



The Role of NISHTHA in Enhancing Pedagogical Practices: An Empirical Investigation

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the impact of the Holistic Advancement (NISHTHA) program of the National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers on changing and improving pedagogical practices in the classroom. NISHTHA, a government-led initiative, aims to empower educators through comprehensive training modules, fostering a holistic approach to teaching. Through an empirical investigation, this study examines the impact of NISHTHA on teacher professional development, classroom methodologies, and overall pedagogical effectiveness. Using a mixed-methods approach, the research combines qualitative insights from classroom observations and interviews with quantitative analysis of participant surveys. Findings illuminate the program's influence on teacher attitudes, instructional strategies, and student engagement. The study contributes valuable insights for educational policymakers, administrators, and practitioners seeking evidence-based strategies to enhance teaching practices and ultimately improve the quality of education.

Keywords: Nistha, Teacher, Pedagogical, Professional development, etc.

Introduction:

On August 21, 2019, the Ministry of Education's Department of School Education and Literacy unveiled a National Mission aimed at enhancing elementary school learning outcomes through the implementation of the NISHTHA - National Initiative for School Heads' and Teachers' Holistic Advancement Integrated Teacher Training Program. This initiative was devised to bolster the skills of approximately 42 lakh elementary teachers, school administrators, faculty members of SCERTs and DIETs, block resource coordinators, and cluster resource coordinators. In response to the challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, NCERT introduced "NISHTHA-Online" on October 6, 2020, utilizing the DIKSHA platform for the online delivery of the remaining NISHTHA elementary level training. The program, with a focus on elevating teacher quality and enhancing student learning outcomes, has evolved to encompass Foundational Literacy and Numeracy at the secondary level in the academic year 2021–2022. The latest addition, NISHTHA 2.0 (Secondary Level), was launched on July 29, 2021, targeting around ten lakh

secondary school heads and teachers nationwide. Comprising 13 online courses with 12 generic modules and 56 subject-specific modules, NISHTHA 2.0 seeks to further elevate the standard of education at the secondary and senior secondary levels. Additionally, on September 7, 2021, NISHTHA 3.0-Foundational Literacy and Numeracy (FLN) was introduced online on the DIKSHA platform, catering specifically to pre-primary students, teachers, and school administrators. Anticipated to reach approximately 25 lakh individuals across all states and Union Territories, NISHTHA 3.0 - FLN aligns with the objectives of the NIPUN Bharat Mission and comprises a tailored package of 12 online modules.

Scope of NISHTHA Program:

About 42 million people are targeted by this project: teachers from the SCERT, all teachers and administrators in government elementary schools, teachers from DIET, professionals and officials from BRC and correspondingly from cluster resource centers throughout all States and Union Territories (UTs).

Implication of NISHTHA Program:

Approximately 33,120 individuals acknowledged as Key Resource Persons (KRP) and State Resource Persons (SRP) by the States and Union Territories will oversee the execution of the educational initiative. To deliver guidance to the SRPs and KRPs, around 120 National Resource Persons will be designated from entities such as the NCERT, KVS, NVS, NIEPA, non-Governmental organizations, UNICEF, and the CBSE.

The NISHTHA Program's objectives:

Through a key capacity-building training endeavour, the NISHTHA Program's core goals comprise motivating and enabling instructors to foster critical thinking abilities in pupils.

- Teachers will gain knowledge and proficiency in a number of areas, including
- The focus of 18 modules was activity-based instruction.
- merging of many departments' efforts.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) integration with education, learning, and evaluation.
- Training for teachers on how to use art as a teaching tool to foster students' originality and inventiveness.
- development of social and interpersonal skills and creation of a safe and healthy learning environment.
- a focus on safety and security measures in schools.
- delivery of health and well-being-focused inclusive education.
- display of leadership abilities in an educational context.
- providing teachers and school officials with information on cutting-edge educational approaches.
- The goal of the NISHTHA comprehensive teacher training program is to improve the proficiency of about 42 lakh elementary participants.

Heads of Schools, Principals, and Teachers. academics affiliated to State Councils of Educational Research and Training, or SCERTs. Teachers associated with the DIETs, or District Institutes of Education and Training coordinators from each state and territory for both block and cluster resources.

