

Professional Development in Higher Education: Experiences from Royal Thimphu College

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Abstract

This study explored the satisfaction and effectiveness of professional development (PD) programmes offered by the Centre for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) for tutors at Royal Thimphu College (RTC) and to identify areas for improvement. A mixed research methodology was employed, incorporating a self-assessment survey, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions among tutors. Data collected were categorised into participation and satisfaction, training impact, and future needs. Secondary data such as student consultative meeting minutes and feedback from 2022 PDs were also utilised. In 2022, 16 trainings, 4 seminars, 2 experience-sharing sessions, and 1 cycle of peer observation partnership on teaching and learning were provided. Seventy-three out of 96 tutors participated in two or more CITL programmes. Overall, a mean score of 3.34 was reported on a 4-point Likert scale for satisfaction. The most useful PDs encompassed classroom management, constructive alignment, Bloom's Taxonomy and Blueprint, lesson planning, and giving and receiving feedback. The impact of these training programmes varied, depending on the tutor's education level and experience. Tutors with master's degrees and less than five years of teaching experience reported higher levels of impact. Future needs included training on teaching practical modules, effective technology use, giving and receiving feedback, and data analysis skills. Emergent themes included tutors struggling to find time for CITL programmes and desiring work-life balance. Recommendations are suggested to address these needs, advocating for iterative PDs, additional support for new tutors, and further studies on work-life balance among academicians.

Keywords: Professional development, higher education, teacher satisfaction

Introduction

Over the past two decades, there has been an increased emphasis on the necessity for pedagogy training for teachers in higher education (Tersa, 2014; Wood et al., 2011). However, professors often prioritise becoming discipline experts or scholars with limited knowledge of pedagogy (Mundy et al., 2012). However, effective teaching requires both subject expertise and instructional knowledge (Hashweh, 2013; Kerber, 2006; Zepke, 2013). The literature on professional development for tutors in higher education also indicates that many tutors lack interest in teaching, focusing instead on research (Pesce, 2015; Wood et al., 2011). To improve teaching and learning within institutions, professional development is identified as a key element (Ebert-May et al., 2011; Ingvarson et al., 2005; Mundy et al., 2012; Tersa, 2014; Wood et al., 2011).

Professional development programmes are designed to engage participants in instructional practices. These programmes may be brief or intensive, covering topics such as assessment, sociocultural context, and pedagogy (Ebert-May et al., 2011). With the growing trend of on-site training centres that assist and encourage tutors in higher education in pedagogy training, professional development in pedagogy is becoming an important aspect of higher education institutions (Mundy et al., 2012; Tersa, 2014; Wood et al., 2011). However, there is limited research on the effectiveness and usefulness of professional development training for tutors.

The Royal University of Bhutan established its Centre for University Learning and Teaching (CULT) in 2008. Likewise, the Royal Academy has an on-site Teacher Development Centre. Likewise, the Royal Thimphu College (RTC), with its vision of inspiring education and contributing to educational excellence in Bhutan, initiated the Centre for Innovative Teaching and Learning (CITL) in July 2021. The Centre promotes a contemporary approach to quality teaching and learning through evidence-based research, reflection to improve current teaching-learning patterns, and collaboration between teaching and non-teaching staff to support professional development, with a focus on student-centred learning. The Centre provides on-site workshops and training programmes for RTC tutors to learn and revise teaching concepts and methodologies. From 2021 to 2022, CITL conducted 31 PDs for 96 tutors (444 repeated participations).

