

Leadership Enhancement and Academic Development program for Officer's Professional Development: An Evaluation



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ABBREVIATIONS

NEP	National Education Policy
MIEPA	Maharashtra Institute of Educational Planning and Administration
DIET	District Institution for Education and Training
SCERT	State Council of Educational Research and Training
NIEPA	National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration.
PSLM	Program for School leadership and Management.
LEAD	Leadership Enhancement and Academic Development.
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
ASER	Annual Status of Education Report
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
OPD	Officers Professional Development
IT	Information Technology
KSM	Knowledge, skills and mindset
CEASA	The Council of Education Association of South Australia
ToR	Terms of Reference
Lfe	leadership for equity
KRA	Key Result Area or Key Responsibility Area.
B/CRCCs	Block /Cluster Resource Centre Coordinators

1 INTRODUCTION

Professional development can be defined as the process of learning, where one focuses on building personal credentials for oneself- such as degrees, certificates, and attending vocational courses.ⁱ As the New education policy which lays focus on the Continuous professional development of the teachers. “*Teachers will be trained, encouraged, and supported - with continuous professional development - to impart foundational literacy and numeracy.*”ⁱⁱⁱ

The state has devised new policies in education for the educational officers keeping in mind the long-term goal of improving the academic performance of the students. State agencies like MIEPA, DIET and SCERT have taken steps to design courses, workshops and other Professional development frameworks. MIEPA through the directives and guidance of NIEPA has been spearheading professional development programs for educational officers. Few of them being the PSLM and LEAD (Leadership Enhancement and Academic development) This document focuses on evaluating the LEAD course.

*In the longer term, State Governments shall prepare cadres of professionally qualified educators for early childhood care and education, through stage-specific professional training, mentoring mechanisms, and career mapping. Necessary facilities will also be created for the initial professional preparation of these educators and their Continuous Professional Development (CPD).*ⁱⁱⁱ

Capacity of India’s governance bodies in general and education governance bodies in particular, to implement programs and efficiently carry out administrative tasks has often been noted to be weak. Lack of capacity has also long been recognized as a key pivot in ensuring robust public services and has been a major focus area in international aid as well. In the context of Maharashtra’s public education system, while there are many areas where efforts have borne fruits, for instance the improvement in ASER scores between 2017 and 2019 reports, many areas of development still remain. Few interventions in this context operate to address governance capabilities in public education bodies. The LEAD program run by MIEPA also aims to improve the skills, knowledge and mindset of those working in the public education system in the hopes to see an improvement in program implementation, improvement in delivery of education, and eventual improvement in student learning.

1.1 NIEPA

The full form of NIEPA is, “National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration”. It was established by the Ministry of Human Resource Development, Government of India, a premier organization dealing with capacity building and research in planning and management of education not only in India but also in South Asia. NIEPA has worked in one very important vision, to evolve a humane learning society through advancement of knowledge.

1.2 MIEPA

The full form of MIEPA is “Maharashtra Institution of Educational Planning and Administration.” It was registered in January 1995 under Societies Registration Act XXI of 1860 & Bombay Public Trust Act of 1950. Established & located at Aurangabad, Dr Neha Belsare ma’am is the director of MIEPA.

Objective:

- Developing training courses for educational administration on the goals of education for all
- Development of innovative approaches for effective supervision and evaluation of school

1.3 LEAD OFFICERS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSE

A few studies on effectiveness of the administrators in Education depts, conducted in the Indian context, identifies 3 broad issues for officer performance as follows:

- Lack of knowledge & skills to design and drive effective people management structures and support team members to achieve departmental objectives.
- Lack of the knowledge & skills to operate processes for designing, implementing and monitoring programs - both administrative and academic.
- Lack of conducive platforms for officers to collaborate, authentically share their views and learn with other peers (officers) on a continuous basis.

This is the result of many structural, cultural and organizational factors plaguing administrative and governance bodies due to which often officers find no value in conducting people management processes, officers have no reason to collaborate, and see no advantages in collaborating, are usually in their silos where they reinvent the wheel instead of collaborating with other officers. Often, officers are not motivated to learn and implement best practices related to their KRAs as there are no performance incentives to engage and demonstrate growth in a professional development program. These are some among many other mis aligned organizational practices observed by multiple studies.

The LEAD program on Officer development aims to improve state capacity to implement effective educational programs. The LEAD program is a blended coursework on specific knowledge and skills in combination with PLCs. This approach

combines online course material with capstone projects (self-learning), and a PLC format to improve a specific skill and knowledge in areas like leadership, project management and monitoring and evaluation etc. This takes the form of certification programs where officers take online courses, attend in-person professional learning circles, and attend virtual webinars.^{iv}

It improves the process, i.e. administrative capacity, through training and support as well as improving outcomes through improved program design and implementation. In the long term the program aims to improve educational outcomes for students, it does so by directly working with officers and educational departments.

