

**Web Based Induction Programme for Elementary  
Teacher Educators**  
**(A collaborative project of RIE, Mysore and DSERT, Karnataka)**

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**Abstract**

After DPEP and SSA there has been a great increase in teacher development programmes. Comparatively, what is done for teacher educators has been very less. It is important that the implementers of all the SSA programmes are well educated about the programmes before hand. The theoretical understanding of these teacher educators, their attitudinal orientations go a long way in ensuring the success of SSA programmes. A few efforts were made in Karnataka in this regard. However, it was necessary to make teacher education programmes sustainable. Teacher educators can empower themselves provided right inputs are made available to them from time to time. It is from this angle that a web based induction programme was thought of. DSERT, Bangalore, in collaboration with RIE, Mysore developed a web page for this purpose. The training was initiated in July 2008 and the first batch is about to complete the course in a month's time.

This paper describes in detail the objectives, processes and outcome of this programme. The web page created for this purpose is usable by any elementary teacher educator. It is hoped this programme will be of use to all partners in their educational endeavour.

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**The Setting**

Professional development of teacher educators is as important as that of the teachers. Unless we have a good team of professionally driven teacher educators teacher education would not be effective at all. However, not many efforts are made to improve the professional capabilities of the teacher educators. Ever since the establishment of DIETs, implementation of DPEP or SSA programmes, inservice teacher education has assumed a lot of significance. It was widely felt that teachers needed to be equipped with a sound theoretical as well as practical knowledge of classroom dynamics to ensure quality in education. This led to a sudden surge in the number of teacher education programmes organised every year. Now under SSA, ideally it is expected that every teacher gets 20 days of inservice training in a year.

The teacher educators, on the other hand, did not receive as much attention as the teachers. The first focus being the teachers, the abilities of the teacher educators were by and large taken for granted. However, soon it was discovered that teacher educators are not able to function effectively unless they are updated regularly.

This made DSERT, Karnataka think in terms of preparing an induction programme for DIET faculty in 1998. A package called 'Teacher Trainer' was prepared and a few programmes were also conducted. Subsequently, in 2005-06, the PPU, DSERT initiated a review and redesigning of the programme owing to certain changes in the functioning of the DIETs. But due to work pressure and other systemic reasons, the review work done really did not come into effect. On reflection, one can list a few reasons why these efforts did not really materialise as expected.

1. The pressure to organise teacher training programmes was so much that the DIET faculty really did not find time to take themselves away from DIET functions for a continuous period of a week or more.
2. The DIET faculty kept changing. Those who were trained got transferred to administrative posts and the new comers could not be trained immediately.
3. The needs of teacher educators changed from district to district as teacher trainings were decentralised and the DIETs could plan for their districts.
4. DIET faculty as such were not the RPs transacting with teachers directly. So even they did not have a very clear purpose for receiving inputs in this regard.
5. DIET faculty perceived their roles more as educational administrators rather than academicians. Without role clarification teacher education programmes would not make sense to them.

With all this, it became a practice in Karnataka to prepare teacher training packages and in a cascade model of training, the RPs would be prepared for conducting teacher training at the block level. This type of teacher education is highly contextual. In this model, teacher educators would not get empowered for decision making at their level.

It is at this juncture that DSERT approached RIE, Mysore for organising an induction programme for DIET faculty. The initial meetings held discussed at length about the inputs already planned. All relevant sections in the modules prepared earlier were retained. However, it was felt that the traditional ways of teacher education had not worked very well and there was a need to think of an entirely new approach.

RIE, Mysore came out with a proposal to organise a web based training of 6 months duration for DIET faculty in Karnataka. The use of internet has an edge over the traditional method.

