

## **Role of Academic Staff Colleges in Professional Development of Teachers**

**Dr. Seema Rani**

*M.Com, M.Ed, NET, PGDCA Asstt. Prof., Department of Commerce,  
Guru Nanak College, Killianwali Distt. Muktsar  
E-mail: seemajindal001@yahoo.co.in*

### **1. Introduction**

Education plays a vital role in making India bright and prosperous. Without a sound and goal oriented system of education, the dream of reconstructing nation's economic, social and political life cannot be realized in order to fulfill the ideals, the quality of education imparted to the children, has to be improved.

The quality of education depends upon the quality of teachers. If the teachers are excellent the nation will have excellent citizens, if the teachers are third rate god help the nation. Thus the role of the teachers is very important in making the nation. So one of the basic requirements is professional development and professional training of the teachers. Different commissions and policies also suggested different programmes for the professional development of teachers.

National Educational Commission (1964-66) recommended that the orientation course should be organized for the new staff in every University. Also, National Policy on Education in its Programme of Action (1986) proposed:-

1. To organize specially designed orientation programme for all new entrance lecturers.
2. To organize refresher courses for all the teachers at least once in five year.
3. To organize orientation programme for the teachers.
4. To encourage teachers to participate in workshop, seminars, conference and symposia etc.

Malhotra committee (1987) (Revision of pay scale of teachers in University) suggested for 3 to 4 weeks duration orientation programme for newly appointed teachers.

Rama Murthi Commission (1990) also recommended that there should be one year training after recruitment of the teachers for their professional development.

All the commissions and committees always felt need of professional development and training of the teachers of higher education. Also the definition of "Professional

Growth” as given in Dictionary of Education by Carter V. Good means increase in subject matter knowledge, teaching skills and efficiency and insight into educational problems with a concomitant increase in success as a teacher.

So it is necessary that there must be an inbuilt mechanism for effective teacher training so that a teacher must not be confined to merely transmitting information but should become trained professional. With the help of the training and education, teacher skills are developed in interpreting knowledge, in acquisition of reasoning skills, reasoned judgment and decisions.

To remove above mentioned lacunae or for good professional development the University Grants Commission came up with the scheme of establishing Academic Staff Colleges (ASC's) in 1986, the U.G.C. established 51 ASC's (U.G.C. report 2001-02) conducting 'Orientation' and 'Refresher Courses'. The refresher courses are disciplinary specific with an aim to update the subject knowledge and teaching skills as pre changing scenario whereas the orientation courses inter disciplinary aiming to enhance intellectual worth of a teacher. The orientation and refresher courses are planned with the following broad objectives.

## **2. Objectives of orientation courses: for newly recruitment teachers (less than five years experience) are:**

- General Awareness: To sensitize the participants to social, political and economic aspects of our life with reference to teaching profession.
- Skill Development:-To acquire and improve the skills of teaching at the college and University level; to understand the significance of education in general and higher education in particular in the global and Indian contexts.
- Professional Development: To make the teachers aware of the latest development in his/her specific subject.
- Personality Development: To utilize opportunities for the development of personality, initiative and creativity.
- To understand the organization and management of college/University and to improve the role of teacher in the total system and;
- To understand the linkages between education and the socio economic and cultural development with particular reference to Indian polity.

## **3. Objectives of the refresher courses**

- To provide opportunities for the teachers of same field to exchange their experience with their peers.
- To keep the participants fully aware about the latest developments taking place in their subject.
- To create the culture of mutual learning and self empowerment.

- To introduce and enlightening the participants on new methods and techniques of imparting knowledge and
- To provide opportunities to further widen the knowledge to pursue research studies.

To achieve these objectives different Academic staff colleges are performing a major role in all over India.

Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra was established in Oct, 1987 during plan VII. Since its inception, ASC, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra has been conducting orientation and refresher courses. Since it started working, Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra has conducted 70 orientation courses up to Jan, 2013. Total 2515 participants participated out of these participants-1412 were male and 1103 female participants. Main feature of these courses is that the maximum participants were local and these belong to Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra, Maharishi Dyanand University, Rohtak, Delhi University, Delhi and the remaining from other states.

