



# **RELEVANCE OF ORIENTATION PROGRAMMES AND REFRESHER COURSES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Teaching is one of the most noble professions one can have. Teachers are the bridge between the students and the institution, as they try to disseminate the information to the students making them ready to stand in the competitive world and thereby achieve the goals of the educational institution. It becomes essential for the teachers to have continuous upgradation and professional development to cultivate teaching efficiently and effectively. While this article focuses on the importance of Orientation Programmes(OP) and Refresher Courses (RC) for the overall development of the teachers and profession. It mentions several reasons for Understanding Educational Culture, Networking, etc. which motivate the teachers to attend the programmes, and on the other side, it lists out the benefits been given to parts of the society i.e. students, teachers, and the educational institution.

**Keywords:** Orientation Programmes, Refresher Courses, Academic Staff Colleges.

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Profession of Teaching is a noble one, conceptually and ideally. Teachers are the one who drives the youth in the correct direction, which perhaps is the future of the nation. Therefore, to befit the teachers to their roles, a sound professional training is needed. Induction training and continuous education thereafter equip the teachers with adequate knowledge and skills to perform their professional functions.

The University Grants Commission, in pursuance National Education Policy and its programme of action, had set up 66 Academic Staff Colleges (ASCs) in different Universities/ Institutions in the country. The Academic Staff Colleges so established are conducting specially designed orientation programmes for newly appointed lecturers and refresher courses for in-service teachers.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

(Sharma et.al, 2013) in their research paper have tried to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of orientation and refresher programmes. Data for 75 senior teachers from different colleges of Nagpur were collected through a questionnaire method relating to objectives, Infrastructure, Discipline, Quality of resource person, reading material, evaluation methodology, and impact on professional development in the context of the said programme. It was found that the majority of the teachers were satisfied with the different parameters of the parameters of the programme and indeed helped them in empowering their professional development.

(Chandi, 2020) in her research paper has stated that for spreading the knowledge or information to the students in a balanced and qualitative way it becomes important for the teachers to have continuous upgradation and professional development for the same. For this researcher has suggested that the Orientation Programme and Refresher Course play an important role for in service teachers and maintain the quality of the teaching profession.

(Narendra, 2022) in his research paper has highlighted the importance of a Continuous Education Programme that helps to maintain the status of any profession in society. The Researcher highlighted that for the newly appointed professor, it is important to attend the Orientation Programme so that they can know their strengths and weaknesses, thus teaching effectively to the students. To have continuous learning and professional development it is important to attend Refresher Courses.

## **MEANING:**

The *Orientation programme* is intended to inculcate in the young lecturers the quality of self-reliance through awareness of the social, intellectual, and moral environment as well as to discover self-potential and confidence. The orientation programmes contribute to the teacher's awareness of the problems of Indian society and the role of education, higher education leaders, and educators in the resolution of these problems to achieve desired goals in national development.



Orientation Programme will be of 4 weeks duration with a minimum of 24 working days and 144 contact hours (6 hours a day) excluding Sundays and Public Holidays.

A *Refresher course* is a training course in which academia improve their knowledge or skills and learn about new developments that are related to the job that they do.

Refresher Course will be of 3 weeks duration with a minimum of 18 working days and 108 contact hours (6 hours a day) excluding Sundays and public holidays.

The Commission has been providing cent percent financial assistance to the host Universities/ Institutions to run the courses mainly towards the cost of resource persons, participants, books/materials, working expenses, and salaries of the UGC- allocated staff, etc. as per the norms under the programme.

## **ELIGIBILITY CONDITIONS TO ATTEND ORIENTATION PROGRAMME AND REFRESHER COURSE**

The newly appointed teachers may have to attend the orientation programme/course for up to 6 years of continuous services. Then after a gap of one year, such teachers may opt for a Refresher course. The eligibility for attending. The courses conducted by UGC-ASCs are only valid for career advancement purposes.

All eligible teachers are essentially required to attend orientation programme and refresher courses as per the terms of reference under the programme/course. The UGC's preference lies towards the teachers in attending the course and not in considering or approving equivalence of courses as are requested by many teachers.

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE ORIENTATION PROGRAMME AND REFRESHER COURSE**

1. To sensitize the participants to the teaching profession in the context of social, economic, and political aspects of our times so that they can appreciate their roles in the present society.
2. To impart and improve necessary professional skills for more effective role performance.
3. To utilize opportunities for the development of Personality, Initiative, and Creativity.