- ✓ The web can be accessed any time any where.
- ✓ The learners and facilitators could be working in their own work spots and still be in the training. Even if bringing them to a training venue is necessary for skill and competency development aspects of the programme, it should be of a short duration and should happen only to the extent necessary

- ✓ A duration of 6 months would give enough time to every participant to adjust his/her timings and work out the assignments and other tasks.
- ✓ As there is no hurry to wind up everything in a week, the participants can put in a lot of thinking and creativity into their efforts.
- ✓ Facilitators could be engaged from all over Karnataka or if necessary even outside Karnataka to work in this programme as RPs.
- ✓ The web interaction would also have other by products such as developing the ability to use the computers and the internet, browsing for getting information etc.
- ✓ Since the internet is a great source of information, this programme, though technically restricted to 6 months, would have an on going effect on the participants. If they are given proper direction, they could specialise in an area or learn more than commonly expected.
- ✓ It would least disturb the person from his/her workplace.

### **The Aim of the Programme**

- **To create an ICT platform to Help the DIET Faculty in shaping up oneself Continuously as a Resource Person.**

### **The Objectives of the Programme are**

- *To understand DIET as an academic institution and the challenges before it.*
- *To develop an appreciation for the trainer's role in the DIET faculty.*
- *To locate and use ICT for enrichment and effective functioning as a DIET faculty.*
- *To enhance functional capabilities as a DIET faculty.*

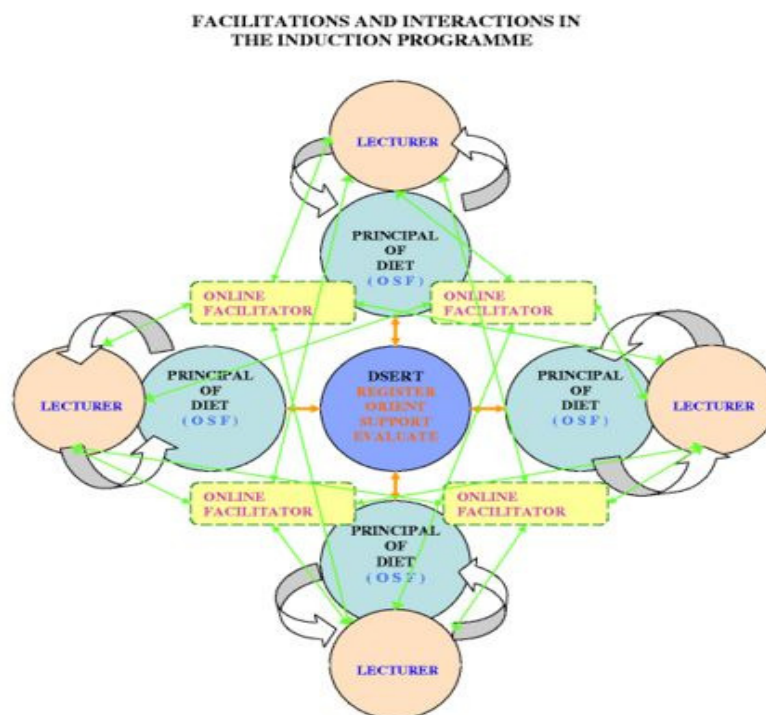
### **Creating the Web Page**

The space for web page is given by Wikieducator. The entire web page was developed by Dr V D Bhat. Two workshops were held to finalise the inputs to different sessions. They were all keyed in and uploaded to the page. The other reference material, audio and video material were also linked. The organisation of the material in terms of its availability could be understood as follows.

1. Material directly available in the web page
2. File which are loaded and available only if clicked.
3. Resources available in the internet to which links are established.

## Facilitation Processes

Facilitation of interaction as envisaged by the programme is represented in the following diagram.



DSERT, Bengaluru is the nodal agency for organising the programme in collaboration with RIE, Mysore. There are two types of facilitators.

1. On line facilitators – who are available any time on the internet. The interaction is carried on through emails.
2. On site facilitators – the principals of DIETs who over see the progress of the participants from his/her DIET and provide all facilities to work on the assignments given.

## **The Content**

The training package looks at the functions and responsibilities of a DIET faculty in relation to the state of primary education. Thus all the areas that make a DIET faculty a trainer and a researcher have been addressed. The content could be classified into five broad areas.