**Table 1:** Number of courses and participants up to Jan, 2013 at Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

No. of Orientation Courses	Male Participants	Female Participants	Local Participants	Outside Participants	Total Participants
70	1412	1103	1762	753	2515
No. of Refresher Courses	Male Participants	Female Participants	Local Participants	Outside Participants	Total Participants
178	3168	2690	N.A.	N.A.	5858

*Source:* As supplied by ASC, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

Apart from above Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra has conducted 178 refresher courses so far. As shown in Table 1. total participants were 5858, out of these 3168 were male and rest were female participants.

#### 4. Refresher Courses in Business Studies

Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra had conducted 15 refresher courses in business studies within the time frame taken for the study i.e. 2001 to 2013.

Table 2. shows that Total no. of 352 male and 208 female teacher participated in these courses in business studies.

**Table 2:** Year Wise Total No. of Refresher Courses and Teacher Participants as Organized by UGC-Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra from 2001 to 2013.

Year	No. of Course	Total No. of Participants		Total
		Male	Female	
2000-01	02	71	26	97
2001-02	02	68	25	93
2002-03	01	34	10	44
2003-04	01	10	16	26
2004-05	01	28	25	53
2005-06	01	22	13	35
2006-07	01	15	13	28
2007-08	01	15	15	30
2008-09	01	20	12	32
2009-10	01	10	07	17
2010-11	01	13	21	34
2011-12	01	23	14	37
2012-13	01	23	11	34
TOTAL	15	352	208	560

*Source:* As supplied by ASC, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

The present paper is an effort to study the refresher courses conducted by ASC, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra in Business Studies from 2001 to 2013.

## 5. Objectives of the Study

- To analyze various aspects concerning refresher courses in Business Studies conducted by, Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Krukshetra.
- To measure the attitude on some concerns related to the refresher courses from the participants of refresher course in business studies held from 02.01.13 to 22.01.13
- To provide feedback to Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Krukshetra regarding refresher courses in business studies.

With the views to achieve the objectives of the study following methodology was adopted conducting orientation and refresher courses.

## 6. Methodology of the Study

1. Time frame of 13 years i.e. from 2000-01 to 2012-13 has been taken.

2. The compiled reports of refresher courses in business studies conducted by Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra from 2001 to 2012 have been taken as secondary source of data. As these reports are compiled at the completion of the course, the report concerning refresher course in business studies held in 2012-13 is not included. However, the different aspects regarding RC's have been included for this course also.
3. The primary data has been collected through a questionnaire from 34 participants of refresher course in business studies held from 02.01.13 to 22.01.13.
4. Different statistical tools and techniques have been applied for analyzing and evaluating both the primary and secondary data so that necessary conclusions can be drawn.

### 7. Sample of the Study

Refresher course in business studies conducted by Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra was selected as sample of the study. Total 34 participants were attending the ongoing refresher course in business studies from 02.01.2013 to 22.01.13. Out of these participants then 23 were male and 11 were female participants. Out of these participants 14 participants in particular were having experience of 6 to 11 years and 10 participants were having 11 to 14 years experience while 3 participants were such having experience of more than 14 years. Remaining 7 participants were having experience less than 6 years. Majority of these participants belong to colleges as data shows that only 8 participants were from University. One more characteristic of this is that majority of the participants i.e. 28 belong to Haryana and 3 participants belong to Punjab and the rest from other states i.e. each participant from Delhi, U.P., and Maharashtra state. Maximum participants were of Commerce background followed by Economics, Management and Tourism respectively (as shown in Table 3.).

**Table 3:** Some Aspects of Refresher Courses in Business Studies, Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra 02.01.13 to 22.01.13

Basis of Division	No. of Participants				
	Male Participants		Female Participants		
Sex	23		11		
Experience	0-6 yrs	6-11 yrs	11-14 yrs	14 yrs +	
	7	14	10	3	
Belonging to State	Haryana	Punjab	Delhi	UP	Maharashtra
	28	3	1	1	1
Subject	Commerce	Economics	Management	Tourism	
	21	7	4	2	

### **8. Refresher course in Business Studies (Analysis Part)**

Total 34 participants attending the ongoing refresher course in business studies from 02.01.13 to 22.01.13 were asked to express their opinion regarding various aspects through a questionnaire (Appendix-1). A total of 10 questions were asked covering the aspects of particular refresher course at Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra and some general aspects relating to refresher courses. All the participants responded the questions.

