In the previous chapter, the statistical analysis of the collected data concerning the objectives of the study has been discussed. Here, the findings of the study with reference to the objectives chosen are outlined.

All the previous studies conducted on Academic Staff Colleges were not in the context of a particular institute. But this study is only in respect of Gauhati University Academic Staff College. Besides, though different methods were applied to different studies, the investigator observed that results of all the studies indicate a similar positive feedback from majority of the participants. This is a definite indication of the success of the programme.

The salient features of observations and findings are briefly discussed as under

1. The Gauhati University Academic Staff College established in 1988 commenced its academic activities with the same set of objectives laid down and the curriculum fixed by the University Grants Commission at the national level.

Since its inception till December 1998, the Academic Staff College conducted 30 Orientation Courses, 77 Refresher Courses and 2 other courses. A total of 3790 participants (1059 in Orientation Course and 2660 participants in Refresher Course) from different parts of the country have participated in these programmes. The highest number of Orientation Courses were held during 1995 and 1996-97, whereas the highest number of Refresher Courses were held during 1998-99.
2. On an all-India basis, nearly six thousand teachers were added every year to a base of 250 thousand teachers as of 1980-81 who required such training. This figure rose to more than 10000 per year between 1990-91 and 1998-99. In Assam the percentage of increase was found to be 3.33.

3. The Academic Staff College has tried its best to cover a good percentage of participants in both Orientation and Refresher Courses. In Orientation Course highest percentage of attendance was found from the discipline of Education (14.84%) in Arts stream and physics (10.6%) in Science stream. Lowest percentage of attendance (0.01%) was found from the discipline of Sanskrit, Manipuri, Bengali, Anthropology, Zoology and Homescience in both Arts and Science streams. Attendance from Commerce was found to be 5.3%.

In Refresher Course, highest percentage of attendance was found in Political Science (13.3%) in Arts stream and in Zoology (13.6%) in Science stream. Lowest attendance was recorded in Sanskrit (3.4%) and Anthropology (3.1%) in both Arts and Science streams.

The reason for such low attendance was twofold. Participants from some disciplines were less in number and the frequency of Refresher Courses held in such subjects were also comparatively less.

4. The Gauhati University Academic Staff College maintains a systematic record of all participants to monitor and evaluate on a regular basis for both Orientation and the Refresher Courses and to provide a feedback to the UGC, when required.

5. It was observed that highest number of attendance was within the age group of 30-35 years in Orientation Course and in Refresher Course it was within the age group of 35-40 years. Attendance was 52 in number in both the courses.
6. Attendance of male and female participants in both the Orientation and Refresher Courses did not follow any pattern and the differences in participation between two sexes being insignificant, it can be said that domestic inconvenience is not a deterrent for female participants.

7. In both the courses within the age group of 25-30 years majority of the participants were having experience of 1 to 10 years. The number of newly appointed teachers were found to be more than teachers who were on the verge of retirement.

8. In Orientation Course, the participants from Arts Faculty preceded over the Science Faculty whereas in Refresher Course the participants from Science Faculty preceded over the Arts Faculty.

As no course on Commerce was held since 1993, the number of attendants were also found to be least i.e. 6 in Orientation Course and 20 in Refresher Course.

9. In both the courses ratio of married to unmarried participants was found out. It was observed that marriage could not be a constraining factor for attending such courses.

10. The entire data concerning occupation of participants' parents and spouses did not reveal any difference between the two types of participants attending Orientation and Refresher Courses.

11. Highest percentage of teacher participants were found from colleges established under the Gauhati University followed by participants from colleges under Dibrugarh University, North East Hill University, Manipur, Mizoram and Tripura University.

12. Significant relationship was found between choices/preferences of the participants and the level of the programme with regard to organisation, admission procedure and standard of the course in cases
of Orientation Programme, Refresher Course and in the comparison between the two courses, Science and Commerce and Arts and Commerce. No relationship was, however, found between Arts and Science under the Refresher Course.

13. Resource Persons and Course Coordinators also offered positive responses on the level of the programme which is an indicative of the success of the programme.

14. Significant relationship was found between the choices/preferences of the participants and the quality of the programme (with regard to quality of the course, relevance of the course content, extent of communication, extent of expertise of the Resource Persons and instructional methods) in case of Orientation Programme, Refresher Course, in the comparison between the two courses and in the comparison between Science and Commerce and Arts and Commerce under the Refresher Course.

15. 60% of the Resource Persons and 100% of the Course Coordinators rated the quality of the programme as average.

16. With reference to teaching and reference materials it was found that participants' choices/preferences are not independent of sufficiency of course materials supplied during the course (with regard to teaching and reference materials, reading materials and library facilities) in respect of Orientation and Refresher Courses and in the comparison between the two courses and in the comparison between the three faculties namely Arts, Science and Commerce under the Refresher Course. 60% of the Resource Persons and Course Co-ordinators rated 'teaching and reference materials' as 'very good', while 40% of them gave an 'average' rating.
17. On availability of food and lodging facilities majority of the participants of both Orientation and Refresher Courses rated as below average. With regard to duration of the programme majority of the participants of the Orientation Course rated as too long whereas the Refresher Course majority of the participants gave a positive feedback.

18. 'Arrangement of Sessions' was given an 'average' rating by 40% of Resource Persons and 70% of Course Co-ordinators. In case of 'Adequacy of Space', 60% of Resource Persons and 70% of Course Coordinators responded positively.

19. Significant relationship was found between the options given by the participants and the effectiveness of the programme (with regard to extent of participation and utility of the programme) in case of Orientation Programme and Refresher Course, comparison between the two courses, comparison between the two streams except in the comparison between Arts and Science.

