



**ATTITUDE TOWARDS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF
COLLEGE TEACHERS OF LAKHIMPUR DISTRICT IN ASSAM:
A STUDY**

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Abstract:

This paper studied the level of attitude towards professional development of college teachers of Lakhimpur Districts in Assam. The investigators administered a questionnaire for collection of data on Attitude towards Professional Development of College Teachers of Lakhimpur district in Assam from 6 colleges in Lakhimpur district. The total population of the study was 50 college teachers. Results showed that the attitude level of professional development of college teachers in the said district is high. Significant differences were found in professional development of college teachers in regard to sex, and stream (Science and Arts). However, category wise college teachers viz. Assistant Professors and Associate Professors were found to have similar attitude level of development towards their profession. The paper discussed certain suggestions for enhancing positive attitude towards professional development of college teachers to cope with the new knowledge era.

Key Words: Attitude, Professional Development, College Teachers, Sex, Stream, Category, Knowledge Era

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1.0: INTRODUCTION:

“The teacher who is indeed wise does not bid you to enter the house of his wisdom but rather leads you to the threshold of your mind.” ~Khalil Gibran

Teaching all over the world today is considered as a profession and teachers are given professional status. Teaching profession now is a knowledge profession. It is the noblest among all professions. Teacher is the backbone of education system, the maker of mankind and the architect of the society. These multifarious tasks and responsibilities cannot be performed by a teacher if he/she is not skilfully updated him/her professionally and personally. The present education system has stressed more on quality than quantity in teaching, learning, research, evaluation and management.

The professional development of teachers, particularly of the college teachers is the most important concerns for policy and practice in Indian education today. The college teachers like other professionals need to stay informed about new knowledge and technologies. From this perspective the professional development of the teachers may be interpreted as an attitude based on constant questioning and search for solutions.

Professional development plays an essential role in successful education. It is regarded as collaborative process and it happens when there are meaningful interactions not only among teachers but also with students, administrators, parents and other stake holders. Thus it is driving force behind much change that has occurred in the area of teaching-learning and it refers to activities to enhance professional carrier growth.

1.1: ICT (Information and Communication Technology) in teaching profession:

With the introduction of ICT in teaching profession, the concept of professional development too is undergoing a radical change. Today the professional development is based on electronic technologies increasingly referred to web based interactive experiences combining text, audio and video to prepare students who are able to work collaboratively with others, think critically and creatively and reflect on their own learning process. The world is now entering into an information age and the developments in ICT are opening up new and cost effective approaches to the teaching-learning process. ICT is a collaboration of Information and Communication Technology that helps in acquiring knowledge and making it



common among others. ICT tools can be used to find, explore, analyze, exchange and present information. ICT has achieved in bringing a revolution in lives of people. With this powerful tool teachers can make a vision to present them in a skillful way. Now time has come to realize that computers should be considered a necessity not a luxury in the classroom. An e-revolution has set the ball in rolling in India in shopping, trading, education and banking. Online education, e-governance, GIS, e-marketing, online shopping, online research, personal e-mail, credit cards and e-economy are the part and parcel of today's life.

Integration of ICT in the classroom is very interactive as multiple senses are involved real environments are simulated. Holistic presentation of materials placement of independent learning tasks within the class group and individual as well as collaborative reflections are facilitated through ICT.

1.2: MAJOR ATTRIBUTES OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENTS:

Certain basic elements for professional developments are as under:

- ❖ **Professionalism:** Professionalism in a global society demands teachers to be innovative in their attitudes, flexible in their approach and reflective in their mind.
- ❖ **Knowledge base:** Knowledge base of a teacher is a strong asset and most important aspect of professional development.
- ❖ **Competency:** It is an important aspect for professional development through which a teacher can produce the demonstrable effects.
- ❖ **Commitment:** It is also a moral duty as stated by National Board of Professional Teaching Standards. NCTE (1998), recommends that a teacher must be having: *Commitment to the Learner, Commitment to the Society, Commitment to the Profession, Commitment to achieve excellence and Commitment to basic human values.*
- ❖ **Knowledge Management:** The communication revolution has raised the importance of pooling the skills and knowledge of a workforce. Development of sophisticated database has made it possible for the institutions to build a reservoir of knowledge that can be drawn across the globe.
- ❖ **Information Management:** Massive influx of information due to IT revolution needs a very meticulous, systematic and thoughtful management of information.