### **9. General aspects relating Orientation and Refresher Courses**

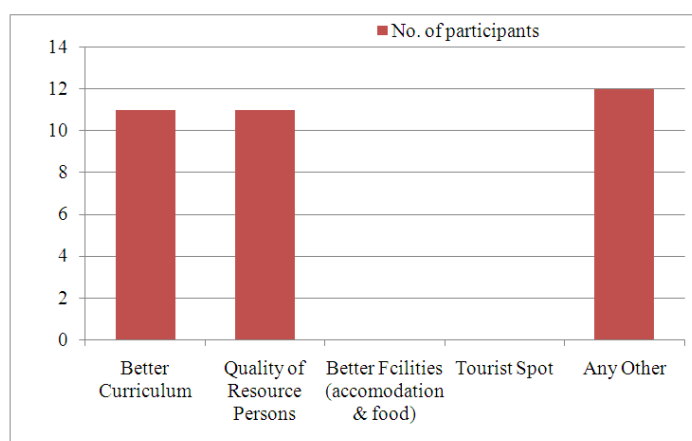
- The respondents were asked to express their views regarding the current system of orientation and refresher courses, whether these programs improve the intellectual quality of the participants. A total no. of 20 out of 34 (58.82%) felt that the current system of OC's/RC's have moderately made important in quality of participants. Twelve respondents (35.30%) responded that significant improvement is there whereas remaining 2 (5.88%) assumed that these have not affected the quality of participants.
- The participants were also asked that whether in their opinion there is need to view and change the current system of career advancement in which it is compulsory to attend orientation and refresher courses, 23 out of 34 respondents (67.65%) answered in affirmative whereas only 11 respondents (32.35%) didn't see any need to change the current system.
- The participants were also asked to suggest the changes in the system of organizing refresher courses, out of 34 refreshers 19 gave suggestions regarding duration of the courses whereas 7 participants gave suggestions regarding the structure of the course. Almost all the respondents suggested changes in the course content emphasizing on practical knowledge and inclusion of specialized and recent topics except one participant who has not suggested any change.

### **10. Specific aspects relating to Refresher Courses in Business Studies at Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra (02.01.13 to 22.01.13)**

All the participants were asked the reason for selecting Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra for the purpose of attending the refresher course. Table 4. lists the respondents along with opinions given to the respondents.

**Table 4:** Reason for selecting refresher course in Business Studies at Academic Staff College Kurukshetra (02.01.2013 to 22.01.2013)

Sr. No.	Reason for Selecting Refresher Course in Business Studies at Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra	No. of Participants
1	Better curriculum	11
2	Quality of resource persons	11
3	Better facilities (accommodation & food)	0
4	Tourist spot	0
5	Any other	12

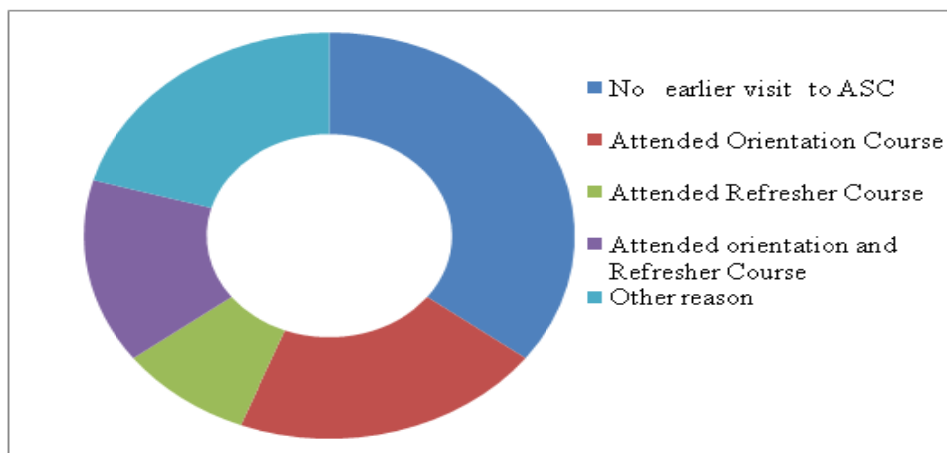


**Fig. 1:** Reason for selecting Refresher Course in Business Studies from 02.01.03 to 22.01.03 at ASC, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra

It is quite evident that Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra is selected for refresher course in business studies mainly because of effective curriculum, quality of resource persons and some other reason not for tourist spot and better facilities from the data shown in Table 4 and Fig. 1.

