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Assessing the Training Needs of Faculty Members at the University Level: A Case Study of University of Loralai

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Abstract: *The present study was planned to assess the training needs of faculty members at the university level. The study was delimited to the University of Loralai only. The main objective of the study was to assess the training needs of teaching staff at the university level. The population of the study was the teachers of the University of Loralai city. 12 teachers from the university were taken as a sample. The questionnaire was constructed, which included different areas, i.e., personal, educational/and professional development of faculty members. The study assessed training needs in critical areas such as classroom management, lesson planning, preparation of question papers/tests, marking of papers/tests, use of library, computer skills, internet use, research skills, technology integration, and ethical decision-making. Addressing these areas through targeted training programs is crucial to meet the expressed needs of the teachers and improve their overall effectiveness in their roles. To address these areas, the study recommended that universities enhance the professional competencies of their faculty, which ultimately leads to improved teaching quality, student engagement, and overall academic excellence.*

Key Words: University Faculty, Students, Loralai, Balochistan, Training Needs, Pakistan

Introduction

Enhancing the competencies of university faculty members is crucial, given the swift changes that have emerged as the most significant aspects of this century. Additionally, given their influence and pivotal position in elevating the caliber of postsecondary education and its results, it is imperative to acknowledge their training requirements (Al-Dougan, 2010; Alsabbag, 2014). Nonetheless, the process of creating training programs is structured and starts with gathering accurate information regarding the kind of training that faculty members actually require. It is a beginning point and the foundation for appropriate training that aims to improve performance rather than an arbitrary or improvised procedure (Maria & Rafael, 2010). According to Harris (1980), training in the field of education is a structured program made up of educational opportunities provided to faculty members in the institution with the goal of enhancing their performance in their particular roles. It is described by Durrah et al. (1988) as a regulator and a planned voltage to supply labor for the organization of specific knowledge, enhancing and expanding their abilities and skills and favorably altering its trends and behavior. Al-Sakarne (2011), on the other hand, described it as a planned action intended to bring about changes in knowledge and experiences, abilities, performance levels, working methods, behavior and trends, and both the individual and the community. As a result, this enables a person or group to do their duties with great production efficiency. According to Mitchell (1987), the primary purpose of training is to assist in bringing about the changes that will aid in resolving a great deal of the issues that different institutions, including universities, confront. According to Preskill & Russ (2005), training needs are a collection of adjustments and advancements that are necessary for a person's knowledge, abilities, and attitudes. Thus, the goal of this was to address issues that arise within the organization and meet the business objectives. In addition, Brown (2002) thinks that in light of the realities of the workplace and personnel issues, training needs should be ascertained using the foundations of objective criteria based on scientific facts. As a preventive measure to guard against these issues, it would, therefore, aid in addressing future issues. It also aids in estimating expenses, time,

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and effort. The need for training is not something that can be measured and decided upon once. As a result, it's a dynamic idea that can change based on faculty members' backgrounds and skill sets. Variables and regional, national, and international events also have an impact on the educational establishment. As a result, every institution needs to regularly identify its training needs in order to adjust training effectiveness to meet current demands and changes (Abd Alāli, [2012](#); Rothwell & Sredl, [2000](#)). Higher education institutions across the globe pay attention to the training and development of their faculty members. Nonetheless, the institution starts the faculty members' professional growth through the Faculty Growth Centers (FDC), which are specialist centers operating under the institution of Loralai's umbrella. One university that is interested in determining faculty members' training needs from the perspective of the trainee himself is the University of Loralai. This is because his involvement allows him to evaluate those needs, pinpoint problems that require development, and enhance training initiatives. But this keeps going until the program hits the targets it aims for.

Statement of the Problem

Despite assessing the training needs of faculty members at the university level, there is a lack of research on the specific needs of faculty members. The present research was designed to assess the training needs of faculty members at the university level.

Objectives of the Study

- To assess the training needs of university teaching staff.