- ❖ ***Keeping abreast of latest development:*** Teacher should aware about the latest development of the world in terms of demand, quality, standard, preferences and practices etc.
- ❖ ***Self-motivation:*** It is the product of attitude and aptitude. It is also an important part of professional development. This urges the ability to pursue goals and works with commitments without thought of personal benefit.
- ❖ ***Self Correction and Self Satisfaction:*** To steer oneself is an aspect of professional development.
- ❖ ***Self-Awareness:*** This requires a capacity to correctly judge the mood of different teachers and take decisions, which are fare and reasonable.
- ❖ ***Self-control:*** This implies that the teacher should not take any decision in haste, but examine all the things calmly and methodically.
- ❖ ***Social responsibility:*** The perspective teacher in the modern society is required to be trained and equipped with the techniques of coping with the problems of illiteracy, poverty, social inequality, unemployment, explosion of population, castism, communalism, regionalism, gender, race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, exceptionality and other social hindrances impeding national development.
- ❖ ***Leadership quality:*** Teacher should have the leadership qualities to develop suitable climate and cohesion in the class as a social group.
- ❖ ***Learner- centred pedagogy:*** In the information and communication age teacher's dominance will be replaced by knowledge dominance. Therefore, to handle the ever-growing knowledge, the teacher in knowledge society requires to be trained to handle learner centred pedagogy.
- ❖ ***Good Communicator:*** The teacher in the modern age needs to be an efficient and effective communicator of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

The inevitable need for professional development of the college teachers' call for inculcation of qualities and competencies, some of the important skills are necessary. They are:

- ***Content management skill:*** The 21st century will develop content site providers. The teacher will be supposed to learn to manage the site by content updating on the sites.



- **Self-management Skill:** The teachers should have the ability to manage time, ability to honor commitment, possessing the right kind of drive and positive personal outlook.
- **Competency Skills:** It includes interpersonal skills and healthy relationships, power of assertiveness, managing anger as well as anxiety.
- **Scanning Skills:** Needs to be very sharp to scan the pros and cons of the situations and environment.
- **Correlative Skills:** To mingle in diverse cultures, as multiculturalism can never be avoided in the era of globalization.
- **Analytical Skills:** It should be analyzed the attention, intelligent, needs, values, personalities of students. A teacher in the informative society is required to be trained and equipped with the skills to cope with the problems of environmental pollution, value erosion, illiteracy, poverty, population explosion, etc.
- **Social Skills:** The teacher should have the confident to his/her colleagues and other partners and share with them with the programmes of actions that should be pursued to improve the academic standard of the educational institutions.
- **Inter-personal skills:** The teacher would have high self-esteem and the ability to skillfully manage stress.
- **Personal leadership Skill:** The teacher should empathize with others; have the ability to make decisions, providing comfort with verbal communication and leadership qualities.

1.3: STRATEGY FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT:

Professional development for teachers means that they must be dedicated to a plan of constantly developing themselves and want to participate in ongoing and sustain professional development classes and endeavour. If the teachers are to act as trail-blazers in the lives of learners and also in the educational process for development, they have to acquire professional competencies and commitments and need to be empowered to perform their multiple tasks in the classroom, institution and the community. This will promote sound teacher performance and high quality learning amongst students in cognitive, affective and psychomotor of human development.



As an interpreter the teacher has to place new knowledge and new experience within the context of what is already known and understood by the students. In order to be a good mediator, he/she has to understand a great deal about the way in which people at various ages and stages of developments perceived the world around them. In 2001, UGC developed model curriculum for teachers. The UGC implements various programmes and offers financial support to the college teachers for conducting seminars, workshops, FDP (Faculty Development Programme) and research projects to make them professionally strong. To ensure quality, long term thinking and planning are also required for professional development of teachers. Following are some of strategies for professional development may be useful:

- **Teachers' Association:** Teacher's association plays a significant role in upholding professional integrity, enhancing the dignity of teachers and in curbing professional miss conduct.
- **Informal conversation:** Joining other faculty members in the department for discussing about the syllabus, contents or the materials they are using is one of the easiest and most effective ways of developing oneself, if the teacher borrow the ideas and try them out in his/her own classes.
- **Individual Reading:** Teachers should also be ready to consult internet materials and journals as well as actual books.
- **Action Research:** Not only research but implementation of the findings is required for the desirable modification of the system.
- **In-service Development Programme:** Due to various innovations, discoveries and developments, there is a great need for regular modifications in the behaviors of college teachers. The active participation in the UGC sponsored Orientation Programme, Refresher course and other related courses are utmost necessary to sensitize the teachers to become proud professionals.