**Table 5:** Number of Participants who earlier visited Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra

Sr. No.	Earlier visit to Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra	No. of Participants
1	No earlier visit	12
2	Orientation Courses (Attended)	7
3	Refresher Courses (Attended)	3
4	Orientation and Refresher Courses (Attended)	5
5	Other Reason	7



**Fig. 2:** Number of Participants Earlier visited ASC, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.

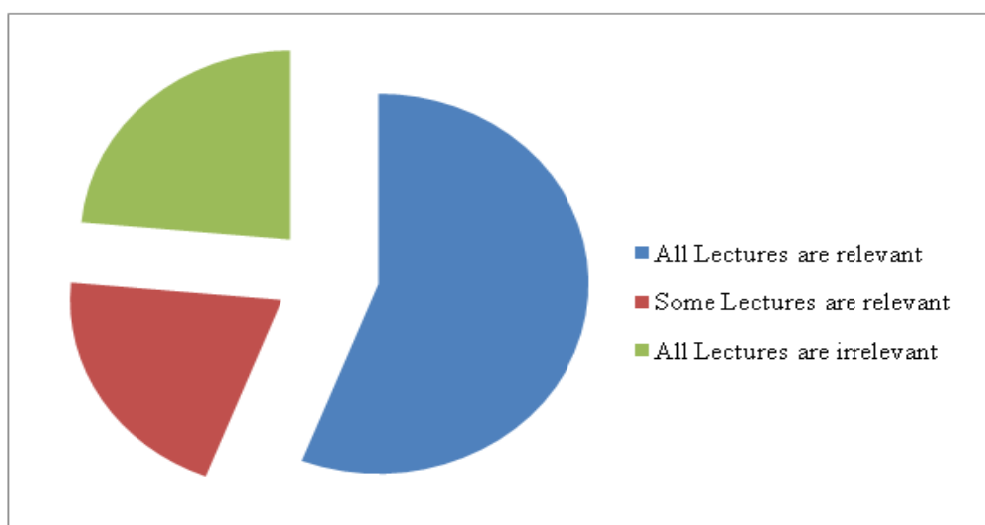
- It was revealed from the data shown in Table 5 and Fig. 2 that out of 34 respondents only 12 have come for the first time to attend the course at Academic Staff College Kurukshetra. 7 respondents had earlier attended orientation courses, 3 had participated in refresher course whereas 5 respondents had attended both orientations and refresher courses earlier at Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra. 7 respondents are such who visited Academic Staff College Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra for some other reason.
- The participants were also asked to give their opinion regarding the relevance of lecturers given in the ongoing refresher courses in business studies. The results are shown in Table 6.

**Table 6:** Relevance of Lecturer at Refresher Courses in Business Studies at Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra

Sr. No.	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	All lecturers are relevant	19	55.88
2	Some lecturers are relevant	7	20.59
3	All lecturers are irrelevant	8	23.53
	Total	34	100.00

- A vast majority of respondents i.e. 76.47% had reservations regarding the relevance of lectures delivered at ongoing refresher course in business studies. It appears that Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra has to look into the relevance of topics covered in the lectures as still there are 23.53 percent of respondents who consider lectures were irrelevant (as shown in Table 6 and Fig. 3).