Significance of the Study

This study's findings will contribute to the literature by identifying the required training needs of faculty members at the university level. The study will provide insights into the areas where improvements are needed the most, which can help universities develop targeted interventions to meet the needs of their faculty members. Additionally, the study's recommendations for enhancements can help the university for the beneficiaries of the training needs assessment for faculty members at the University of Loralai.

Research Questions

1. What are the training needs of faculty members at the University of Loralai in teaching, research, and technology?
2. How do faculty members at the University of Loralai view their personal, educational, and professional training needs, and where do they feel they lack or excel in training?

Delimitation of the Study

The present study was delimited to the University of Loralai. Both male and female faculty members were part of the study.

Literature Review

There are three primary categories into which the training needs of university staff and faculty can be divided; these categories are essential to all educational systems and institutions. These training needs are specifically divided into three categories: those that are frequent and regular; those that are related to work-related issues resulting from a lack of creativity, knowledge, and abilities; and those that are intended to address future training needs in response to environmental demands (Morsi, [2001](#); Armstrong, [2006](#)).

Therefore, it is common for time, effort, and money to be lost when these demands are neglected, whether it is in terms of identifying them or manually counting and assembling them (Elewa, [2001](#)). This is corroborated by Alanzi ([2012](#)), who correctly concluded that, up until the program achieves the intended goals, the requirements of the trainees must come first in the design of any training program. The desire to determine training requirements generates information that aids in the creation of strategies. This ultimately leads to the training's exact objectives and aids in creating customized training curricula that

close the performance gap between faculty members' actual and desired performances (Alsabbag, 2014; Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart & Wright, 2004; Sadik, 2007).

The theoretical background of Training Needs

Numerous international studies on the topic of training requirements and assessment have been carried out. In order to get insight into their methods and instrument development, the researcher went over these investigations. As a result, they are listed from newest to oldest. Al-Najjar & Al-Sulaiman (2014) identified how university faculty members used the Internet for scientific research and instruction. We gave a sample of faculty members a questionnaire. Nonetheless, the findings show that all faculty members have favorable opinions about how important it is to use the Internet for scientific research and instruction. But this is based on their opinions—that is, the faculty members of science studies—about how important it is to use the internet in scientific research. Examining Moroccan English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers' use of information and communication technology (ICT) was the goal of Lamtara's (2014) study. The purpose of the study was to ascertain the ICT beliefs and behaviors of EFL teachers in the classroom. The results demonstrate how a contradiction between the technological and pedagogical exploitation of instructional activities hinders the Moroccan EFL teachers' ICT practices. Furthermore, the study clarifies that improper use of the technology occurred despite the teacher's growth in ICT proficiency. This was thus due to the fact that it did not support the pedagogical planning of instructional activities. The purpose of Saeed & Othman's (2014) study was to ascertain faculty members' perspectives regarding the value of professional development training for employees of Sudanese educational institutions (the "Edwards Deming" criteria for quality). As a result, thirteen Results were presented in the study. The training and defining of the training demands are, therefore, the most crucial. The professional development of employees at Sudan's Faculty of Education depends on a scientific approach. Important training requirements also include those for educational technologies, English language proficiency, and a number of other areas. The goal of Abdul Hafiz's (2013) study was to determine the training requirements for Jordanian community college faculty members in relation to their perspectives on the use of technology in higher education. The effect of gender on those needs will be considered in the study. It will also recommend a training course with the aim of integrating technology into Jordanian community colleges based on the demands of this industry. There are 225 participants in the research sample. The results show that training needs received a high priority score of 36, or 100%. The findings also show that there was no statistically significant variation in the evaluation of faculty members' training needs according to gender.

