

The Effectiveness of In-service Training Courses on the Sixth Grade Teachers of Andimeshk City

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at evaluating the effectiveness of in-service training courses on the sixth grade teachers of Andimeshk. This was a descriptive survey. The population consisted of all 115 sixth grade teachers of Andimeshk selected by using complete census. A researcher-made questionnaire was used to collect information on the effectiveness of in-service training courses on aspects of attitudes, skills and knowledge. The reliability of each category was calculated by using Cronbach. To analyze the data, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics like Friedman rank test, chi-square test of goodness of fit, and one- sample t-test were used. The results showed that teachers evaluated the effectiveness of in-service training courses on their attitudes, skills and knowledge to be above the average.

Keywords: evaluation; effectiveness; in-service training courses

1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, education and improvement of human resources are a key strategy for organizations for positive adaptation to changing conditions. Life of organizations largely depends on the knowledge and skills of employees. The timelier and better the issues, the more adaptable they are to changing environments (Sam Khanian, 2006).

In the past two decades, attention to the staff is the largest and most important asset of the phenomenon. Today, with the increasing the growth of information and the complexity of job, importance of staff training has been increased.

Toffler considered education as one of the most important activities and ways to deal with the great changes in the future in order to accept the changes. Sophisticated and effective training help people grow in their job and achieve adequate ability in it and work more efficiently.

Obviously, whatever people catch better knowledge and education about their work, the process of their learning is better; and they can provide a more useful thoughts and ideas to improve their work (Al-Husseini, 2001).

If we want to define in-service training, it must be said that its main essence in all the organizations and institutions include the enhancement of efficiency of the staff and improvement of adaptation to the environment; consequently, the increase of in-service training is nothing but the efforts done in order to improve the knowledge and technical, professional and career skills and create the desirable behavior in employees and prepare them to perform the duties and responsibilities of the job in the best way (Chaichi, 2003). Today, the importance and role of in-service training is no secret to any organization; and every organization, in proportion to the importance that gives to this matter, will spend money and time on their human resources. In-service training courses, which are regulated and permanent and improve skills and knowledge of the employees and solve problems in the work environment, can ensure the survival of the organization. Hence, continuous efforts to improve the quality of training can bring significant benefits. It should be noted that we can never claim that education itself is useful, unless provided education is evaluated (Tavakoli, 2010). Evaluation of the effectiveness of training means to partly measure and evaluate how much the education can lead to create the skills required for organization practically and applicably (Bazargan, 2006).

In the meantime, education system, that aims to educate and train the next generation and to provide a sense of well-trained work force, is elements and factors which are effective and important which among them, the teacher's role is most important. In fact, teachers working in schools are the drivers who drive the next generation to their destination. Efficiency and effectiveness of these forces is due to several factors that among them are teachers' update education, and the pursuit of the latest skills and techniques of teaching and motivation. Not only is necessary to employ and select the teacher who at the time of employment and the beginning of their work have acceptable information, but also, it is necessary for efficient teachers to update their information during service. Education is the most efficient tool and the most powerful of the existing process to transfer knowledge and skills to human resources and strengthen them to do their tasks (Nikooei Moghadam, 2006). As noted above, evaluation and awareness of the results and the efficiency of training is necessary for training process; and it makes educational circles to be completed. In fact, the evaluation of the effectiveness of training courses, on the one hand, provides a mirror for managers and the staff to achieve clearer picture of the quantity and quality of educational activities. On the other hand, it makes planners and teaching staff of the organization aware of the positive and negative aspects of the program; and in this way, it helps to the effectiveness of the educational programs and activities (Danesh Pajouh, 1385).