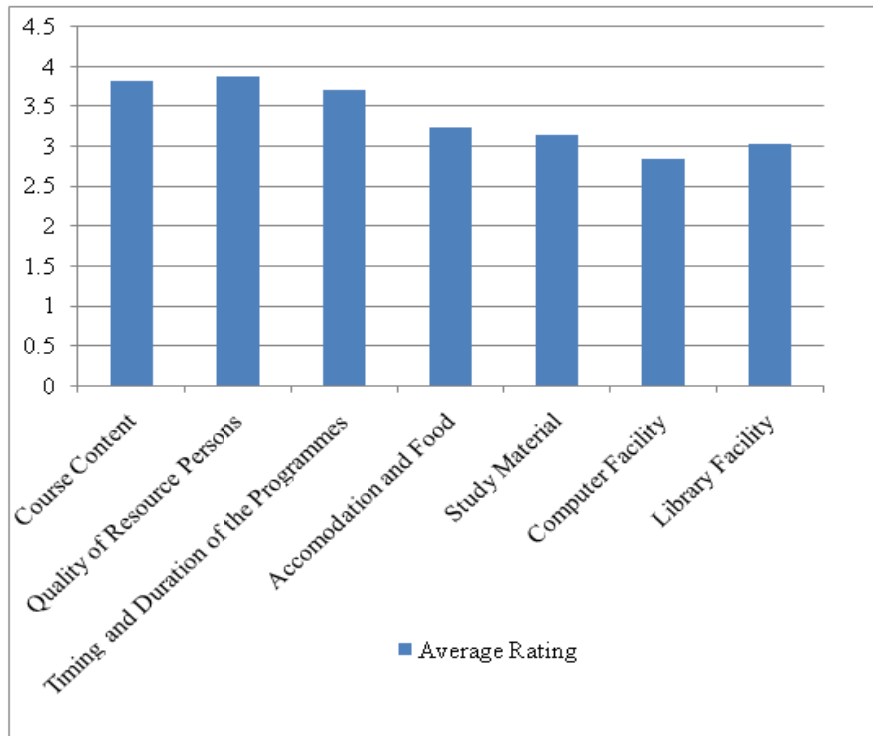


- The participants were also asked to rate different parameters for ongoing refresher course in business studies in the scale of 1 to 5 where 1 is for unsatisfactory, 2 for satisfactory, 3 for good, 4 for very good and 5 for excellent. The different parameters and average rating given by 34 respondents is shown in Table 7.

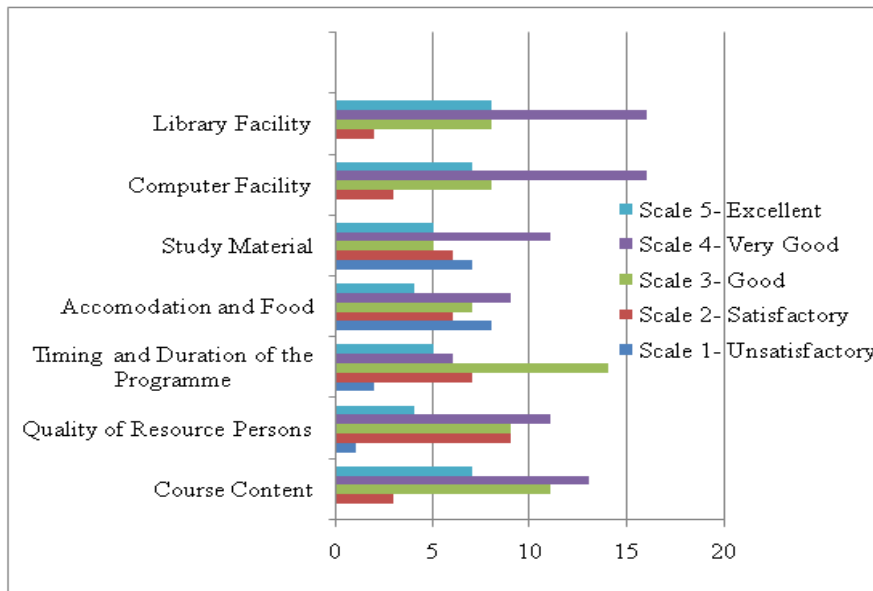
**Table 7:** Different Parameters and their Average Rating (Refresher Course in Business Studies at Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra from 02.01.13 to 22.01.13)

Sr. No.	Parameter	Average Rating
1	Course content	3.82
2	Quality of resource persons	3.88
3	Timing and duration of the programmes	3.71
4	Accommodation & food	3.24
5	Study material	3.15
6	Computer facility	2.85
7	Library facility	3.03

Although few respondents demanded more time slot at computer lab in order to complete their presentations and projects in time. Computer facility provided by Academic Staff College Kurukshetra has been given the score 2.85. There is scope for further improvement on facilities like computer lab and library as the score given were 2.85 and 3.03 respectively (as shown in Fig. 4). While study material, accommodation and food need little improvement as scores given to the parameters were 3.15 and 3.24 respectively. The no. of scores given by respondents to different parameters is also shown with the help of Fig. 5.