The goal of Elzubeir's (2011) study is to get academics ready for their new, problem-based graduate entry medical program's duties as assessors and facilitators. As a result, it was determined that clinical faculty members who are not experts in medical education can provide peers with excellent and widely recognized training. Medical education is expected to improve as a result of faculty development, which is supported by a distributed leadership style that upholds the principles of a learning organization and creative, adaptable, and democratic methods of fostering expertise at all organizational levels. Furthermore, the data offered is helpful for informing decisions and enhancing programs. Al-Asmara's (2009) study aimed to ascertain the demands for faculty development based on their respective professional duties, namely teaching and research. Faculty at Umm Al-Qura University's perspective on management and involvement in community service. Fifty items total, including a survey instrument, demographic data, and a professional development survey, were created and given to 357 faculty members. The findings showed that participation in the Jung community service, teaching, research, university administration, and overall professional development requirements were all on the high side. As a result, the responses of study population members with varying genders and the academic position variable differed significantly. According to Jung's research findings from 2005, teaching is quickly rising to the top of the most difficult professions in our culture. This is due to the fact that information is advancing quickly and that instructors must become proficient in the usage of contemporary technologies in the classroom. Although the demand for teacher training has increased, new technologies also contribute to the solution. Information and communication technology (ICT) can improve pre- and in-service teacher training, give teachers more flexible and effective professional development opportunities, and connect them to the global teacher community. This study examines and arranges a range of methods from ICT applications in teacher preparation into a four-cell matrix. It addresses the new opportunities and



difficulties that ICT has brought to teacher preparation and professional development based on the examination of those approaches. The discussion of recent study findings regarding the integration of ICT into networking and teacher preparation serves as its conclusion. On the other hand, the research by Preskill and Russ (2005) offers a meta-analysis of a customer service training program's beta test. The preliminary assessment revealed a low rate of response. As a result, the meta-assessment concentrated on problems pertaining to how the initial evaluation was carried out and the causes of nonresponse. The authority, capacity, and motive domains were found to be associated with solutions to the nonresponse problem in the meta-evaluation. It was evident from the above that research on the topic of training needs received a lot of attention. Additionally, from their perspective, it plays a significant part in deciding which training courses are best for the target audiences. This research employed the descriptive analytical method for the most part. Its instrument was the questionnaire, particularly in research involving university education abroad and other Arab nations like Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Kuwait, and Morocco. From here, the teacher needs to be proficient in the curriculum and subject matter, understand the different standards, be conscious of assessment, be able to plan lessons, and most importantly, be able to engage students—to know them well enough to make informed decisions about their education. The knowledgeable teacher connects the pieces through pedagogy. Teachers' interactions with students and the way they structure their lessons are vital components in supporting each student's learning (Tharp, 1999; Tharp et al., 2003).

The effectiveness of teacher quality, which is largely dependent on the quality of teacher education, determines the success of reforms in educational institutions. Staff development uses learning and trait-strengthening programs to develop and promote a productive personality. It involves the development of skill-oriented vision, mental poise, objective perception, alertness, drive, communication skills, team building, competency in problem-solving and decision-making abilities, honesty, etc., as well as the art of supporting and tolerating dissent from staff members and other differing viewpoints (Sisodia, 2000). The caliber of university personnel has a major impact on the caliber of higher education. The role that employees play is essential to an institution or organization's success in achieving its objectives. The foundation of educational achievement is a highly qualified and driven faculty. The culmination of all the efforts aimed at improving faculty members' performance, vision, knowledge, and abilities is known as faculty development. Staff development programs at universities enhance teachers' thinking, classroom behavior, communication skills, and teaching techniques. The goal of staff development is to enhance the caliber of students' education through various pedagogical approaches. The abilities of educators have a major role in the success of numerous technologies. Historically, universities have not made a concerted effort to improve the training of their faculty members. A number of federal and provincial initiatives were launched. However, they were quickly discontinued for various reasons. Therefore, it was time to carry out an analytical survey in this respect. University faculty members have a wide range of competencies and skills that are necessary for successful teaching, research, and professional growth.