1.4: SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY:

Effective teaching anticipates effective education. The dedication and accountability towards the profession makes the teacher strong. The need for the improvement and enhancement of professional development of college teacher is now universally emphasized



and highlighted in educational circles and forums. How to effect its improvement to the optimum desirable degree is the formidable problem which teachers and educationists face. On the basis of the aforesaid discussion the present study was undertaken to find out the level of professional development of college teachers of Lakhimpur districts in Assam.

1.5: OBJECTIVES:

The research has the following objectives:

1. To study the level of professional development among the college teachers.
2. To find out the difference between the sample grouped under the categories of – (a) Sex (Male-Female), (b) Stream (Arts-Science) (c) Experience (Associate- Assistant Professors) in their level of professional development.

1.6: HYPOTHESIS:

1. There is no significant difference between the mean score of the sample grouped under the categories of – (a) Sex (Male-Female), (b) Stream- (Arts-Science) (c) Experience (Associate- Assistant Professors) in their level of Professional development.

1.7: METHODOLOGY:

In view of the objectives of the present study, the investigator has adopted the ‘Descriptive Survey Method’ of educational research. The details are as follows:

- (i) **Sample:** For collecting the requisite data from the college teachers, a total of 6 colleges (Urban colleges=3; Rural colleges=3) were selected from Lakhimpur district of Assam on the basis of convenience. Afterwards, all the college teacher serving in these colleges were approached for data collection. Thus, a total of 50 college teachers (out of which 29-Male, 21-Female; 25 each from science & arts stream; 20-Associate Professors & 30 Assistant Professors) were selected.
- (ii) **Tool:** An attitude scale based on ‘Likert’ type was developed and administered. The weightage for positive statements was given as 4,3,2,1 and 0(zero) points to SA, A, UD, D and SD respectively. In case of negative statements the weightage as 4,3,2,1 and 0(zero) points to the responds categories SD, D UD, A and SA respectively. The total of all the 20 statements was considered as the score of respondents on this attitude scale. The minimum score of a respondent on this attitude scale could be Zero (20x0),



whereas the maximum score would be 80(20x4). The reliability of the questionnaire was found out by the test-retest method, which came to be 0.88 and considered quite satisfactory. The scale has content validity.

- (ii) **Data Collection:** The questionnaire was handed over to the sample group to fill up it on their own.
- (iii) **Statistical Technique used in the Study:** The obtained data were pooled together and calculated Mean, Standard Deviation, t-value and percentage.

1.8: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS:

The pattern of analysis followed the requirements outlined in the statement of objectives and hypotheses.

Objective- 1: To study the levels of professional development among college teachers.

Table 1: Levels of Professional development

Variables	Maximum Score	N	Mean	SD	%
Levels of Professional development	80	50	74.32	6.418	92.9

Table 1 revealed that the mean value of professional development scores of college teacher is 74.32 with a standard deviation of 6.418. This indicates that the professional development of college teacher of Lakhimpur district is much higher as 92.9 percent of teachers reported to have favourable commitment towards their profession.

Hypothesis- 1: There is no significant difference between the mean score the sample grouped under the categories of – (a) Sex (Male-Female), (b) Stream- (Arts-Science) (c) Experience (Associate- Assistant Professors in their level of Professional development).

Table 2: Comparisons of college teachers of different categories in their level of Professional development



Sl. No	Categories	N	M	SD	Categories compared	t-value	Significance level
1	Male	29	76.13	4.59	1 & 2	2.47	0.05
2	Female	21	71.80	7.74			
3	Arts Stream	25	69.6	8.08	3 & 4	-2.437	0.05
4	Science Stream	25	74.72	6.70			
5	Associate Prof.	20	74.6	6.26	5& 6	0.395	N. S.
6	Assistant Prof.	30	73.86	6.537			

Table 2 reveals that the t-values computed for the mean differences between male and female (2.47), arts and science stream (-2.437) are significant at 0.05 level of confidence. The computed t-value between the mean score of Associate and Assistant Professors (0.395) is not significant at any level of confidence indicates no significant difference between them in their professional development. The mean score of Associate Professors (74.6) is little higher than the mean value of Assistant Professors (73.86) but it is negligible. It indicates that they have more or less same professional developments. Thus, the Hypotheses 1 (a), (b), stand rejected and the Hypothesis 1 (c) stands retained.