Teachers are central to educational development; thus, professional development is necessary for their continuous growth in knowledge and skills, as student learning outcomes are directly linked to teaching quality (Al-Qahtani, 2015; Avalos, 2011; Gibbs & Coffey, 2004). Professional development is essential for enhancing teacher quality. A study in undergraduate education found that participation in professional development workshops helped tutors create student-centric learning environments (Ebert-May et al., 2011). Most literature on PD suggests that training programmes for tutors should be based on specific needs, emphasising both discipline and student learning needs. Tigerwell et al. (1994) argue that “one size fits all” professional development programmes are not effective or impactful. Professional development training for teachers in higher education is often complex, requiring conceptual models that evolve over time (Avalos, 2011; Gibbs & Coffey, 2004; Ebert-May et al., 2011; Tigerwell et al., 1994). Educators may not always find professional development strongly related to classroom practice, as they are not always involved in selecting and preparing those activities (Colbert et al., 2008). Short-term professional development approaches have been criticised as uneconomical and inefficient (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Knight & Skrtic, 2020), often yielding no significant evidence of learning outcomes or instruction improvement (Knight & Skrtic, 2020). The alignment of effective professional development with appropriate content and suitable participants is also crucial (Cohen-Vogel et al., 2015; Knight & Skrtic, 2020).

To create context-based PDs, a needs assessment is recommended (Knight & Skrtic, 2020). In line with CITL's mandate to provide an evidence-based teaching-learning environment at RTC, two needs assessments have been conducted to inform PD development. The 2021 needs assessment examined teaching and learning-related challenges, needs, and opportunities within the framework of Pedagogical Content Knowledge. The 2022 PDs were informed by the 2021 needs assessment. Recognising the importance of context-based alignment of PDs, the second needs assessment aimed to assess the satisfaction and effectiveness of the professional development programmes offered by CITL and to identify areas for improvement in the future.

Research Questions

This study aimed at addressing the following research questions:

1. What were the tutors' satisfaction and participation levels in CITL programmes?
2. How useful were these programmes (impact)?
3. What could be done for future improvement?

Research Methodology

A sequential explanatory design was employed, involving a self-reported online survey, followed by the conduct of focus group discussions, in-depth interviews, and document reviews. The mixed-methods approach benefits the research design in numerous ways, particularly by combining the advantages of both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative design is valuable for theory-building (Patton, 2006) due to the critical and interpretive nature of qualitative data. It can also uncover salient and anomalous experiences. However, it may also be used to corroborate, contrast, and explain the findings of quantitative design (Creswell et al., 2006).

Quantitative Data

Primary data were collected using a self-reported 20-item survey divided into five sections namely i). Demographic information; ii). Participation in any 2022 PD programmes; iii). Satisfaction with the programme; iv). The impact of the CITL programmes; and v). Future needs. To gather opinions on the subject areas in which tutors require more training, a number of possible training areas were suggested in the future needs section, but space was also provided for adding additional topics. The questionnaire was adopted from the 'Professional Development Survey for Educators and School Leaders' survey of the Pennsylvania Department of Education, OECD Teaching and Learning International Survey 2018 (Jensen, 2010), and the Professional Development Needs Assessment survey (Hanover Research, 2020). The questionnaire was first piloted among five selected tutor members, then deployed online via Google Forms to all 96 tutors, of whom 56 returned the survey. The survey was collected from 29 November to 27 December 2022.

Qualitative Data

Qualitative data were collected after examining the preliminary survey responses in the second week of the survey. Two focus group discussions with new tutors were conducted, comprising four and five participants respectively. Individual in-depth interviews were conducted with two academic management members and 11 tutors between 28 November and 8 December 2022. The focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were expected to provide greater detail regarding the PD programmes - specifically, how they helped enhance ongoing teaching practice, what did not work, and expectations not captured in the survey section. Qualitative data were used to strengthen the rigour and credibility of the interpretation of all the data.

Additionally, secondary data in the form of the Student Consultative Meeting minutes from the Fall 2022 semester at the academic department were reviewed to help understand teaching-learning needs from the student's perspective. Furthermore, feedback collected at the end of each CITL professional development programme was also used.