The goal of this review of the literature is to thoroughly investigate the diverse training requirements that faculty members have in a number of areas, such as technology integration, ethical decision-making, learning theories, lesson planning, preparation of instructional materials, assessment, and feedback. Through a review of the literature, this study aims to shed light on the crucial areas that require consideration and funding for professional development programs, as well as insights into the varied and changing needs of faculty members in higher education. In today's educational environment, faculty members play a more comprehensive role in teaching, research, and student participation than just giving lectures. Because of this, educators must receive extensive training in classroom management, which includes techniques for upholding order, creating inclusive learning environments, and handling the dynamics of a diverse student body. Furthermore, in order to engage students, explain difficult concepts, and promote meaningful interactions in the classroom, faculty staff must possess strong communication skills. Comprehending varied learning theories is crucial for faculty members to customize their pedagogical approaches to suit the varying learning styles and preferences of their students. Effective teaching also involves creating lesson plans, preparing instructional materials, and creating evaluation tools like examinations and question sheets. To create memorable and stimulating learning experiences for their students, faculty personnel need to be trained in these areas. Furthermore, in order to successfully navigate the changing landscape of higher education and make a significant contribution to their

respective academic disciplines, faculty members are becoming more and more dependent on their ability to integrate technology into their teaching practices, make ethical decisions, and conduct research. This review will cover the importance of faculty training in the areas mentioned above as well as how to use library resources efficiently, hone computer skills, use the internet for research and teaching, and incorporate new technologies like AI chatbots like GPT into the classroom. In addition, the review will examine the moral issues that arise while making decisions in an academic setting, highlighting how crucial it is to maintain professionalism and integrity in all areas of faculty duties.

Training Needs of Faculty Members

Training needs are the adjustments that university faculty members must make to their abilities, knowledge, and behaviors in order to accomplish goals and get past obstacles. Training needs are all of the adjustments necessary to a person's knowledge, abilities, attitudes, and experiences in order to prepare him to successfully carry out the responsibilities of his current position (Andronesco and Solomon, 2010). The information, abilities, attitudes, and behaviors that the trainee must adapt to deal with modern or developing elements needs are defined by Boon, Lutz, and Marburger (2015). Some ideas regarding the necessity of training are as follows:

1. There are knowledge, attitudes and skills that need to be acquired, modified or changed.
2. They represent shortcomings in the target group.
3. They require the identification of human and technological innovations and problems that need training.
4. They entail a constant revision of reality to reach maturity and self-evaluation.

So, training needs represent the difference between the present reality of a faculty member's performance and what this performance should be in the future in order to face changes and developments in knowledge, skills, attitudes and abilities.

The Importance of Identifying Training Needs

In order to assist training program designers in creating efficient programs that will assist in achieving practical and well-defined objectives, training demands are determined scientifically. Hegarty and Florian, (2004). According to Haesner et al. (2015), determining professional needs is a crucial step in any effective training procedure. If clearly identified, training needs constitute the main component of an effective training program. Training needs are also confirmed by Pop and David (2009) as the first stage in creating and planning any successful training program. According to (Mohamed and Osman, 2014), it is critical to determine training needs for the following reasons:

1. Designing training programs.
2. Help focus on improvement of performance.
3. Directing trainees and identifying the types of training and expected outcomes.

Since identifying training needs is an organized survey based on a cooperative effort by members of the organization to eliminate the gap between target objectives and reality, many related institutions also take part in the process (Kaufman, Hughes, and Riccio, 2010).

This study aims to detect the training needs of faculty members at the University level from their perspectives in light of some variables. Thus, this was aimed at identifying the appropriate training programs for them during their professional fields.

Concept of Training

Training has been defined by various scholars in the field of education and professional development:

Harris (1980) defined training in the field of education as a planned program consisting of learning opportunities offered to positively impact the performance of individuals.

Al-Sakarneh (2011) defined training as a planned activity designed to bring about changes in individuals and communities in terms of information, experiences, skills, levels of performance, ways of working, and behavior and trends, aiming to enhance efficiency in job performance. Mitchell (1987) believes that the



basic function of training is to contribute to making changes that will help in solving a large number of problems faced by various institutions, including universities.

