A Study on Perception of the Teaching Faculty on Learning and Development Techniques used in Academics

M. SUMANTH

Abstract

The convergence of social, economic and global forces in the knowledge driven era poses new challenges to the present learning and development process. In view of this, faculty development is considered as an enduring process that enhances the productivity of academics for helping faculty to play their instructional, professional, and organizational roles effectively. It promotes academic excellence and innovation, sharpens conceptual, human, and technical skills of faculty and enables academic institutions to produce employable graduates. The learning and development programs are a means to expose the faculty in higher education to review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop their knowledge, skills and attitudes. The present study tries to explore the various learning and development techniques which are helpful for the faculty to perform their job effectively. To achieve this objective, a purposive sampling technique adopted to collect the data from teaching faculties of Malla Reddy University, Hyderabad through structured questionnaire. The results revealed the need for university faculty to be trained in the light of technological innovations.

Keywords: Higher education institutions, academics, learning and development programs.

1. Introduction

Faculty Development program refers to a range of activities designed to improve the professional skills of the academicians in respect to teaching, research or administrative activities. Faculties are the assets of medical schools and faculty development is the basis of curriculum development (Salam et al., 2015). Faculty development has been considered to play a pivotal role in sustaining academic vitality in medical education. These programs exert a positive effect on institutional climate by fostering knowledge and professional skills of faculty which results in enhancement of the academic performance of learners. Faculty development on teaching methodology is the most desirable and highly demanded programme to train the teachers in teaching skills. Teachers in medical schools are traditionally not trained to teach but are assumed to have that ability because of

their content knowledge and their own experience of being taught. Medical education is constantly undergoing changing to adapt to the changing pattern of the health care practices, the impact of new technologies and advances in the development of educational theory, research and knowledge. Therefore, medical teachers also need appropriate training in order to foster knowledge and professional skills among them and enabled them to be competent and acceptable

Any types or process of activities that are performed by a group or an individual to enhance, promote, and improve the performance, competencies or skills of a health professional at an institute level are defined as faculty development which has many other names like staff development, academic development, and educational development. The importance of faculty development stressed by Harden is equivalent to curriculum development, which is a very difficult assignment.

Professional development is provided through an academic in-service series of workshops designed for higher education faculty members. Since many faculty members in higher education institutions, especially those in majors other than education, complete their degree programs with a deep knowledge of their disciplines, but generally have little or no educational basics of classroom teaching; these workshops were developed to address that gap. (Mocinic, 2012) Higher education institutions have found it necessary to implement professional development activities to assist faculty in developing the skills and strategies necessary to provide effective instruction

2. Review of Literature

Online education programs in teaching are growing in increased numbers. (Allen and J. Seaman, 2013, B. Mastel-Smith, J. Post, and P. Lake, 2015). Online programs range from associate to graduation, post-graduation and so on. With the growing number of online education programs in teaching, faculty need to be competent and possess skills specific to the online learning environment. Effective teaching strategies foster student learning, satisfaction, and achievement of outcomes (R. A. Croxton,2014, D. R. Garrison and J. B. Arbaugh,2007). A literature review of research on perception of the faculty members learning and development techniques used in academics, teaching strategies revealed several recurrent themes of collaborative activities such as discussion boards, instructor presence, and using a variety of instructional methods (M. Dixson,2010). Plante and Asselin (K. Plante and M. E. Asselin, 2014) examined online nursing education and found that several factors are important to create a sense of social presence and caring. Richardson et al. also examined presence and supported common factors. These factors include the ability to provide respectful, encouraging, timely, and positive faculty

messages while, concurrently, allowing caring interactions between faculty and students, establishing mutual respect, and finding meaning in the faculty-student relationship. However, there may be a disconnect between application of these strategies and faculty perception of the most important elements for student success.