Data Summary

Table 1

Summary of the Primary and Secondary Data Collected

Data type	Methods	Description	Female	Male	Total
Primary	Survey	20 questions covering 3 main categories of Professional Development - Satisfaction & participation, Impact, and Needs.	25	31	56

	Interview	In-depth interview with academic management and teachers. Each interview was 30 - 60 min.	8	9	17
	Focus Group Discussion	Two discussions, each discussion was between 1 -1.5 hours.	5	7	12
Total Primary			38	47	85
Secondary	Post PD feedback	All feedback forms have 4 - 6 Likert scale questions and 2 open-ended questions at the end.	Anonymous		234
	Minutes of student consultative meeting of fall 2022	A 32-page MoM from the student consultative meetings for all programmes conducted by Academic Affairs.	44	36	80
Total secondary			314		

The total sample size of the study was 399, inclusive of faculty members and students (2020, 2021, and 2022 cohorts) of Royal Thimphu College collected at the end of the Fall 2022 semester. Primary data consisted of 38 female and 47 male participants, while in the secondary data, 44 are female and 36 male, with the remaining 234 participants being anonymous.

Data Analysis

Quantitative analysis was performed using IBM SPSS Statistics 25 to check for associations, simple descriptive statistics, and Chi-square ($P < 0.05$) tests. For qualitative analysis, the recordings from the focus group discussions and in-depth interviews were transcribed using the qualitative data analysis software NVivo version 20 and cross-checked afterward by CITL staff. Thematic coding and analysis were performed for qualitative data to supplement quantitative data.

Results

Predominantly, the tutors at RTC hold a Master's degree with 0-5 years of teaching experience. Only 4 (7.1%) out of 56 tutors have more than 15 years of teaching experience, while 29 (51.78%) out of 56 tutors have 0 to 5 years, and 14 (25%) have 6-11 years of teaching experience as reflected in Table 2.

Table 2

Respondents' Education and Teaching Experience

Qualification	Years of Teaching experience in Higher Education				Total
	0-5	6-10	11-15	15+	
Bachelor's Degree	3	0	0	0	3
Master's Degree	22	11	6	2	41
Currently Pursuing Master's Degree	0	1	0	0	1
Currently Pursuing PhD	3	1	1	0	5
Postdoctoral	1	2	1	2	6
Total	29	14	8	4	56

Participation and Satisfaction

Participation

The quantitative survey consisting of 20 questionnaires was administered to all 94 tutors present at RTC at the end of the Fall 2022 semester. 56 tutors out of 94 returned the survey, with an overall response rate of 59.57%, with the highest rate of 67.64% from the Business Programme and the lowest rate of 23.07% from the Nursing Programme. 44.6% of the survey respondents were female and 55.3% were male. Out of the 56 survey participants, 16 respondents (28.6%) have not undergone a single programme in 2022. The remaining 71.4% (20 female and 20 male) have participated in at least one programme. No significant association was found in the participation in the programme according to age, gender, faculty, number of teaching experiences, or teaching experience in higher education institutions.

According to the 2022 CITL programme records, there were 113 tutors at RTC, including those who joined or left during the year. A total of 444 participants were counted, where participants could be counted more than once. 23 tutors participated in only one programme, compared to 4 tutors who participated in more than 10 programmes, which is the highest number attended. The other 69 tutors have attended at least two or more programmes in 2022. CITL awards 1 point for a one-hour session, and a tutor at RTC is required to collect a minimum of 3 credits at the end of each semester and at least 6 points within a year. Accordingly, in 2022, 36 tutors obtained at least a minimum of 3 credits, followed by 4 tutors who gained 7-9 credits and 40 tutors who acquired more than 10 credit points, while 17 tutors did not attend any CITL PD programmes.

Satisfaction

Overall, the respondents were satisfied with CITL programmes. With the mean response on a four-point Likert scale, an average of 3.358 and 0.73 standard deviations was reported. There was no significant relationship between satisfaction and the years of teaching experience, gender, or the department they taught in. This indicates that the tutors were satisfied with the CITL programmes they attended.