Covered Dimensions:

The NISHTHA training effort is a skill-development program that involves district, state, and school administrators, teachers, and school management. This program seeks to improve abilities in a number of areas, including:

- Security and safety in schools
- Individual social attributes
- Information and communication technologies used in the classroom Artificial intelligence used to improve student learning
- Competency-based education and assessment
- All-inclusive learning
- Well-being and health
- Leadership attributes in schools
- Youth club and environmental issues
- Assessment conducted in schools
- Learner-centered instruction
- Pre-vocational education Programs in the classroom, such as those offered by the library

"NIEPA and NCERT are responsible for developing the training materials and modules needed to achieve NISHTHA's objectives. However, in order to maintain the overall goals of NISHTHA, States and Union territories are free to alter certain parts of the training modules and assign their own training staff."

Nishtha Yojana 3.0:

Nishtha Yojana has been started by the Central Government, under which teachers will be trained by the government under the new education system so that they can provide quality education to the students so that their future is bright. The scheme has been launched by the Ministry of Human Resources. Let us tell you that Nishtha (3.0) has been started by the Ministry of Human Resources in 2023. Before this, two training programs can be conducted. Let us tell you that a 10-member team has been formed at the state level to operate Nishtha Scheme 3.0. It has also been formed through which teachers will be given training about the new education policy. Let us tell you that for this the government has launched the Nishtha portal through which you can get all the necessary information related to the Nishtha scheme.

Benefits and features of Nishtha Yojana:

- Nishtha Yojana has been launched by the Central Government to strengthen the education sector.
- Training will be provided to teachers through this scheme.
- This training will be provided free of cost by the Ministry of Human Resources.
- This training will be provided to teachers teaching children from class 1 to class 8.
- Union Minister of MHRD Ramesh Pokhriyal Nishank has introduced the Nishtha Yojana.
- The purpose behind starting this scheme is to update the teachers.
- So that they can provide better education to the children.

- To ensure that this plan is implemented successfully, a state level committee has also been formed which includes 10 members.
- Nishtha Yojana will be implemented through this committee.
- This scheme will also prove to be effective in developing the thinking ability of teachers.
- Capacity building of 4.2 million teachers will be done through this scheme.
- Activity based training module has been developed under this scheme.
- Many fortunate efforts will be made through this scheme.
- This scheme will be monitored and supported online.
- Implementation of NISHTHA scheme will improve the quantity of students.
- Apart from this, this scheme will create an enabling and prosperous inclusive classroom environment.
- As first-level counselors, all instructors will receive training to handle kids' social, emotional, and psychological needs.
- Through this scheme, teachers will also be trained to encourage the overall development of students.

Expected Outcomes:

The following is a summary of the expected results of the NISHTHA initiative:

- Teachers will switch from teaching through memory to teaching through competency-focused instruction along with activity-driven learning.
- It is anticipated that pupils' learning outcomes will improve.
- Teachers will become watchful and responsible for attending to students' social, emotional, and psychological needs in their capacity as advisors.
- It is anticipated that a refined and inclusive classroom environment would be created.
- It is intended to create a safe and healthy learning environment.
- Teachers receive coaching on how to support students' entire growth and strengthen their social-personal qualities.
- It is predicted that a stress-free, school-based examination will be developed with an emphasis on enhancing learning capacities.
- Students' inventiveness and originality are expected to increase when teachers use art as a teaching tool.
- Information and communication technology (ICT) integration with teaching and learning is anticipated.
- Teachers and school administrators will receive a briefing on innovative methods of teaching and learning.
- One goal is for school administrators to become knowledgeable, intellectual individuals who support new projects.

The Impact of Nishtha Programme of Inservice Teachers Training:

NISHTHA is a significant educational program in India designed to enhance the skills and competencies of in-service teachers. Launched under the centrally sponsored scheme of SSA, NISHTHA aims to improve the quality of school education by providing integrated teacher training. In this elaboration, we will explore the impact of the NISHTHA program on in-service teachers' training, focusing on various dimensions and outcomes.

1. Professional Development:

- NISHTHA seeks to enhance the professional development of in-service teachers by offering training in diverse pedagogies. The program aims to equip teachers with the skills necessary to address the evolving needs of students in the modern era.
- Through the training, teachers have the opportunity to move beyond traditional teaching methods and adopt innovative approaches, promoting a more dynamic and effective learning environment.