The result reveals that only 5 percent (3 nos.) teachers use ICT in classroom teaching. The teachers are not aware about the basic needs of the modern teaching. Only 20 percent (10 nos.) teachers acknowledge being the member of national and international organizations and only 40% (20 nos.) teachers from science stream publish research papers in reputed journals and 10% (5 nos.) from arts stream published the same. The result shows that the teachers from science stream are more advantageous position than the teachers from arts stream. Therefore, it may be noted to take the situation seriously by the teachers and governments and needs to further investigation. All the teachers support the need of orientation programme and refresher courses to make them more efficient and suggest enough scope should be provided for interactive sessions among the participants for exchanging their experiences on curriculum construction, teaching methodology and evaluation system. Though most of the candidates 90% (45) considered attaining knowledge as their prime objectives but at the same time a few numbers of candidates 10% (5) considered this course for attaining certificates for promotion only. 94.12% (47) teachers showed that OP helped in understanding the significance of higher



education in society and 84% (42) agreed that these helped in understanding their roles and responsibilities as a better teacher. Majority of the teachers 80% (40) suggest some innovative techniques like Brain Storming, Provocation Operation, Panel Discussion, Buzz session, Group Discussion etc for developing their creativity and logical thinking.

1.9: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS:

1. The results indicate that the professional development level of college teacher in Lakhimpur district is high.
2. Factors like gender and stream have an impact on their professional development level.
3. A quality in-service education programme is needed to enhance the professional development level of college teachers so that they can guide the students for the future nation.

1.10: ACTION PLAN:

The following action plans are suggested in the present study:

1. **Strong influencing force:** There are many other agencies which pay important role in shaping the personalities of people but teachers are only strong force to influence society in general and their students in particular.
2. **Role must be optimistic and effective:** Teachers should always be optimistic and effective.
3. **Careful of any Blaming:** Blaming others for the lack of values in their behaviour won't serve any purpose. Teachers have to make an effective dent to come out of it.
4. **Self-example with leadership quality:** Teachers have to be sincere in all what the teachers say and do and they have to lead others by their own exemplary behaviour because action speaks louder than words.
5. **Command real prestige:** The teacher would command real prestige among students only if they have a genuine concern for their welfare and development. They always try their best to teach and guide for the welfare of the students and the society.
6. **Having faith in 'Towards better living and better teaching':** Teacher should sincerely try to make "Towards Better Living" and "Towards Better Teaching" as



permanent values in our personal and professional lives. Continuous development both as a teacher and as a nation builder would make their lives enjoyable, fruitful and worthwhile in the truest sense.

1.11: SUGGESTIONS:

On the basis of the findings the following suggestions are put forward for consideration:

1. Quality of education depends on the quality of teachers, and therefore a sound programme of professional education of teacher is essential.
2. During the Refresher Course, enough scope should be provided for interactive sessions among the participants for exchanging their experiences on teaching methodology, drafting of syllabi, evaluation etc.
3. More project work should be undertaken by the teacher participants of OP/RC. Focus should be on development of communication skills, on arranging workshops, group discussion, research work and book review.
4. The administrators and policy makers should create a congenial atmosphere in the college premises.
5. Implemented more research in this area.
6. Teacher should undertake minor/major research project to develop their commitment to the society, students and after all for the professional development.
7. Teacher should develop the knowledge of Information and Communication Technology (use of the computer, surfacing the internet, web-processing, etc.) and try their best to apply it to their teaching and strengthening to prepare them for future society.
8. Revision in curriculum in teacher education is must for meeting the challenging issues and needs concerning to man and humanity.
9. Teachers should develop their understanding level of the rural students and their special needs.
10. Teacher should develop Scientific –temper, managerial skill and teaching skills to face boldly all the problems.

1.12: CONCLUSION:

In conclusion it can be said that active participation in orientation programmes, refresher courses, short-term courses, workshops etc. organized by various agencies will help in updating the knowledge, skills and competencies and ultimately will result in enhanced



commitment towards teaching profession. Participation in seminar and conferences and their contribution of research papers can help in enhancing their professional competency. Healthy academic environment, more salaries and other facilities might enhance professional development among teachers. Teachers should try their best to bring about a change in the nature, vision, thought, character and conduct in them and the students also. These initiatives will be a great boon and boost for enhancing the professional development among college teacher. If the teachers have to perform their different emerging roles efficiently, they need appropriate education and training. Once *Professor Humayun Kabir said, "Without good teachers, even the best of system is bound to fall. With good teachers even the worst of system can largely be overcome"*.

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