Table 3

Analysis of the Participation Satisfaction in CITL Programmes

	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
The CITL programmes were well organised.	3.45	0.73
The CITL programme objectives were clearly stated.	3.45	0.68
All necessary materials/equipment, and resources were provided or made readily available.	3.5	0.71
The contents of the CITL programmes were relevant to my current teaching-learning needs.	3.21	0.82
Overall instructor performance.	3.18	0.71
Total	3.358	
0.73		

Note: 4 = Excellent; 3 = Good; 2 = Average, 1 = Poor

From the qualitative data, the following themes were found, especially when discussing or asking questions about tutors' participation in CITL programmes.

Work-Life Balance

Data suggested that for both experienced and new tutors, workload can be overwhelming during the semester, hence making time to attend CITL programmes would mean either working later to meet the deadlines or sacrificing their personal time. Many respondents suggested that there was just not enough time during the semester to attend CITL programmes and also ensure they were on top of their core responsibility of teaching. For example, one participant stated: *“If you have fewer modules that you are taking for the current semester, it's easier to balance. But then when you have more modules, it is very difficult to manage the time, even if you want to attend that seminar at times, it doesn't align with your time.”*

Impact and Useful Professional Development Programmes

To examine the impact of CITL programmes on tutors' daily practice, respondents were asked to rate, on a four-point Likert scale, how the capacity building helped them gain knowledge and influence their practice. Table 4 shows that 45.5% of participants reported a moderate impact on their professional practice after attending CITL programmes, followed by 36.75% of participants reporting a significant impact on their professional practice in at least one area. Only 0.5% of participants reported no impact on their professional practice. The largest impact, experienced by 45% of participants, was in the area of better planning for teachers.

Table 4

Frequency Table of the Impact of CITL Programmes on the Professional Practice

Item	A large impact	A moderate impact	A small impact	No impact
The CITL programme content was relevant to my current teaching-learning needs.	16 (40.0)	19 (47.5)	5 (12.5)	0
The CITL programmes I have attended have helped me plan my teaching better.	18 (45.0)	16 (40.0)	6 (15.0)	0
The CITL programmes enhanced my content knowledge on teaching pedagogy.	16 (40.0)	17 (42.5)	7 (17.5)	0
The CITL programmes increased my teaching skills based on research on effective practice.	16 (40.0)	15 (37.5)	9 (22.5)	0
The CITL programmes provided information on a variety of assessment skills.	11 (27.5)	20 (50.0)	9 (22.5)	0
The CITL programmes provided skills needed to analyze and use data in decision-making for instruction design for my class.	11 (27.5)	21 (52.5)	8 (20.0)	0
The CITL programmes I have attended have helped me better help my students in the classroom.	14 (35.0)	21 (52.5)	4 (10.0)	1 (2.5)
The CITL programmes provided me with the knowledge and skills to think strategically and understand student needs for meaningful learning.	12 (30.0)	21 (51.5)	7 (17.5)	0
The CITL programmes enhanced my professional growth and deepened my reflection and self-assessment of exemplary practices in teaching-learning.	16 (40.0)	17 (42.5)	7 (17.5)	0
The CITL programmes have helped me prepare for advancement in my current career	17 (42.5)	15 (37.5)	7 (17.5)	1 (2.5)
Overall	14.7 (36.75)	18.2 (45.5)	6.9 (17.25)	0.2 (0.5)

When the association between the impact and the education level of respondents who participated in CITL 2022 programmes was analysed, 52.5% of those with a Master's degree reported a moderate impact, and 35% noticed a significant impact in helping them better

support their students ($p = 0.03$). Another association was the years of teaching experience: 25% of participants with 0-5 years of teaching experience found that CITL programmes helped them prepare for advancement in their current career ($p = 0.01$).

However, no statistically significant relationship was found between the impact of CITL programmes on professional practice and age, gender, the department they taught in, or the number of teaching experiences in higher education.

In the category of the impact of training, one theme was identified from the qualitative data.