**Fig. 4:** Average Rating of Different Parameters of Refresher Course in Business Studies (02.01.03 to 22.01.03)



**Fig. 5:** Number of Participants as per scale of 1 to 5 as given by Participants to Different Parameters.

- The participants were also asked to give their opinion regarding the value addition in them after attending the ongoing refresher course (02.01.13 to 22.01.13). 9 respondents out of 34 (26.47%) responded that the course has made significant value addition whereas 25 (73.53%) were of the opinion that moderate value addition has been there. There was not any single participant pointed out that the course content has made no value addition. This shows that refresher course at Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra 02.01.13 to 22.01.13 was meeting the objectives to some extent.
- The participant's suggestion regarding the improvement in different aspects of refresher course in business studies conducted by Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra were asked. All the participants had given the following suggestions listed below:-
  - Cross discipline interaction.
  - Corporate/practitioners participation.
  - Representatives of regulators.
  - Representatives of change agents (social relating to business studies NGO of repute).
  - Proper use of library and computer lab.
  - Involve quality lecturers and reading material should be provided during the lectures. Courses should be organized in vacations period as some head of institutions refused to relieve the participants in working days.
  - A few field visits should be arranged like a visit to any business organization to know their innovative strategies and their implementations.
  - Topics of Resource Persons presentation should be decided in advance. So that repetition of topics should not take place.
  - Ice-breaking session should be introduced.
  - Schedule of all the lecturers should be given beforehand.
  - Maximum lecturers should be on research techniques, SPSS software, research software, research methodology etc.
  - Case study based learning with few new, fresh topics of present day world.
  - Time duration should be two week and there should be two sessions each of 2 hrs duration.
  - Accommodation and food should be fairly good.
  - More emphasis should be upon content and domain knowledge.
  - Participants should be involved in some more interactive activities.
  - Resource Persons should be from all the subjects of participants.
  - Mode of research through practical application of techniques with the help of data, individually.
  - Make the things in reality (means out of situation).
  - Presentations of participants should be organized in the observation of RP's and taken sincerely.

- PPT's of Resource Persons should be updated and focus must be on current topics.
- Refresher course should be more practically regarding writing of research paper.
- Micro teaching should not be the part of refresher course.
- Refresher courses should be conducted on any one subject to make it more useful.
- The participants were also asked to list their preferences regarding different topics which in their opinion should be included in refresher course in business studies. The following topics were preferred by the participants:
- New vistas, current developments and challenges in the various subjects of Refresher course.
- Research based skill enhancement.
- Practical workshop orientation through application of software.
- Exposure to latest trends and knowledge areas related to disciplines.
- Research methodology and analytical tests.
- Revised schedule VI for preparation of final accounts of companies.
- Share/stock market relating lecturers and SEBI laws.
- Cased study based lecturers.
- Information about research publication.
- Learning through business games.
- Preparing for Global Competitiveness.
- Job related lecturers (like tally, other latest accounting software).
- Topic which are important for present students.
- Knowledge about different avenues of job creation.
- Lectures on Current affairs.
- Latest topics in business like green marketing, strategic management, HRD, FDI, financial inclusion, IFRS, CR, TQM retailing, Entrepreneurship, inflation, etc.
- Teaching methods in new era.
- Recent advanced macro economics theories.
- Environment related lectures.
- More stress on cost management.
- Techniques of management & analysis.
- University-industries linkage.
- Research paper writing.

## 11. Findings

Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra has been doing wonderful services in teacher training and development. The refresher courses in

business studies conducted by Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra have been popular among the teachers of north west area. A total of 560 participants have so far attended the refresher course in business studies during the period of 2001 to 2013. On an average the no. of participants comes out to be 37 (approx.) in 15 courses conducted during the time span.

Analysis of the primary data collected from the participants of refresher course in business studies held from 02.01.13 to 22.01.13 reveals that the following observations comes into picture.