There is a gap in the literature of qualitative studies that focus on teaching faculty's perceptions of teaching effectiveness in an online environment in teaching. An integrative review by Horne and Sandmann (E. M. Horne and L. R. Sandmann,2012) stated that more studies are needed that evaluate online programs, especially at the graduate level. One pilot qualitative study used focus groups to explore faculty perceptions of how a workshop supported the ability to implement best practices into their courses and allowed students to provide feedback a limitation of this study includes that it was a specific evaluation of a workshop and has limited transferability. Carter et al. (L. M. Carter, V. Salyers, S. Myers et al.,2014) conducted a mixed methods study in Canada to discover what students and faculty view as strategies that ensures meaningful e-learning. Focus groups elicited answers to questions regarding elements that require dedicated support about educational practices and technology aspects so that the e-learning experience is meaningful. Four themes emerged which were the human connection (student-faculty and student-student), IT support, course design that is specific to e-learning, and institutional infrastructure to support e-learning. The researchers on e-learning experiences involving faculty and students recommend a need for additional research. Other studies have focused on online teaching effectiveness, but these have been in other disciplines such as medical education or focused on student perception of e-learning. In a recent review by Zidan (2015) states that there is a need for more qualitative studies to address the gap regarding the effectiveness of online learning.

The Teacher Professional Learning and Development is an extraordinary synthesis. It moves the discourse about what we know about learning for teachers onto a different plane, offering a rich and detailed theory supported by highly defensible evidence and logical arguments. Its authors have extended the research methodology, explicating a process for determining effect sizes for both qualitative and quantitative studies so that no data are lost, and establishing a means for categorizing and organizing widely different studies so that they can be considered in relation to a standard framework.

Professional learning can ask a lot of teachers in the interest of their students. Even those who are confident in their professional role can feel profoundly uncomfortable when what they hold to be true is challenged and they have to rethink their beliefs and practices. This is particularly so because teachers are adults who have well-defined and defended schema about the way the world works. People come to learning with preconceptions about

how the world works. If their initial understanding is not engaged, they may fail to grasp the new concepts and information that are taught or may learn them superficially and revert to their preconceptions in real situations.

It is sometimes argued that the only way to improve teaching quality is to develop professional standards that outline an 'effective' teacher's learning progression throughout their career, and use these as 'drafting gates' for promotion and/or pay increments.

Teaching is a highly complex weaving of professional knowledge, professional relationships and values, and professional practices. This Best Evidence Synthesis establishes that how teachers' own ongoing professional learning occurs is equally complex. It is one of the 'black boxes' of how learning actually takes place—whether it be the learning of young people, or of teachers, or of those who teach or coach teachers.

3. Research gap

In the present scenario of Covid 19, the education sector has gone a tremendous shift. The traditional method of learning and development has been drastically changed due to prevalence of the pandemic. As teaching methodology has changed, the learning and development of faculty also has taken different turn. It is observed from the literature review that due to pandemic various techniques have come into the

Although we have been able to identify a number of specific attributes of professional development and draw some conclusions about their effect on student outcomes, this is a relatively undeveloped field of educational research. As we proceeded, we found major gaps in the knowledge base and these limited what we were able to conclude. Specifi c shortcomings identify ed were: the weak theory base for professional learning; limited information concerning the qualities of effective providers, including those in the tertiary sector; a lack of research into the role of information technologies in promoting professional learning; and a lack of research into the mentoring of beginning teachers.

4. Objectives

- ➢ To study the concept of learning and development for the faculty members in academic.
- ➢ To identify the different learning and development technique on reward and recognition received by the faculty members.
- ➢ To identify the most preferred technique of learning and development by the faculty.

5. Scope of Study

Faculty development embraces all forms of development activity including personal study, e-learning, internal or external courses, workshops, work shadowing and planned experiences. The present study is focused on the various developmental techniques which is helpful for the faculty to enhance in their career and overall development. The study is also ascertained the various personal development and growth of the faculty to have a better understanding of their respective subjects. In this way they will be more competent to deliver the knowledge to the students and ultimately it will be having a better impact on overall image of the university. It will also help to make university understand the various techniques which are being attended and need to be conducted within their respective subject area and provide the resources to cater the needs of the society as whole.