Preskill & Russ (2005) defines training as a flexible concept that varies according to the experiences and abilities of faculty members and is affected by local and global developments that impact the educational institution.

Methodology

This study attempts to assess the training needs of faculty members at the university level. The study was descriptive in nature. The following steps were followed:

Population of the Study

All the faculty members of the Education Department, University of Loralai, were the population of this research. The questionnaire was distributed to the faculty members of the education department in a random manner.

Sample of the Study

The 12 questionnaires were distributed among the faculty members of the University of Loralai. The current researcher took data as a sample of study: 03 from the Education Department, 02 from the English Department, 02 from the Computer Science Department, 01 from the Islamic Studies Department, 02 from the Commerce Department, and 02 from the Pashto Department. This sample was selected through the random sampling technique.

Research Tools

For the present study, a questionnaire was developed as an instrument. In the light of the literature review and by the consultation of the study advisor, the researcher derived a training needs assessment questionnaire. Three areas of training needs were assessed: personal needs, educational needs, and professional needs at the university level. Statements indicating the deficiency and efficiency of those needs were formulated. The statement was rechecked and revised. The final questionnaire consisted of 15 questions on the whole. There were 05 statements on personal training needs, 05 statements on educational training needs, and 05 statements on professional training needs.

Data Collection

The researcher personally visited the sample university and distributed the questionnaire among the faculty members; for this purpose, the researcher faced a few difficulties because some of the faculty members were not aware of the study, its tool, or its purpose. However, the researcher was successful in collecting the questionnaire from faculty members.

Data Analyses

After the collection of the data, it was tabulated, analyzed and interpreted in the form of frequencies and percentages. Each category of the response on each item is shown in tabulated form.

Findings

The main objective of this study was to assess the training needs of faculty members at the university level. It was assumed that faculty members have training needs that need to be assessed and developed in different areas of their teaching field. The results of this study revealed that University faculty members are seeking guidance and training needs in their professional fields.

The findings provide a breakdown of the training needs of teachers across various areas, such as classroom management, communication skills, learning theories, instructional material preparation, lesson planning, assessment and feedback, technology integration, ethical decision-making, and more. The frequency and percentage of teachers indicating their training needs in each area are presented.

58 % of teachers need training in classroom management, while 42 % do not need it.

Classroom Management: The teachers expressed a high need for training in this area.

50% of teachers need training in communication skills, while 50% do not need it.

Communication Skills: The teachers indicated a moderate need for training in communication skills.

50% of teachers need training in learning theories, while 50% do not.

Learning Theories: The teachers expressed a moderate need for training in learning theories.

50% of teachers need training in the preparation of instructional material, while 50% do not need it.

Preparation of Instructional Material: The teachers indicated a moderate need for training in this area.

58% of teachers need training in lesson planning, while 42% do not need it.

Lesson Planning: The teachers expressed a high need for training in lesson planning.

74% of teachers need training in the Preparation of question papers/tests, while 25% do not need it.

Preparation of Question Papers/Tests: Teachers indicated a dire need for training in this area.

58% of teachers need training in Marking papers/tests, while 42% do not need it.

Marking of Papers/Tests: The teachers expressed a high need for training in this area.

66% of teachers need training in the use of the library, while 33% do not need it.

Use of Library: The teachers indicated a high need for training in the use of the library.

67% of teachers need training in computer skills, while 34% do not need it.

Computer Skills: The teachers expressed a high need for training in computer skills.

58% of teachers need training in internet use, while 42% do not need it.

Internet Use: The teachers indicated a high need for training in internet use.

25% of teachers need training in chat GPT use, while 75% do not need it.

Chat GPT Use: Teachers expressed no need for training in this area.

83% of teachers need training in research skills, while 16% do not need it.

Research Skills: The teachers indicated a dire need for training in this area.

49% of teachers need training in assessment and feedback, while 50% do not need it.

Assessment and Feedback: The teachers expressed a moderate need for training in assessment and feedback.

75% of teachers need training in Technology Integration, while 25% do not need it.