### **AREAS COVERED IN THE INDUCTION PACKAGE**

1. DIET Roles and Functions
2. Trainer Skills
3. Research and Reflective practices
4. e-media
5. Planning
6. General Topics for awareness

### **How does it work?**

1. The staff member of DIET is required to register online as well as by post by filling the REGISTRATION FORMAT enclosed.
2. The DSERT would organise an orientation programme to the participants on the training package, procedures to be followed, etc.
3. Upon receiving confirmation, the faculty is required to work online with the material, preferably area by area, and complete the activities/ tasks as per instructions provided.
4. Each section has a suggested time for completion. Even though you are free to proceed at your own pace, the time frame may be kept in mind for maintaining efficiency and for enabling face-to-face programme to be scheduled.
5. Reading material, supplementary material in videocassettes and transparencies for classroom transaction have been prepared and incorporated in the training package.
6. Training is conducted both online and face-to-face. However, teleconferencing could be incorporated for review of progress and redressing difficulties faced by the trainees in completing the online component.
7. The respective DIET Principals have to facilitate the completion of online component by providing Internet facilities and administrative clearance for undertaking various activities envisaged in the package.

8. The assignments and activities completed have to be communicated online, through e-mail to the address given, with a copy to the coordinator at the DSERT.

## **Some Features**

The programme inputs of this web based induction programme consist of

1. Primary texts, pdf file attachments and AV clippings developed by the online facilitators
2. Pages from relevant internet sites under different sections
3. Video clippings on different topics and for different training objectives
4. All assignments are also provided under 'Self Check and Evaluation' on the main page
5. The Book Shelf has a collection of relevant material and also consists of four activities to be accomplished by the participants during the training
6. Web Resources provides with connections to internet sites which could help a participant as a DIET faculty
7. The participants can get to know about the online facilitators and their e-mail ID by opening *online facilitators* on main page
8. At the end of every page is a **navigation help** that allows participants to go to any section of the package without having to go to the main page. They would need this help when they want to parallelly refer to more than one section of the package.

## **Time Allocation**

The rigidity of timings is relaxed, prioritizing the process part of the training. However, suggestions are made for completing an activity in a time frame. This has been done keeping in mind the fact that the faculty of DIET is also engaged in certain routine activities of the institute while receiving the training inputs.

## **Teleconferences**

The programme consists of three teleconferences to be held in within the course duration to help the participants seek clarifications and for exchange of feedback between participants, the facilitators and the DSERT. Each teleconferences would specifically focus on two areas. Hence, the first teleconference would be centered around first and

second areas, the second teleconference on third and fourth areas and the third teleconference on fifth and sixth areas respectively.

The first and final interactions are face to face. The first interaction is to initiate the participants into the use of web resources and other procedures because every one is new to this approach. The final interaction is to take stock of the situation, wind up the discussions picked up earlier during the course. After a post test, certificates would be issued to the participants.

## **The Other Users**

1. The Training package, though initially being used by DSERT, in future it can also be used by any institute such as, SCERTs of other states, RIEM, ATI Mysore, IASEs and others who propose to train the DIET faculty.
2. The package aims to cover several areas of training such as e-media and trainer skills, which are general in nature and therefore can be adapted by any training institute.
3. The training package, though tested, welcomes enrichment in course of time. One of the ways of attaining this is evaluating the course each time it is run.

## **The Present Status**

This programme was launched in Karnataka in the month of June, 2008. By December 2008 the first batch was expected to complete the course. However, due to non availability of studio for organising teleconferences, busy schedules of Facilitators and engagement of DIET faculty in a number of department programmes, only two teleconferences could be held. The last one and the face to face interaction is due to be held in March. The first batch had 54 participants enrolled from 27 DIETS.

## **The Outcome**

The direct outcome of the first programme is yet to be assessed because the programme has not come to an end yet. However, there are many other issues that have been observed.

1. The participants have grown comfortable using the email for communication. All participants have learnt to prepare their



- assignments in the computer and send the same to the on line facilitators through email.
2. The participants have learnt to browse the web resources to collect information on various issues.
  3. They have learnt to use word processors, spread sheets and power point presentation. They have also practised using the LCD projectors and whenever they had problems, they have referred to the literature given in the website on the use of LCD projectors.
  4. Some of them have learnt uploading literature and editing the webpage.

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