6. Research methodology

The present study is comprised of exploratory and descriptive research. The exploratory research tries to explore the various teaching learning and development that a faculty goes through. The descriptive research helps to find out which of the learning and development technique is suitable to have better understanding and enhances the knowledge about the particular subject. For this purpose, non-random sampling method with purposive sampling technique has been adopted to collect the responses from the teaching faculty of various departments or schools of the Malla Reddy University, Hyderabad through a structured questionnaire. The study consists of 124 sample sizes. The data collected with the help of questionnaire analyzed by various statistical techniques such as percentage, average, ranks etc. and presented in graphs, charts etc.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The following paragraphs provide the data analysis and interpretation of the collected data.
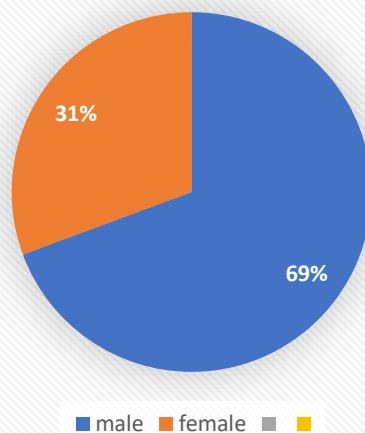
Table 1 – Age of the Respondents

Age group	Frequency	Percentage
20-25	4	3.2%
25-30	16	12.9%
30-35	100	80.6%
35+	4	3.2%

Graph 1 – Age of the Respondents
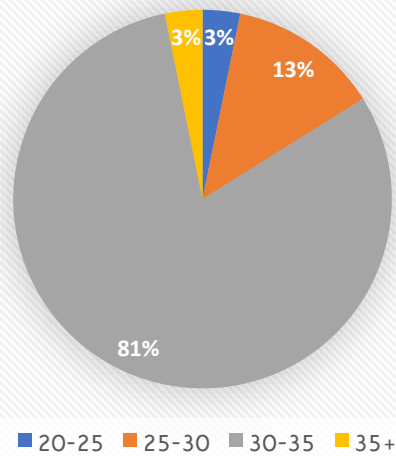
From the above table 1, it is known that 80.6 percent of the respondents belong to age group 30-35 years, followed by 12.0 percent belong to 25-30 years and 3.2 percent from both 20-25 years and above 35+ years age group.

Table 2 – Gender of the Respondents

| Gender of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage
Male	86	69.3%
Female	38	30.6%

Graph 2 – Gender of the Respondents

As per table 2, most of the faculty are male faculty in the university comparing with the female faculty because of our culture female faculty are less lo work (male faculty 69.3%-female 30.6%) .

<div align="center">

Table 3 – Employment of the respondents

</div>

|	Frequency	Percentage
Private employee	44	35.4%
Government employee	12	9.6%
Others	68	54.8%
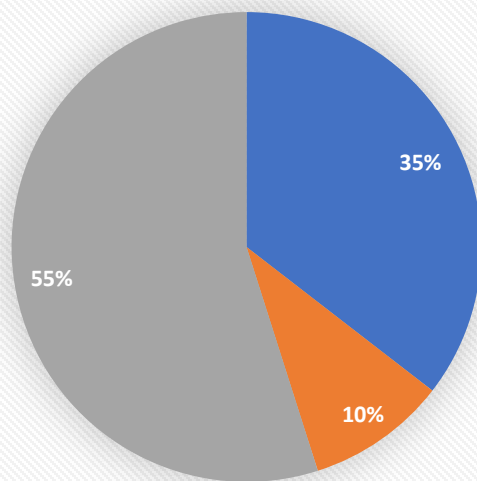
Government employees are less in my survey. the government employees are work with the government university 9.6% Malla Reddy is the private university because of that government employees are less private employees 35.4% and others are still they doing the training in the university to gain experiences.