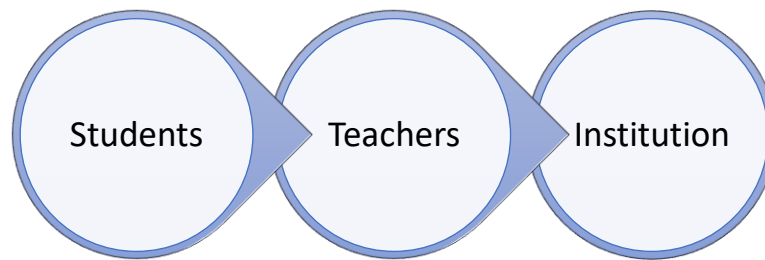
## **REASONS / IMPORTANCE TO ATTEND ORIENTATION PROGRAMME AND REFRESHER COURSE**

Following are the different reasons that encourage teachers to attend the Orientation Programme / Refresher Course.

- 1) Understanding the Educational Culture
  - Programme helps the teacher to understand the value of education and educational culture. Various factors like mission, vision, philosophy, and psychology can be understood.
- 2) Networking
  - It helps the teachers to build up a network with colleagues, administrative staff, and support staff. It helps in doing up the collaboration for a project, and working on the research paper, and thus creates a feasible working environment.
- 3) Curriculum and Pedagogy
  - Orientation programs often cover the curriculum structure, teaching methodologies, and assessment practices of the institution. Teachers can learn new effective ways to teach their subject which is more student-centric.
- 4) Technology Resources
  - Under this programme, the teacher also receives training for the new technological advancements in education. This updates and helps the teacher to deliver their lecture most efficiently and effectively.
- 5) Student Support Services
  - This programme often introduces teachers to the various student support services available, such as counseling, tutoring, and special education resources. Understanding these services can help teachers better support their students.
- 6) Professional Development
  - Some of the programme also offers information on development opportunities like conferences, workshops, associations, etc. This can help the teachers in their future growth prospects.
- 7) Team Building
  - This programme involves many activities or exercises that involve team building work. Through this teachers can work effectively in a team, promoting a sense of belonging among educators.
- 8) Expectations and Performance Evaluation

- Teachers can learn about the institution's expectations for their performance and the criteria used for evaluation. Understanding these factors can help teachers set goals and meet up the individual as well as the institution's goals.
- 9) Cultural Sensitivity
  - Orientation programs may address cultural sensitivity and diversity awareness, which is important in today's multicultural classrooms. Teachers can gain insights about different cultures thus creating inclusive learning environments.
- 10) Career Advancement Scheme
  - For placement on the senior scale as per the UGC norms, the lecturer must participate in one orientation programmes and one refresher course.

***Benefits to the Different Sections of the Society***



***Benefits to the Students***

- 1) Learning by Doing: As the students resort to active learning, many times students are given different tasks for understanding the concepts in a much better way. Different techniques like role play, group discussions, team building, etc. are being used through which students start learning by doing the things him/herself.
- 2) Boost Self-Confidence: As the students initiate in learning different ways it boosts the self-confidence of the students which is ultimately reflected in their behavior and attitude and perhaps it helps in the overall growth and development of the students.
- 3) Inclusive Classrooms: As these programmes provide the importance of diversity in the classroom and how to manage the same, students from different backgrounds feel more comfortable thereby creating a feasible learning environment.

***Benefits to the Teachers***

- 1) Teaching Styles: During Orientation Programmes, teachers are being trained in different teaching pedagogies that can be adopted in a classroom like team building, group discussion, storytelling, etc., thereby effectively delivering the content.
- 2) Soft Skill Abilities: With the help of the Orientation Programmes and Refresher Course soft skills abilities like communication skills, interpersonal skills, problem-solving and Critical Thinking, leadership skills, emotional intelligence, etc.
- 3) Legal and Ethical Awareness: Teachers gain awareness of legal and ethical responsibilities in education, ensuring they operate within the bounds of the law and adhere to professional ethics.

***Benefit to the Educational Institution***

- 1) Improved Teaching Quality: As this programmes emphasizes teachers on different pedagogical skills, innovative & best practices for teaching, stay updated with new technologies which ultimately levels up the education standards thereby increasing the reputation of the educational institution.
- 2) Resource Optimization: Teachers attending such programmes regularly are well-equipped to utilize the resources, technology, and material effectively. Thus, this ultimately results in cost reduction and resource allocation for the institution.



3) Competitive Advantage: Educational Institutions that invest in the professional development of the teachers always enjoy the competitive advantage over the other institutions as parents and students will only choose those schools or colleges that ensure a commitment towards growth and qualitative learning.

### **CONCLUSION:**

The Orientation Programme & Refresher Course helps to channelize the continuous professional development of in-service teachers in higher education. Teacher learns about new technological advancements, and innovative ways of teaching which makes them future-ready. By bringing the different teaching styles, shifting from passive to active learning, and becoming more student-centric in the class helps the student also to understand the concepts in a much better and more concrete way. Teachers are better equipped and trained to understand and meet the diverse needs of the students in the classroom. This programme covers a 360-degree view in the sense that it not only helps the teachers, but also the students, and ultimately the goals of the educational institution are also being achieved.

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