Technology Integration: The teachers indicated a dire need for training in technology integration.

66% of teachers need training in ethical decision-making, while 33% do not need it.

Ethical Decision-Making: The teachers expressed a high need for training in ethical decision-making.

Conclusion

According to the data, it was concluded that there is a high demand for training in critical areas such as classroom management, lesson planning, preparation of question papers/tests, marking of papers/tests, use of library, computer skills, internet use, research skills, technology integration, and ethical decision-making. Addressing these areas through targeted training programs is crucial to meet the expressed needs of the teachers and improve their overall effectiveness in their roles.



While there is a moderate need for training in communication skills, learning theories, preparation of instructional material, and assessment and feedback, it's evident that the teachers have expressed a clear need for training in several key areas. This highlights the importance of prioritizing these high-need and dire-need areas in faculty development programs to enhance teaching practices and academic performance within the educational institution.

Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of ongoing assessment and adaptation of training programs to ensure that they align with the evolving needs of faculty members. By recognizing and addressing these training needs, the University can enhance the professional competencies of its faculty, ultimately leading to improved teaching quality, student engagement, and overall academic excellence. This underscores the significance of investing in targeted and comprehensive professional development initiatives to support the continuous growth and success of faculty members in the university setting.

Recommendations

Here are recommendations for assessing the training needs of faculty members at the university level:

1. **Tailored Training Programs:** Develop and implement tailored training programs focusing on high-need areas such as classroom management, lesson planning, technology integration, and ethical decision-making to address the expressed needs of the faculty members effectively.
2. **Professional Development Workshops:** Organize professional development workshops and seminars specifically targeting the identified high-need and dire-need areas to provide faculty members with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their teaching and research roles.
3. **Mentorship and Coaching:** Establish mentorship and coaching programs to provide ongoing support and guidance to faculty members, particularly in areas such as research skills, assessment and feedback, and technology integration, to enhance their professional development.
4. **Resource Allocation:** Allocate resources for the acquisition of modern teaching aids, technological tools, and research facilities to support faculty members in improving their competencies in technology integration, research skills, and instructional material preparation.
5. **Continuous Evaluation:** Implement a system for continuous evaluation of the effectiveness of the training programs and the impact on faculty members' professional development to ensure that the training needs are being adequately addressed.
6. **Collaboration with Industry Experts:** Foster collaborations with industry experts and professionals to provide specialized training and insights in areas such as digital literacy, research methodologies, and ethical decision-making, aligning the training with real-world demands.
7. **Research Grants and Support:** Provide opportunities for faculty members to access research grants, mentorship, and support to enhance their research skills and contribute to the university's research output.
8. **Technology Infrastructure:** Invest in modern technology infrastructure and provide technical support to facilitate faculty members' effective use of technology for teaching, research, and professional development.
9. **Peer Learning Communities:** Establish peer learning communities where faculty members can share best practices, discuss challenges, and learn from each other, fostering a culture of continuous improvement.
10. **Recognition and Incentives:** Recognize and incentivize faculty members who actively engage in professional development activities and demonstrate improvement in the identified training areas.
11. **Flexible Training Formats:** Offer training programs in flexible formats, including online courses, workshops, and self-paced modules, to accommodate diverse learning preferences and schedules.
12. **Cross-Disciplinary Training:** Encourage cross-disciplinary training opportunities to broaden faculty members' perspectives and enhance their adaptability to new teaching methods and educational trends.
13. **Feedback Mechanisms:** Establish feedback mechanisms to gather input from faculty members regarding the effectiveness of the training programs and to identify evolving training needs.
14. **Leadership Development:** Provide training and support for faculty members aspiring to leadership roles, equipping them with the necessary skills for effective academic leadership and administration.

15. Long-Term Planning: Develop a long-term strategic plan for faculty development, aligning training initiatives with the university's academic goals and vision for continuous improvement in teaching and research excellence.

Establish a culture of continuous professional development and lifelong learning, encouraging faculty members to engage in ongoing training and skill enhancement opportunities.

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