<div align="center">

Table 4 - Education level

</div>

Please specify your highest education level	Frequency	Percentage
Postgraduation	46	37%
M.Phil.	26	20.9%

Ph.D.	42	33.8%
Graduation	4	3.2%
B tech	2	1.6%
Graduate	2	1.6%
Degree	2	1.6%
up	0	0%

Graph 4 - Education level

Legend: Postgraduation, M.Phil, Ph.D., Graduation, B tech, Graduate, Degree, up
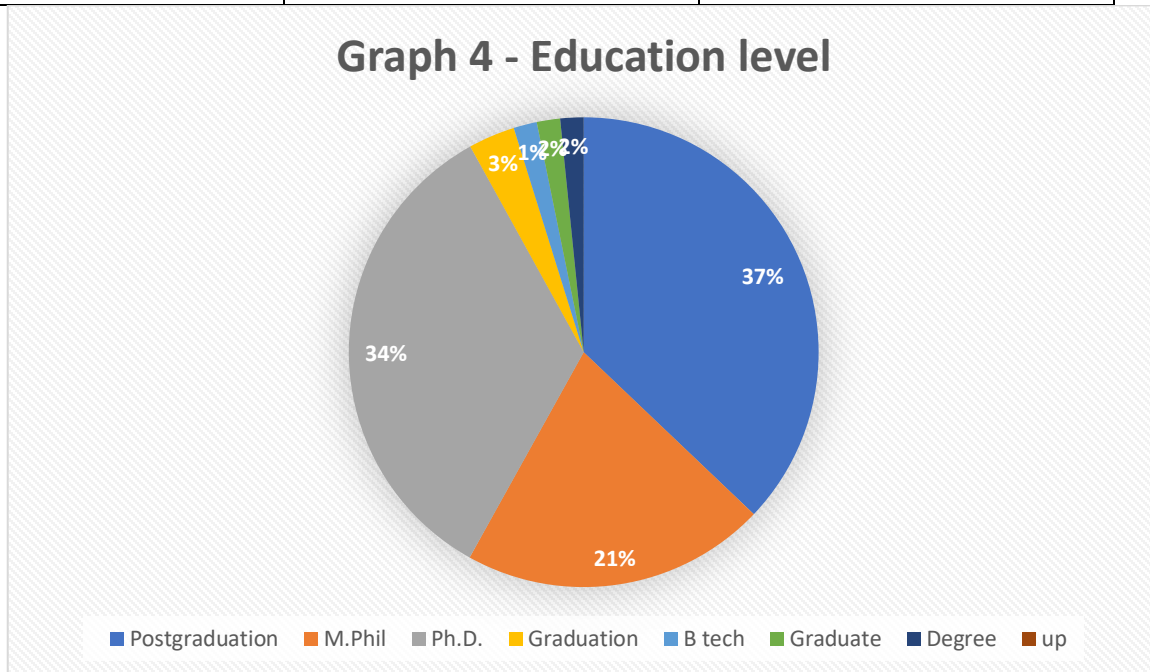
Now a days people are giving more importance to the higher educations. As per table 4, most of faculty preferred for post-graduation with 82.2%. Then facility preferred M.Phil. with 6.4% Remaining faculty preferred Ph.D. graduation with 3.2% and B.tech, graduate, degree with 1.6%.