Too Early for an Impact Assessment

Qualitative data revealed mixed findings on the impact of CITL programmes, particularly for participants who attended the 2022 programmes. It was suggested that assessing impact immediately might not be possible and that changes in teaching-learning practice depend on individual participants' attitude to self-improvement. Recommendations for an iterative process, particularly for training/workshops, were made to better foster change and enhance the impact in future programme designs. Nevertheless, learning and direct impact were reported among new tutors, as corroborated by the quantitative data.

Most Useful CITL Programmes

The most useful programmes offered by CITL reported in the qualitative data were:

1. **Working with PL, Mentor, and Student feedback:** This training was identified as the most useful for all tutors. Feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with one respondent stating that the training helped them understand different perspectives on feedback and become less critical of themselves: *"In the beginning, feedback was supposed to be like, whatever I mean, I mean, what I'm trying to say is that feedback, I took it very negatively. I was being very critical of myself. The way he had explained it made me some more..... It has helped me personally to understand the other positions from where that feedback is coming."*
2. **Classroom management:** Classroom management was a common need and the most useful training for new tutors. One respondent noted that the training helped them understand they were not alone in facing classroom management challenges and provided useful strategies to implement in their own classes: *"the training on classroom management helped me to understand that it's not just me. It's even the other lectures that are facing the same issue and then like it really helps me to understand what the others are doing and I could implement it in my class."*
3. **Constructive alignment:** Originally designed for new tutors, this workshop was attended by tutors with 0-15 and more years of experience. One respondent mentioned that the training helped them ensure their learning outcomes and assignments were interconnected: *"Constructive Alignment helps me to engage further with the whether my learning outcomes and the assignments which are in place, I mean, whether they connect with each other or not."*
4. **Bloom's Taxonomy and Blueprints:** Offered annually to new tutors, this workshop was also rated as one of the most useful by CITL. One respondent highlighted how the training helped them understand how to align activities with objectives and choose appropriate language for framing objectives: *"Bloom's Taxonomy and Blueprint actually helped me to understand like where, how to put my like objectives and how I*

can you know align my activities with the objectives and also the words that we use while framing the objectives, all those words and I didn't know about that”.

5. **Lesson Planning:** Conducted for beginner tutors, this workshop was also identified as a useful training among respondents. One respondent emphasised the importance of the workshop in discussing planning and alignment with learning outcomes: *“It was very important because it not only talks about the planning but also like meeting how it's aligned with our learning outcomes”.*

Needs

Quantitative results show that 60.17% of respondents indicated high and moderate levels of need for the programmes listed, while the remaining 24.46% felt there was a low level of need and 15.35% felt there was no need at all for at least one of the programmes listed, with an overall mean of 2.65 and a standard deviation of 0.95.

Interestingly, 26.8% of respondents indicated a moderate level of need for 'Classroom Management' from the needs list, while another 26.8% indicated no need at all. Overall, 48.24% of respondents indicated a moderate to high level of need, as opposed to 51.8% of respondents who indicated low to no need at all. Hence, there is almost an equal number of tutors who feel the need and those who do not feel the need for capacity building in 'Classroom Management'.

However, a significant relationship between classroom management and years of experience was found ($p = 0.02$). Among respondents with 0-5 years of teaching experience, 35.71% (out of 51.78%) reflected moderate to high levels of need for professional development in classroom management. Only 5.3% (out of 15.14%) of respondents with more than 10 years of experience indicated moderate to high levels of need. This implies that tutors with little to no teaching experience felt a greater need to build their capacity in classroom management compared to tutors with more than 10 years of experience.

Another significant association was found between professional development needs and teaching experience in higher education institutions (Table 6). Of respondents with 0-5 years of teaching experience, 30.35% expressed moderate levels of need in the area of content and performance standards in their main subject ($p = 0.01$), while only 3.57% of respondents with more than 15 years of teaching experience expressed a need in this area. Additionally, 37.5% of respondents with 0-5 years of teaching experience indicated a need in the area of 'Student discipline and Behaviour problems' ($p = 0.03$ and mean = 2.53). Subsequently, 67.85% of respondents with varying experience levels, from 0 to more than 15 years, demonstrated moderate to high levels of professional development need in 'Teaching in a multicultural setting' (mean = 2.63, $p = 0.04$).