Clarification - Only Monitoring and Evaluation has been released under The LEAD course. There are two other courses

- Team Management
- Creating Online Courses, which are yet to be released.

2 COURSE OBJECTIVES

- To improve the skills, knowledge and mindset of those working in the public education system in the hopes to see an improvement in program implementation,
- To work on the delivery of education, and eventual improvement in student learning.

2.1 AIMS:

After completing the course, the officers will be able to-

- To understand the difference between Monitoring and Evaluation, Components of project cycle.
- To Apply backwards planning for creating a program plan through Program planning framework.
- To Create and use monitoring systems to track every event of the program and tracker to monitor day-to-day tasks in the office.

- Use various methods of data collection.
- Learn about Kirk Patrick and Counterfactual methods of Evaluation.
- Explain Errors and Biases while collecting data and how to minimize them.

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Professional development refers to all training, skills, certification and education that an officer needs to succeed in his or her career. Even if an officer has the necessary skills, he or she may need additional skills based on the demands of their social situations that they are in and the changing demands of their jobs. Through professional development, officers can learn skills to become better, more efficient workers.

The context of the present paper deliberates professional learning framework taken from CEASA (The Council of Education Association of South Australia) and speaks about its component with regards to New knowledge and understanding, quality Leadership, Co-learning, Reflective practice, which will produce high quality professional learning that is sustainable.

This course was designed for the educational officers to gain new knowledge and understanding about the monitoring and evaluation, backwards planning, Kirkpatrick and Counterfactual methods of Evaluation, task tracker and to apply it effectively in their work. This would help them in capacity building in their workplace.

Relating to the CEASA framework (2006) we could see the program aims at Co-learning (PLC) professional learning community, thereby focusing on new learning and understanding, working collaboratively, and holding yourself accountable for results. We also observed the program provides scope for reflective practice through assignments given to the officers

Thus, we can see the program designed for the officers has strong alignment with the CEASA professional framework, with respect to its six elements, wherein the program offers knowledge to experiential learning and concludes with reflection. Therefore,

while trying to find out the gains and impact that the LEAD program has had on the educational officers, we will see the impact based on the following:

- **New Knowledge and Understanding** - If the professional development Programme offered opportunities of Theory into practices, Ongoing lifelong learnings, Contemporary research and Knowledge for the 21st Century. Thus, enhancing the extension officers with new knowledge and understanding.
- **Inquiry processes** -Through the professional development programme whether the opportunities were given for critical analysis, systematic planning, Rigorous reflection and data analysis and research. Thereby strengthening these skills in the extension officers.
- **Co- learning** - Whether the Professional Development programme offered opportunities of Collective Inquiry, Working, learning, planning and evaluating together. Thus, sustaining the Co-learning skills in the extension officers.
- **Issues for Identification** - If the Professional Development Programme presented identification opportunities of Focusing the learning, Listening to voices, Data analysis and Planning. Thus, reinforcing inquiry skills in the extension officers.
- **Reflective Practice** - Through the professional development Programme whether the opportunities were given for Using Data, reflecting on new practice, practicing new behaviors and taking time to embed new practices. Thus, reinforcing these skills in the extension officers.
- **Quality Leadership** - Through Professional Development Programme whether the opportunities were given for Cultures for learning in partnership with others, Capacity building within the association, Resources management, Enabling structures and processes, High performance organization, Continuous Improvement and Sustainability. Thus, imbibing these skills in the extension officers.