Table 5 – Participation in teaching and/or learning programs

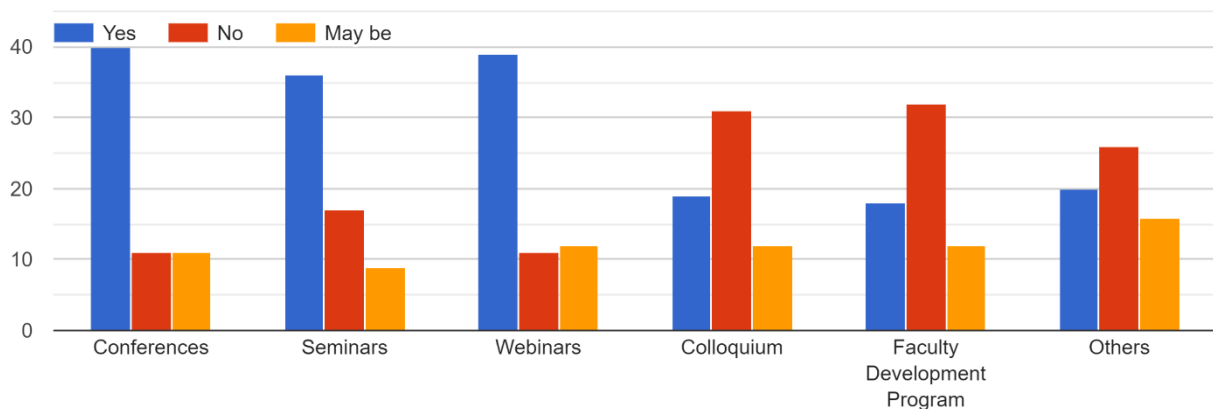|	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	72	77.5%
No	28	22.5%

Graph 5 – Participation in teaching and/or learning programs
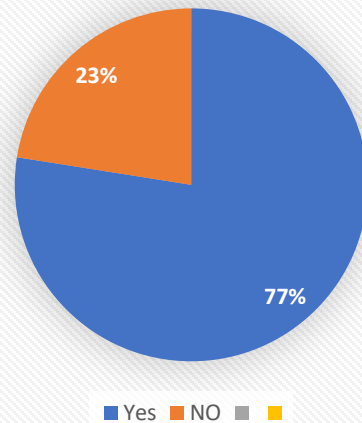
As per table 5, most of the faculty attended teaching and/or learning programs as it helps to the developing the growth of the faculty and skills.

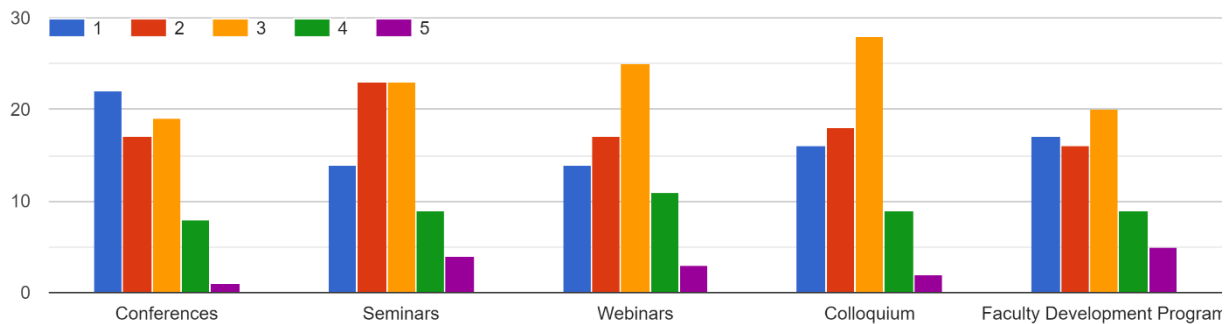**Graph 6 – Learning and Development Programs Attended**

Please specify which of the following have you attended.

From the above graph 6, the most preferred techniques is conference, followed by webinars, seminars, colloquium and faculty development programs. It is evident from the above graph that faculty need to attend development program since it shows least out of all the techniques.

Graph 7 - Rate/rank the following in terms of learning outcome

How do you rate/rank the following in terms of learning outcome.

From above graph 7, in terms of learning outcome, conference inculcate highest learning and development technique, followed by faculty development program, colloquium, seminars and webinars.