No statistically significant relationship was observed between professional development needs and programme/department, indicating no unique differences among the various departments in terms of areas of professional development need.

Table 5

List of Training Topic Needs

	Mean	Std. Deviation
Teaching students with special learning needs	3.11	0.867
Student assessment practices	2.73	0.904
ICT skills for teaching	2.68	0.993
Student counseling	2.66	0.9

Programme management and administration	2.63	0.926
Teaching in a multicultural setting	2.63	0.885
Knowledge and understanding of instructional practices (knowledge mediation) in my main subject field(s)	2.61	0.985
Student discipline and behavior problems	2.52	1.009
Content and performance standards in my main subject field(s)	2.52	1.009
Classroom management	2.43	1.11
Overall image	2.65	0.95

Note: High level of need = 4; Moderate level of need = 3; Low level of need = 2; No need at all = 1

Table 6

Associations between Professional Development Need and Teaching Experience in HEI

PD Need	p value[#]
Content and performance standards in my main subject field(s)	0.01*
Classroom Management	0.02*
Student discipline and behavior problems	0.03*
Teaching in a multicultural setting	0.04*
The associations were tested using the chi-square test	
* $p < 0.05$	

Table 7

Average Duration Tutors would like to be Engaged in Professional Learning each Semester:

Duration	N = 56	Percent
None	3	5.4
1-3 hours	26	46.4
4-10 hours	25	44.6
More than 10 hours	2	3.6

Furthermore, 91% of respondents expressed a desire to engage in an average of 1-10 hours of professional learning each semester, while 5.4% of respondents did not wish to engage in professional learning at all with CITL.

In the category of future needs for teaching and learning, eight topics were identified from the data as listed below.

Common Training Needs

From the data, common training needs suggested by respondents included:

1. Teaching in a multicultural setting
2. Training on teaching practical modules
3. Utilising technology in teaching and learning
4. Working with feedback for self-improvement
5. Training on mentorship
6. Designing effective field trips and course packs
7. Training on SPSS, R, Python, and other accounting skills
8. Understanding and addressing challenges faced in managing RTC academic system expectations and standards, particularly among new tutors with diverse experiences

From the qualitative data, five additional themes were identified under the support required from CITL, and the academic department to make teaching and learning a fulfilling and meaningful experience:

1. *Work-life balance*: Encouraging a balanced work-life among tutors was suggested, as it was mentioned in the CITL training stratification category. This was also highlighted to ensure quality work output for both tutors and students and to prevent demotivation and burnout among tutors.
2. *Iterative CITL training*: Data also suggested that CITL should focus on iterative training so that its programmes do not become one-offs, which are left up to individuals to implement based on their motivation. This was also linked to encouraging and guiding the process of implementing the skills learned from the training, which would indirectly assist in impact assessment.
3. *Programme Leaders (PL) role and responsibilities*: Data also suggested a need to streamline the role and responsibilities of the PL, particularly when it comes to minor administrative tasks. Training for the PL was also requested on skills such as leadership, class observation, and other essential skills related to the quality of the programme.
4. *Module distribution*: Most new tutors who have been at RTC for more than a semester suggest that, for quality teaching, at least one module in a semester should be allowed to be retaught to enhance understanding and improve lesson planning and delivery in both content and pedagogy.
5. *Group-taught modules*: New tutors suggested the need for flexibility in updating teaching and learning resources, especially for group-taught modules. Flexibility in modifying the content in slides and teaching materials was also reported.