In this regard, many researchers have evaluated the effectiveness of in-service training in organizations. Hosseini (2009), in his study entitled the effectiveness of short-term training of the staff on their performance in Municipality of Tabriz, concluded that the mentioned training leads to the effectiveness of the performance of the staff. Monfared (2010), in his study entitled the evaluation of the effects and benefits of staff training in agriculture organizations, concluded that in service training in organizations shall have an effective impact. Tavakoli (2010), in his master's thesis entitled the evaluation of the effectiveness of staff training course for librarians of Astan Quds Razavi, concluded that Training courses had impact on the effectiveness of staff training course for librarians of Astan Quds Razavi. Mousavi (2007), in his study entitled the evaluation of the effectiveness of staff training course on improving the productivity of the employee of Ministry of Transportation, concluded that the results of training had significant effect on the promotion of organizational

behavior, efficiency, effectiveness and identification of strengths and weaknesses, threats and opportunities. Also, review of published research provides appropriate framework to understand the application and importance of in-service training courses in educational and non-educational institution. Edom (2003), in the research on in-service training library and information science in Delta State of Nigeria, concluded that it is necessary for officials to play a greater role in education and to make employees to attend this course. Hogaboam (2004), in the study, examined "The combination of these two approaches to in-service training of teachers (Academic Research and training of trainers) with regards to the attitudes and practices of teachers"; the results showed that use of self-learning styles reduced tend towards traditional methods; and apprenticeship increases private education. In another study by Suleman (2011), teaching effectiveness of teachers who had attended in-service courses was evaluated from the perspective of students.

The results showed that teachers did not have required knowledge related to modern teaching methods and professional skills. Also, they did not use information and communication technologies in education. Katrina (2011), at the University of Wales in UK, in collaboration with the University of Eristol of Greece, evaluated the effectiveness of staff training on performance of linguistic researchers; the results showed that training had positive impact on performance of teachers.

According to the results shown by other researchers and statements by experts on the important role of service training in increasing efficiency and effectiveness of the staff and thus greater productivity and improvement of organization, holding effective short-term in service courses for teachers is the most important factors that should be considered in order to gain it; and the use of most effective and efficient ways with regard to financial and human resources bring hope that effective steps can be taken by holding such appropriate and extensive courses in order to improve the knowledge and skills required for teachers by the increased growth of training needs of teachers (Khodadadinejad, 2003).

In-service training is also applied in education and training in Iran. In this paper, we are going to study this issue because optimization of methods required assessing the effectiveness of these methods and learning of teachers. Due to the growing importance of assessing and improving the quality of education, doing this research is important because there has been taken no comprehensive assessment of in-service training courses for teachers in sixth grade in Andimeshk yet. Therefore, it seems useful to conduct the evaluation. On the other hand, as mentioned previously, teachers has effective role in the development of students' talents. Also, education officials always call for skilled experts in the field of education. To determine these expectations, evaluation of this course can be the best way. Accordingly, the present study is going to evaluate the effectiveness of in-service training courses on the sixth grade teachers of Andimeshk.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The main objective of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of in-service training courses on the sixth grade teachers of Andimeshk. This is a descriptive survey. Due to the low number of subjects, all teachers were selected as sample. Complete census is used. Accordingly, the sample consisted of 115 people (48 male, 67 female), respectively. A researcher-made questionnaire is used to collect information which has closed answer. The questionnaire consisted of 21 questions designed in terms of the effectiveness of in-service training courses on aspects of attitudes, knowledge, and skills. Tables of responses are designed based on five-point Likert scale (very high, high, medium, low and very low).

Also, the relationship between the subscales and the total score of the questionnaire is used to show validity by Pearson correlation. The Spearman correlation coefficient is equal to $r = 0.681$ for professionalism, equal to $r = 0.813$ for improvement of attitudes and equal to $r = 0.411$ for job skills. In the present study, to determine the reliability, Cronbach's alpha is used which for the questionnaire, professional knowledge is equal to 0.854, improvement of attitudes is equal to 0.940 and job skills is equal 0.705.

To describe the data, descriptive statistical methods Such as statistical analysis of the frequency, percentage, maximum, minimum, mean and standard deviation were used. As well, to analyze the research questions, and inferential statistics like Friedman rank test, chi-square test of goodness of fit, and one-sample t-test is used.