8. Limitation of the Study

The replication of this study with larger sample size is needed. Further research is also needed with faculty from various colleges and universities as the present study is confined only to one university i.e., Malla Reddy University, Hyderabad. A larger and more diverse sample size may enhance the findings of the present study. A qualitative study might also give further insight into teacher learning and development aspects. This study also leads to questions about why some faculty member chose to participate in faculty development and why others do not. A longitudinal study will also be helpful to understand pre and post learning and teaching programs effectiveness.

9. Conclusion

The outcome of this paper showed that high quality professional training programs for faculty members is important and will become essential to institutions' capacity to compete in this changing world. Professional training programs based on their area of subject can produce promising learning and teaching practices. A better learning and development program needs to combine both theoretical and classroom practices to achieve the intended learning outcomes. The faculty should routinely attend the related learning and development workshops or programs in the present ever changing technological era to abreast with the subject and also with the method of delivering their respective knowledge with an ease.

References

B. Mastel-Smith, J. Post, and P. Lake, "Online teaching: "are you there, and do you care?"," Journal of Nursing Education, vol. 54, no. 3, pp. 145–151, 2015.

Baesu, C. and Bejinaru, R. (2013) Leadership Approaches Regarding the Organization Change. The USV Annals of Economics and Public Administration Journal, 2, 146-152.

D. R. Garrison and J. B. Arbaugh, "Researching the community of inquiry framework: review, issues, and future directions," Internet and Higher Education, vol. 10, no. 3, pp. 157–172, 2007.

E. Allen and J. Seaman, "Changing course: ten years of tracking online education in the United States," 2013, http://www.onlinelearningsurvey.com/reports/changingcourse.pdf.

E. M. Horne and L. R. Sandmann, "Current trends in systematic program evaluation of online graduate nursing education: an integrative literature review," Journal of Nursing Education, vol. 51, no. 10, pp. 570–576, 2012.

Furst, S.A. and Cable, D.M. (2008) Employee Resistance to Organizational Change: Managerial Influence Tactics and Leader Member Exchange. Journal of Applied Psychology, 93, 453-463. https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.93.2.453

K. Plante and M. E. Asselin, "Best practices for creating social presence and caring behaviors online," Nursing Education Perspectives, vol. 35, no. 4, pp. 219–223, 2014.

L. M. Carter, V. Salyers, S. Myers et al., "Qualitative insights from a Canadian multi-institutional research study: in search of meaningful e-learning," The Canadian Journal for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, vol. 5, no. 1, pp. 1–21, 2014.

M. Dixson, "Creating effective student engagement in online courses: what do students find engaging?" Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 1–13, 2010, http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ890707.pdf.

Mocinic SN. (2012). Active Teaching Strategies in Higher Education. Metodicki obzori 15, 7, 97-105

Gartner (2018) Manage Change More Successfully.   https://www.gartner.com/en/insights/change-management

Moran, J.W. and Brightman   B.K. (2000) Leading Organizational Change. Journal of Workplace Learning, 12, 66-74. https://doi.org/10.1108/13665620010316226

Pierce, J.L., Gardner, D.G. and Dunham, R.B. (2002) Management Organizational Change and Development. In: Management and Organizational Behavior: An Inte-grated Perspective, South-Western College Publishing, Chapter 18, Cincinnati, 627-657.

R. A. Croxton, "The role of interactivity in student satisfaction and persistence in online learning," Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, vol. 10, no. 2, pp. 314–324, 2014, http://jolt.merlot.org/vol10no2/croxton_0614.pdf.

Salam A, Akram A, Mohamad N, Siraj HH. (2015). Measures of educational environment in a higher educational institution using Dundee Ready Educational Environment Measure-DREEM. Int Med J, 22(2), 98-102

T. Zidan, "Teaching social work in an online environment," Journal of Human Behavior in the Social Environment, vol. 25, no. 3, pp. 228–235, 2015.