20. Resource Persons and Course Coordinators expressed satisfaction with regard to the effectiveness of the programme.

21. Significant relationship was found between the views of the participants and the impact of the programme with regard to motivation, inspiration, research, professional development, exaltation of service over personal gains and career development in all areas except in the case of comparison between Arts and Science under the Refresher Course.

22. There was mixed reaction from Course Co-ordinators with regard to the evaluation system. 50% of them rated it as 'above average', while 50% as 'average'.
23. 100% of both Resource Persons and Course Co-ordinators unequivocally rated the "involvement of the Director" in the design and conduct of the programmes as "above average".

24. More than 90% of the participants of both Orientation and Refresher Courses had chosen to say that the prime objective of higher education is "self development" out of five choices given to them.

25. Both Resource Persons and Course Coordinators had a consensus of opinion with regard to the objectives of higher education, such as:

(i) Intellectual, moral and aesthetic upliftment of the people and
(ii) Excellence in specialised areas

26. Participants of both Orientation and Refresher Courses have opined that notebook facilities and tuition facilities are the major constraints of higher education.

27. Both Resource Persons and Course Coordinators have categorically said that lack of adequate resources and infrastructure is a major constraint of higher education.

28. Participants, Resource Persons and Course Coordinators have opined that higher education should not be made compulsory and there should be vocationalisation of courses at higher secondary and college level so that these courses become job oriented.

29. Participants, Resource Persons as well as Course Coordinators have suggested that persons of repute should be invited from across the country. There should be no scope for Course Coordinators to favour anyone while selecting Resource Persons.
30. It has been suggested that course contents should meet teachers' requirements and students' expectations. Practice sessions should be introduced and interaction in the class should be encouraged instead of one way lecturing.

31. It has been suggested that while formulating the course a broad committee consisting of members of affiliated colleges in addition to Course Coordinators and P G faculty members should be constituted for ascertaining the real field requirements. Keeping in mind that the ultimate purpose of all intellectual endeavour is the extension of knowledge, the course should be formulated in such a way so that the society is enlightened finally.

32. Feedback of the participants of different courses show that some of the issues raised by them are repetitive in nature which indicate that those issues have not been taken care of by the Academic Staff College in the subsequent programmes.

SUGGESTIONS

The Academic Staff College established under the Gauhati University may be regarded as a prestigious institution which is adding value to the teaching community and also acting as a catalyst for the overall improvement of higher education.

A great emphasis has been laid on training of teachers of higher education through Orientation and Refresher Courses in order to enhance the teaching skills of teachers and to maintain the quality of higher education.

1. Orientation in higher education need to be restricted to fresh teachers only. The course can be made more meaningful by addition of practical classes instead of offering only theoretical knowledge.
2. The training should ensure active participation of the teacher participants.

3. The Academic Staff College should provide the teacher participants a model of the methodology they are expected to employ in their classroom.

4. Academic Staff College can create a climate in which even an indifferent participant feels motivated enough to learn. It calls for resourcefulness of a very high order, imagination and of course dedication on the part of everyone involved with the courses.

5. Project work should be assigned on the various current problems which they come across in their day to day academic life.

6. The institution needs to seriously think about the food and lodging arrangements of the participants on priority basis followed by other physical facilities.

7. In order to break the monotony which is always associated with long duration courses, the Gauhati University Academic Staff College should introduce ice breakers, brain storming and exercise sessions etc.

8. A continuous monitoring and evaluation of the programmes is necessary in order to make them more useful. For the development of knowledge and skills, it is suggestible to take advantage of the course developed by the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) in the field of higher education.

9. Course contents should meet teachers' requirements and students' expectation. Interaction in the class should be encouraged instead of one way lecturing.
10. From the feedback given by the participants the Academic Staff College should identify the areas of deficiency so that their issues are addressed and they do not recur in future.

11. Students evaluation should be taken on the teachers' performance with regard to and the methods applied by him/her before and after the training in order to find out how the trainee has responded to the training.

12. Regional centres should be established under the UGC in each region for academic and administrative control of the Academic Staff Colleges under it. Academic Staff Colleges would be supervised by the regional centres which would in turn be supervised by the UGC.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

It is felt that there is enough scope for carrying out studies and research work on different aspects of the Academic Staff College which are discussed below:

1. A comparative study of all the Academic Staff Colleges can be done with regard to the method of teaching, tools used in the training, physical facilities provided, effectiveness and impact of the training programme.

2. A study can be made on the courses offered by the Academic Staff College and their relevance in the present day context, whether contents of such courses need a relook for revision and so on.

3. An evaluative study on different Academic Staff Colleges in a region can be undertaken. Such study would help in comparing the performances of the different Staff Colleges on regional basis.
CONCLUSION

Higher education provides people with an opportunity to reflect on the social, economic, cultural, moral and spiritual issues facing humanity. Being at the apex of the educational pyramid, it plays an important role in creating the best in the world. The main task is to strengthen the base of the pyramid.

Professional advancement programmes like those conducted by Academic Staff Colleges are bound to have some effect on advancement of knowledge and skill of teachers and provide a platform for sharing ideas. The present study reveals that Gauhati University Academic Staff College is moving in the direction of achieving the objectives set forth by the Academic Staff Orientation Scheme. It has also been able to satisfy the expectations of the participants to a great extent with regard to level and quality of the programme. Much of the academic energy was being wasted in the past which is now being utilised for creative purposes. It is expected that there will be more tangible results from the relentless efforts of the Academic Staff College in the forthcoming years.

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