3. FINDINGS

Results from this study are presented in the form of questions:

First research question: from the perspective of the sixth grade teachers, how is the effectiveness of in-service courses on improvement of their professional knowledge?

Table 1. Chi-square test of goodness of fit and the observed and expected frequencies.

		sig	Degree of freedom	chi-square test	remaining	expected frequencies	observed frequencies
From the perspective of teachers	low	0.001	2	33.93**	-25.3	38.3	13
	medium				-.3	38.3	38
	high				25.7	38.3	64
	total						115

** Significant at the level 0.01, * Significant at the level 0.05

According to table of chi-square test of goodness of fit, Chi-square value is equal to 33.93 and degrees of freedom is equal to 2 and significant level 0.001 is lower than the level of error, 0.05.

We accept the difference between the observed and expected frequencies and consider it as significant test. Since Chi-square test is influenced by the highest frequency (high to 64). Then, we concluded with 95 % confidence that from the perspective of the sixth grade teachers of Andimeshk, the effect of in-service courses on improvement of their professional knowledge is highly desirable.

Second research question: from the perspective of the sixth grade teachers, how is the effectiveness of in-service courses on improvement of their attitude?

Table 2. Chi-square test of goodness of fit and the observed and expected frequencies.

		sig	Degree of freedom	chi-square test	remaining	expected frequencies	observed frequencies
From the perspective of teachers	low	0.001	2	48/74**	-29.3	38.3	9
	medium				-2.3	38.3	36
	high				31.7	38.3	70
	total						115

** Significant at the level 0.01, * Significant at the level 0.05

According to table of chi-square test of goodness of fit, Chi-square value is equal to 74/48 and degrees of freedom is equal to 2 and significant level 0.001 is lower than the level of error, 0.05.

We accept the difference between the observed and expected frequencies and consider it as a significant test. Since Chi-square test is influenced by the highest frequency (high to 70 people), then, we concluded with 95% confidence that from the perspective of the sixth grade teachers of Andimeshk, the effect of in-service courses on improvement of their attitude is highly desirable. Third research question: from the perspective of the sixth grade teachers, how is the effectiveness of in-service courses on job skills?

Table 3. Chi-square test of goodness of fit and the observed and expected frequencies.

		sig	Degree of freedom	chi-square test	remaining	expected frequencies	observed frequencies
From the perspective of teachers	low	0.001	2	24/64**	-23.3	38.3	15
	medium				3.7	38.3	42
	high				19.7	38.3	58
	total						115

** Significant at the level 0.01, * Significant at the level 0.05

According to table of chi-square test of goodness of fit, Chi-square value is equal to 24/64 and degrees of freedom is equal to 2 and significant level 0.001 is lower than the level of error, 0.05.

We accept the difference between the observed and expected frequencies and consider it as significant test. Since Chi-square test is influenced by the highest frequency (high to 58 people). Then, we concluded with 95 % confidence that from the perspective of the sixth grade teachers of Andimeshk, the effect of in-service courses on improvement of their job skills is highly desirable.

4. CONCLUSIONS

According to other results of the first research question: from the perspective of the sixth grade teachers, the effectiveness of in-service courses in the promotion of professional knowledge showed that from the perspective of the sixth grade teachers in Andimeshk, the effect of in-service courses to improve their professional knowledge of compliance was high. The results of the study done by Andishmand (1998) and Farahman (2003) in non-educational organizations also, suggested that in-service training courses would increase technical and professional knowledge of trained specialists. Shabak (2013) in a research showed that those teachers who had passed in-service training had professional knowledge. As noted in the results, the inferential analysis of the perspective of Sixth grade school teachers of Andimeshk showed that the effect of in-service courses to improve their professional knowledge was very highly desirable. It means that training courses have a great impact on their professional knowledge. Before explaining the possible causes of this issue, it is necessary to mention that usually the effect of training in terms of changes in the trained individual are divided in three areas: knowledge, skills and attitude domains. Education experts, all agree that Changes in knowledge and changes in attitude are more difficult than the other two domains. Accordingly, it is expected that education have a positive effect on the knowledge and information of the participants in the courses. For the following reasons, in-service training course has had an impact on teachers' professional knowledge:

1. Increased awareness of teachers of education and its objectives;
2. Their increased knowledge about identifying student learning disorders;
3. Increased knowledge of teachers in the educational activity;
4. Increased awareness of teachers in relation to the identification of students with behavioral problems;
5. Increased awareness of teachers in relation to coping with learning disabilities.

As discussed above, from the perspective of teachers, the information provided in this course is to increase their professional knowledge. Hence, it seems that the course content and faculty have been effective in increasing awareness of teachers in their educational needs.

Also, the findings showed that according to the sixth grade teachers, in service training courses had a positive effect on their attitude. It can be concluded that from the perspective of the sixth grade teachers of Andimeshk, the effect of in-service courses was very desirable on improvement of their attitude. The results of the study done by Hatami (2010) on the evaluation of in-service training of human resources office showed that the training has a positive effect on improving the attitude of the staff. Rezai (2007) in the study on evaluation of in-service training courses in academic subjects showed that the training courses held promote attitudes of employees. Khalidi (12007) found in a study that those teachers who had passed in-service training course had more desirable attitude towards job consistent with the findings of this study. The analysis results of attitudes showed that from the perspective of the six grade teachers of Andimeshk, in-service courses had highly desirable effect on improvement of attitude. After in-service courses, teachers feel more responsible for their job

responsibilities in education. Participation in these courses will to have positive attitudes to their learning; and their motivation to continue learning in the future will be better; and teachers' effort to do their task will be improved. Also, their interest in following the behavioral problems students will increase. Participation in these courses will to have positive attitudes to their learning; and their interest in carrying out teaching duties will increase. In general, training courses has a significant impact on improving their attitude. Likely, the most important factor of in-service training influencing on teachers' attitudes is utility of the training and desirability of training implemented. Also, from the interpretation of the results obtained in this case, it seems that This training is highly effective.

Other results about the first research question, from the perspective of the sixth grade teachers shows the effectiveness of in-service training on job skills that from the perspective of the sixth grade teachers of Andimeshk, the effect of in-service courses on the enhancement of their job skills are highly desirable. The findings are consistent with the results of the study done by Mohammadi (2003), Hatami (2010), Shabak (2013), Norouzi (2003), Askari (2010). The results of the research conducted showed that participation in in-service courses was highly effective in increasing their job skills. The results showed that in-service training for teachers was effective in improving their job skills. Also, the training will extend knowledge and information relevant to the task of teachers and enhance their job skills. Participation in in-service training courses cause teachers to use modern methods of teaching in training and to better identify students' learning disorders. Courses passed make teachers be able to better identify students' behavioral problems and gain the ability to accept more responsibility in solving students' problems. It causes to increase their capabilities in providing guidelines for solving students' behavioral problems. By participating in these courses, functional skills and their ability to work will increase. In general, training courses passed had an impact on improving job skills. Therefore, to further promote these courses, it is recommended that the creation of in-service training courses should be based on the needs assessment and according to the update results of research carried out and to fit the programs with needs and should be planned according to conditions and facilities. In educational planning of teacher training and in service training, national needs and scientific advances should be considered. In this regard, in-service training should:

1. Be continuous,
2. help to increase teachers' job skills,
3. Provide the basis for knowledge.

If training is purposeful and followed up with a detailed plan, it can play its role very well. In the process of educational planning, reliable information and proper utilization of it is very important and can avoid many mistakes and bad decisions.

The main objective of the training is to gain technical skills, knowledge and information needed in order to increase the effectiveness and to promote job opportunities. Also, continuous assessment of in-service training increases the efficiency and effectiveness of teachers.

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