



NECESSARY TEACHER TRAINING (NETT) -AN INNOVATIVE TWO-YEAR PRE-SERVICE TEACHER TRAINING PROGRAMME OF HUMANA PEOPLE TO PEOPLE INDIA (HPPI)

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Abstract

It is the right of every child to get quality education. The quality of education depends on various factors one of which is the teacher. Teachers are the backbone and central figure of any education system. Since teaching is vitally linked with school improvement, it is important to work on teacher preparation. Apart from government, many non- government organizations (NGOs) have been working in this area. This paper aims to focus on the Necessary Teacher Training (NeTT) - an innovative two-year Pre-service Teacher Training Programme being implemented by Humana People to People India (HPPI), a non- government organization. HPPI collaborates with the state governments and private agencies to run the NeTT programme at District Institutes of Education and Training (DIETs). The unique training module of NeTT is designed in alignment with the state curriculum prescribed for D.El.Ed. course at DIET's. The programme is aligned with the vision and goals of HPPI and tailored in accordance to the National Curriculum Framework for Teacher Education (NCFTE) 2009. Thus, the NeTT programme fills this gap where teacher educators aim at training teacher trainees towards improving the quality of teacher education.

Keywords: *Necessary Teacher Training (NeTT) Programme, Innovation, Pre-service Teacher Training, Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.), District Institute of Education and Training (DIET)*

INTRODUCTION

Humana People to People India (HPPI) is a not-for-profit development organization working in almost 43 countries around the world. It works on long-term development projects within

Education, Health, Agriculture and Rural Development, Community Development, Recycling of Clothes and Environment.

Humana People to People India (HPPI) was founded in India in the year 1998. The pre-service Teacher Training Programme of HPPI is known as Necessary Teacher Training (NeTT). It was previously called DNS. DNS stands for “Det Nodvendige Seminarium”, which is Danish for “The Necessary Teacher Training College”. NeTT is a two year pre-service teacher training programme that runs at selected DIETs in Uttar Pradesh, Haryana, Bihar and Madhya Pradesh. The programme is developed to address the needs of primary school children. The NeTT programme is aimed to prepare teachers according the emerging demands and trends of society; teachers who not only teach children but also act as facilitators in their learning process. The NeTT Programme offers an innovative pedagogical framework to transact the two-year Diploma in Elementary Education (D.El.Ed.) curriculum by a team of teacher educators of HPPI.

Structure of the programme- The NeTT programme distributes the entire D.El.Ed. curriculum into 22 periods and the duration of each period is four weeks. Each period has a headline to give direction and focus to teacher trainees. It uses a methodology called the Doctrine of the Modern Method- DMM. The subjects of the training are presented to the D.El.Ed. trainees in form of Study, Courses and Experiences which is the teaching-learning material of the NeTT programme.

INNOVATIVE ELEMENTS OF THE NeTT PROGRAMME

1. Learning organized in thematic periods

The NeTT program is organized in periods with a theme. There are 11 periods each year having a headline with its own objective like Studying Humanity subjects, Modern Technology, Mastering Languages, Big issues of our time etc. The teacher trainees drive themselves forward through activities related to the theme. At the beginning of each period they make a plan, formulate their expectations and learning goals for the period (of one month). At the end of the period they conclude and take action if learning goals have not been met.

2. Doctrine of the Modern Method (DMM) learning system

The Doctrine of the Modern Method (DMM) is a unique pedagogical system of teaching and learning.

The NeTT programme elements have been laid down in- **Studies, Courses and Experiences**

Study Tasks- Study tasks are provided with a short title which in few words expresses what the piece of learning is about. The Study Tasks take up half of the time and the trainees can do it alone or in group. Teacher educator checks the finished tasks.

Courses- Courses take up quarter of the time. Here the teacher educator teaches, give presentations, conducts activities and liven up the teacher trainees through various methods.

Experiences- Experiences make up the last quarter of the time. Conducting rallies, community work, tree plantation, role-play, national travel etc. are examples of experiences that the teacher trainees gain.

It is all available in a set of 10 DMM BOOKS as well as on computers which is available to teacher trainees and faculty members.

3. Theme Weeks (Week of Building, Week of Conclusion, Week of Investigation etc.)

Most of the periods have defined the last week as a theme week, where the teacher trainees work on a project. In the Week of Building, they plan and perform an action of maintenance and improvement of the DIET building. In the Week of Investigation, the teacher trainees plan and execute an investigation of a important issue in the community, such as -reasons for school drop-out, health issues, etc. Small conclusion is done every quarter, where the teacher trainees assess the progress of their training individually, in the group and in the whole team.

4. Period planning and conclusion

The faculty at DIET along with the teacher educators makes an overall annual plan for the programme including subjects to be covered, activities to be undertaken, highlights of the year etc. The faculty also plans every four week period well in advance with topics to be covered, projects to be undertaken etc. The plan is presented to the teacher trainees who in their function groups study the period texts in the NeTT Book, take note of the content elements for that particular period, and make detailed plans for how to implement the plan. The teacher trainees also add elements and activities to the plan. The period plan is then displayed at the notice board for all to see and follow. An important part of a period is the conclusion, where the teacher trainees assess what they have learned in the four-week period; what was planned and what was achieved. The conclusion is presented by each group to the whole team.

5. Community work

The NeTT Programme has dedicated a period for a project where teacher trainees plan and execute a project with community within health, women empowerment or community

development. The NeTT Team coordinates with DIET Principal and faculty how this can be integrated into the existing curriculum as much as time permits.

6. Travel

The NeTT Programme has also dedicated a period in the second year for a National Excursion with research. The idea is that the teacher trainees visit a state that is very different from their home state, and conduct 2-3 small research projects. They may investigate the level of education in the state, the socio-economic differences, the situation for women, etc. The travel needs to be planned well in advance, so the budget can be approved, finances found, permission from parents obtained, and alignment with curriculum settled.

7. Saturday Pedagogical Session (SPS)

One Saturday every month the teacher trainees at DIET organize and carry through a Saturday Pedagogical Session. They invite primary school teachers, community members, the school management committee, and other people of interest. The SPS is organized at the DIET or at a primary school. A topic is chosen, speakers prepared and a debate or discussion is conducted. The teacher trainees can also choose to present results from their travel, action research, findings from teaching practice, etc.

8. It's Show Time (IST)

The meaning of IST is the time to present or show learned subject or gained knowledge in front of others. IST is useful in making students, trainees and teachers reflect over various issues. It is an important event in the NeTT programme in which trainees show their knowledge, content and experiences. They show their talent through some craft work, role plays, posters, songs, sketches, dance, poems, etc. Much of IST takes place in the community. It gives an opportunity to the trainees to develop confidence where they can show their understanding over a topic.

Tools for the implementation of the NeTT Programme

A set of tools have been developed for the whole NeTT Programme and is made available to the DIET in form of NeTT Programme Book, the school digital library, DMM books etc. The HPPI Team, the faculty and the teacher trainees together plan and implement the programme within the realities of DIET.

CONCLUSION

NeTT, the Pre-service Teaching Training Programme of HPPI has most of the elements which are important in the professional preparation of teachers. There are many qualities that prospective teachers need to inculcate in the 21st century. The NeTT programme helps the

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teacher trainees to achieve them; whether it is their unique pedagogical framework or their innovative pedagogy, the programme holds several elements that take teacher trainees through the processes of constructing knowledge, learning and experiences along the way.

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