2. Improvement in Teaching Methodologies:

- In-service teachers participating in NISHTHA receive training modules that emphasize learner-centered approaches, school-based assessment, and the incorporation of new initiatives in education.
- The program encourages teachers to move away from rote learning and embrace competency-based teaching methods, fostering a more engaging and interactive classroom atmosphere.

3. Impact on Student Learning Outcomes:

- One of the primary objectives of NISHTHA is to improve students' learning outcomes. By providing support to teachers through various modes, including activity-based modules and continuous feedback mechanisms, the program aims to create a positive impact on student academic performance.
- Evaluating changes in student learning outcomes will be crucial in measuring the success of the program and its effectiveness in translating teacher training into improved educational results.

4. Motivation and Problem-Solving Approach:

- NISHTHA endeavors to motivate teachers to uplift problem-solving approaches, develop critical thinking in students, and handle diverse situations. This includes training teachers to act as first-level counselors for students, addressing not only academic but also social and emotional needs.
- The impact on teachers' motivation and their ability to guide students through problem-solving scenarios will contribute to creating a more supportive and nurturing educational environment.

5. Inclusive Education and Specialized Skills:

- The NISHTHA program addresses a number of topics, such as the use of ICT in the classroom, health and well-being, and inclusive education. Teachers who are in-service acquire specialized skills that allow them to meet the various needs of their pupils, including those who have special education needs.

- Assessing the integration of inclusive education practices and the application of specialized skills by teachers will shed light on the program's impact on creating inclusive and accessible learning environments.

6. Collaboration and Networking:

- The training program encourages collaboration and networking among teachers by bringing together participants at the state, district, block, and cluster levels. Peer learning and support networks can contribute to sustained professional growth and the exchange of best practices.
- Evaluating the extent to which teachers engage in collaborative activities and build professional networks can provide insights into the social impact of NISHTHA on the teaching community.

7. Utilization of Technology:

- NISHTHA emphasizes the integration of ICT and artificial intelligence in education. In-service teachers are trained to incorporate these technologies into their teaching methods.
- Assessing how effectively teachers incorporate technology into their classrooms and the impact on student engagement and learning outcomes will be crucial in understanding the program's technological influence.

8. Evaluation of Training Modules:

- While NISHTHA provides standardized training modules developed by NCERT and NIEPA, states and union territories have the flexibility to make some changes to suit their specific needs.
- Evaluating the adaptation and effectiveness of these training modules at the local level will provide insights into the program's ability to cater to diverse educational contexts.

9. Long-term Impact on Teachers' Roles:

- Beyond immediate outcomes, assessing the long-term impact of NISHTHA on the roles of in-service teachers is essential. This includes understanding how the program contributes to sustained professional development, leadership roles, and the overall advancement of the teaching profession.

The impact of the NISHTHA program on in-service teachers' training is multi-faceted, encompassing professional development, improved teaching methodologies, enhanced student learning outcomes, and the cultivation of motivation and problem-solving approaches. The program's influence on inclusive education, collaboration, technology integration, and long-term changes in teachers' roles are critical aspects that contribute to the holistic advancement of the education system. As NISHTHA continues to evolve, ongoing evaluation and research will be essential to gauge its effectiveness and address areas for improvement in shaping the future of education in India.

Conclusion

Teachers are an essential part of the educational system and a pillar of society, contributing significantly to the development of the country. As such, it is necessary to provide them with suitable instruction and improve their skills. The NISHTHA, or National Initiative for School Heads and Teachers Holistic Advancement, is a valuable tool for improving teacher proficiency.

With the help of this initiative, educators will be encouraged to hone their skills in a variety of areas, such as using artificial intelligence to improve student learning, embracing competency-based learning and assessments, incorporating ICT into the classroom, emphasizing school safety and security, implementing learner-centered pedagogical approaches, developing school leadership qualities, and implementing school-based assessments.

This program is primarily concerned with designing and developing training modules in order to guarantee a thorough improvement in the abilities of teachers. NIEPA, NCERT, CBSE, KVS, NVS, and non-governmental organizations are among the prestigious organizations whose opinions and collaborative discussions go into the careful creation of the NISHTHA training curriculum. Teachers' professional development is enhanced by these cooperative efforts. The program is strengthened, in a big way, by the use of technology and artificial intelligence, which makes it easier for the program to run smoothly and achieve its goals.

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