- The respondents in majority felt that present system of conducting OC's/RC's by the UGC has made only moderate improvement in the quality of participants. But under the present system of career advancement scheme, OC's/RC's are compulsory to be attended.
- The majority of respondents had selected Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra for attending the refresher because of better curriculum and quality of resource person. The response regarding better curriculum and quality of resource person is also proved as these participants had earlier attended orientation and refresher courses at Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.
- A majority of participants were of the view that all lecturers delivered at refresher course in business studies were relevant.
- Course content and quality of resource persons was satisfactory but the computer facility and library facility were not upto the expectations of the participants. Also more current subject related to topics need to be included in the course curriculum.

It can be concluded that Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra is a favourite destination for the refresher course in business studies. The system of involving participants in administration and effective running of course is an innovation. This system of management through students not only keeps the participants busy but also brings them closer to their colleagues. With the some improvements in the quality of resource persons this institute can really make a commendable change in the overall professional development of the teachers.

## **12. Suggestions**

Academic Staff Colleges are doing their best but they are not covering all the aspects of a teacher's role or professional development. After considering the suggestions and views of the participants following are few suggestions for the improvement of programmes conducted by Academic Staff Colleges.

- Teachers must be able to know the objectives of their subject.
- They must be able to select learning material according to their objectives.
- They must be aware about different methods of teaching.
- They must be practiced at least few very important teaching skills during "orientation" or "refresher" courses.

- They must be able to create healthy environment of teaching in which students work with rather than depend upon teachers.
- They must be expert in research methodology.
- They must be able to select the useful research problem.

Apart from above mentioned suggestions, lifelong learning needs to be a goal for each professional teacher for his professional development.

### **13. Conclusion**

So, the various Academic Staff Colleges should consider the problems of the practicing teachers and experienced resource persons in the conduct of training to the teachers in order to create a better organizational climate where teachers on the training can develop their proficiency in classroom transaction.

To make OC's and RC's more relevant it is profoundly felt that our teacher education system has go a long way to quench the thrust of our teachers in all their professional quest and to instill in them a sustained motivation for improvement.

It is time that a comprehensive review is to be done of all such training programmes, which are conducted most of the time in an adhoc manner just to complete the formalities required in a particular scheme. In order to make an impact on the system it would be necessary to take a holistic view of systemic needs of which training will form an important part. The teacher has to be freed from many inadequacies. Both in administrative as well as financial set up so that he or she can freely try innovations and bring in changes as a follow up of the training programme. Enrichment and nourishment of every sub system must be taken up simultaneously by timely interventions even by relaxing the relevant rules, if need be.

Relevance of any programme largely depends upon its contribution towards contemporary society. In case of a 'subject of a study', recognition for the subject is strongly tied with its base discipline. Therefore need of the day is to make the existing teacher education programmes more need-based and demand driven to enable it to hold command in catering the changing needs of the contemporary society of the nation, failing which not only the programmes will lose their relevance, but also become ornamental. Simultaneously it is essential to strengthen the base discipline education with a view to gain feedback from the enrichment of teacher education programmes in course of time.

### **References**

- [1] Vachrajain, Bhardarya. Some Innovations for Professional Development, University News 43 (18), May 02-08, 2005.
- [2] Doss, M. In-Service Teacher Education: A Road to Professional Competence, University News 43 (18), May 02-08, 2005.

- [3] Chalam, K.S. Performance of Academic Staff Colleges in India. Publication: Andhra University Press and Publications, Visakhapatnam.
- [4] Parvez, M. Professional Development of Teachers In Higher Education, University News 47 (32), August 10-16, 2009, pp(15-18).
- [5] Gupta. M. Sen. Teacher Training-Any Impact?, University News 45(10), March 05-11, 2007. p16, p26.
- [6] Govt. of India-Indian Education Commission (1964-66), Ministry of Education, New Delhi.
- [7] Govt. of India: National Policy on Education-1986, Ministry of Indian Human Resources Development, New Delhi, May, 1986.
- [8] Dhawan. Rau (2000), Impact of Academic Staff Colleges Programmes on Teacher And Student, University News 38 (16), pp(14-55).
- [9] Murti. Rama, Towards an Enlightened Human Society: NPE, 1986 -A Review Dept of Education, Government of India, New Delhi, Dec.1990.
- [10] Data Supplied By Academic Staff College, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra.
- [11] Roy, R. (2005), Rethinking Teacher Education: Need of The Day, University News 43 (51), pp(12-16).