Discussion

New Tutors - Professional Development and Other Support

The attrition rate at RTC is naturally high due to the composition of tutors from abroad that are on fixed-term plans to begin with, and young Bhutanese tutors aspiring to study further. With the tutor composition being fluid and mobile, CITL is required to develop a separate training and support programme for new tutors. New tutors are a mix of first-time teachers and those with prior experience. Two different needs must be addressed: first, the training needs of new teachers without any teaching background in pedagogy, and second, re-orienting experienced tutors on the teaching-learning expectations of the institution. Additionally, there is a need to provide support that would help tutors, especially in the first year, to understand and navigate the new system. Research suggests that the first few years are very stressful for new tutors, and providing various support types to help new tutors (Dishena & Mokoena, 2016) settle into the profession is necessary. Due to mismatched expectations of what they imagined the teaching profession would be like and the reality, the attrition rate is as high as 50% in the first five years among new tutors, especially in the U.S. and Canada (Lindqvist, 2014; Moir & Gless, 2001). Literature also suggests that providing support, such as mentorship and professional development training, can help reduce attrition rates among new teachers (Bonura, 2012; Light et al., 2009). Classroom management and lesson planning are also identified as important training for first-time teachers (Downey, 2008; Gafoor & Umer, 2010).

An Iterative Process to Build a Context-based Implementation of Strategies and Collegiality

One of the recommendations from most respondents regarding impact was that when left on their own to implement newly learned skills, it is difficult. The need to have support in planning the implementation process would make the PDs more impactful. Since most pedagogy skills must be implemented based on context, discussion and evaluation among peers are required to determine what might work. Working in groups can encourage tutors to employ new or enhance pedagogy skills. In many ways, using new pedagogy for the first time can be considered taking risks, which is easier to do when working with peers/groups.

Engagement and Participation of Teachers in Professional Development Planning

Professional development programmes are often planned without evidence of context-based need. Mass training that usually follows the “one size fits all” agenda is often ineffective. There are criticisms surrounding short-term professional development approaches as uneconomical and inefficient, consuming a huge budget (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Knight & Skrtic, 2020). These trainings often have no considerable learning outcomes or instruction attained (Knight & Skrtic, 2020). In contrast, trainings that are evidence-based and engage tutors in the planning of the programmes with expert guidance often have a higher success rate and ownership of the learned skill to be practiced (Ebert et al., 2011). The need to provide trainings that are evidence-based and context-driven is a crucial ingredient for a useful professional development programme. Moreover, engaging tutors in the planning of such training can tailor a general teaching-learning strategy to a specific context-based PD.

Conclusion

The faculty composition at RTC is mostly a master's degree with less than 10 years of teaching experience. In 2022, 45.8% of tutors had earned 6 and above CITL credits while 36.5% had earned 3 credits and 17.7% had not participated in even one CITL PDs. The data indicate that tutors were mostly satisfied with CITL PDs however, not having enough time due to teaching workload was reported. On the impact of PDs, an iterative process of support and learning was suggested as a better way of impact assessment. Tutors with less than five years reported a higher impact on PDs helping them “support students better” and prepare for advancement in their careers. Classroom management was rated as the required training amongst the tutors with less than 5 years of teaching experience. The same category had reported training needs in “content and performance standards in their main subject”.

A study on work-life balance is also suggested because RTC's focus on enhancing the quality of teaching-learning can only be achieved with tutors continuously improving their disciplinary scholarship and teaching craft. If attending CITL programmes requires them to compromise on their core duties and personal time, as reported by the data, the institution could consider adapting policies accordingly.

RTC has a wide range of students in terms of socio-economic backgrounds and levels of prior academic achievement. This makes RTC a truly complex but urban institution. Tutors must engage this diverse group of students, often making it challenging and difficult to manage learning needs. It is recommended that dialogues on such topics and training be provided for tutors because this is unique to the institution.

Limitations

Since both quantitative (self-assessment survey) and qualitative (focus group discussion and in-depth interview) data were self-reported, the study's results cannot claim robust evaluation, particularly concerning the usefulness and impact of the training. A further study using classroom observation and the practice of teaching-learning strategies is suggested. The secondary data of student consultative meeting minutes were not collected with research questions as the focus, but rather as a university requirement for routine feedback for quality assurance of programmes offered.

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