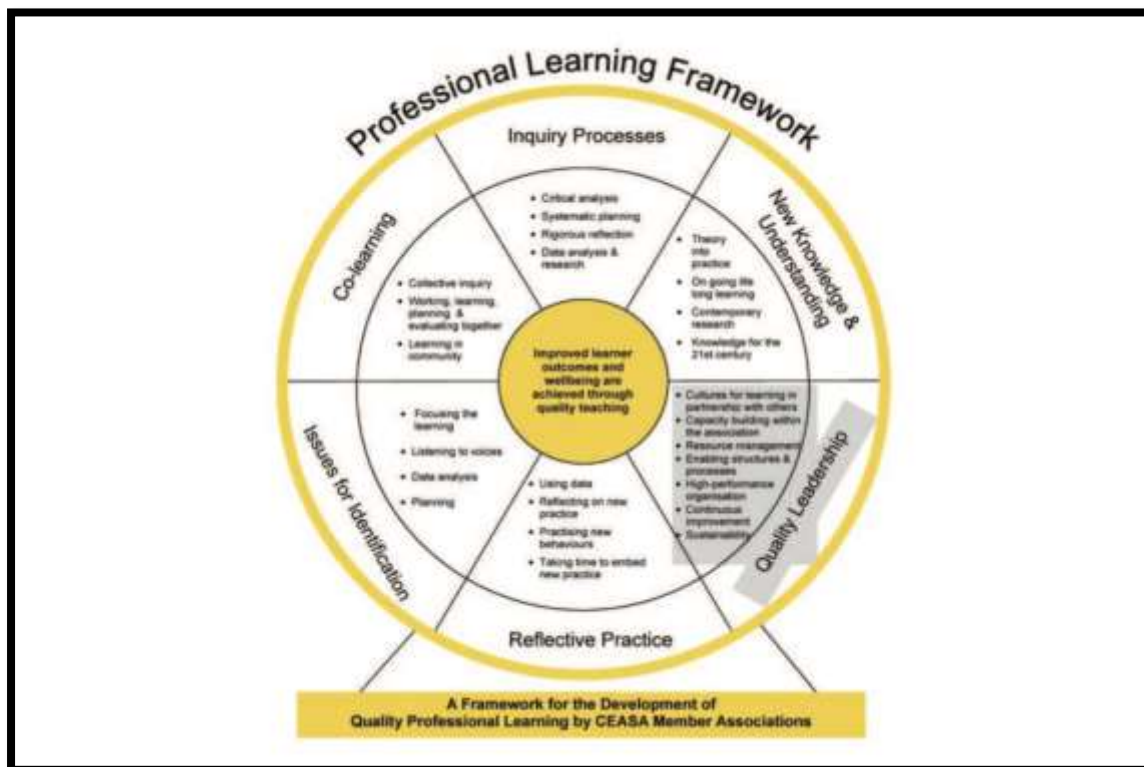


Figure 1: Professional Learning Framework

3 PROGRAM DESCRIPTION:

Each module addresses multiple objectives outlined in the table below along with the scope of each lesson. The topics are chosen so as to build a scaffolded understanding of designing an online course keeping in mind the current context of officers. The time duration to complete each module is approximately 6 hours.

3.1.1 MODULE 1

Module 1 Detailed Outline				
Sr No	Topic	Objective	Objective type	Scope
	Introduction to course - Scope and expectations	To understand the course outline and expectation from them during the course consumption.	Knowledge	Understanding course structure
	Understanding terms- Monitoring and Evaluation and its difference	To explain the basics of Monitoring and Evaluation	Knowledge	What is Monitoring? What is Evaluation? When do we do Monitoring and Evaluation, what is the difference between M&E, what is the project cycle and its stages?
	Backward Planning	To use backward planning while creating the Program planning framework	Application	What is backward planning, stages of it, how do we use the backward planning process in program planning.
	Program Planning Framework	To explain the components used in the framework.	Knowledge	Introduction of Framework, Understanding components of the framework Activities/INPUTS-OUTPUTS-GOAL
		To design and use the Measure of success	Application	Introduction to measure of success Importance of Measure of Success, Guidelines to Measure of Success.

Module 1 - Create and use a program plan by using program planning framework.

3.1.2 MODULE 2

Module 2 - Detailed Outline				
Sr. No	Topic	Objective	Objective type	Scope
1	Task Tracker	To create and use a tracker to monitor the program as per their context.	Application	The need for Tracker, components of the tracker, how to create the tracker.
2	Monitoring System	To create and use Monitoring systems as per their context.	Application	The need for the Monitoring system, components of the Monitoring system, how to create the Monitoring system.
3	Methods of Data Collection	To understand various methods to collect data	Knowledge	Various methods of data collection, its use, what kind of questions do we create for each data collection method.
		To apply different methods to collect data	Application	How do we collect data through each method (Observation, Survey, Interviewed)

Module 2

- Create a Monitoring System for a program and use it in their office.
- Create a questionnaire for each type of data collection method.

3.1.3 MODULE 3

Module 3 - Detailed Outline				
Sr. No	Topic	Objective	Objective type	Scope
1	Evaluation and its types	To learn about different types of Evaluation	Knowledge	Different types of Evaluations, how does Monitoring and Evaluations go hand in hand, what kind of questions does each evaluation method ask.
2	Kirk Patrick Model	To understand the Kirkpatrick model to evaluate the training.	Knowledge	The need of Kirk Patrick Model and levels of the Model.
3	Counterfactual Model	To understand Counterfactual model to evaluate programs	Knowledge	The need for the Counterfactual model, how do we conduct this evaluation method.
		To explain errors and biases while evaluating and how to minimize them.	Knowledge	What are errors and biases, types of errors and biases, different ways with which these errors and biases can be minimized.

Module 3

Using Kirk Patrick model of Evaluate one of the running training programs.^v

4 LEAD PROGRAM EVALUATION

4.1 RATIONALE

In its current format the program is in the pilot and prototype stage, however the program approach has shifted and refined in comparison to the program implemented in 2019-20. As the program was beginning to stabilize, there was a need to validate its approach before scaling it further and establishing proof of concept. This evaluation was initiated after a need was felt to better understand the OPD program and its effects on the key stakeholders.

The results of this evaluation will inform decision making aimed at improvement of the program but also provide a basis for scaling of the program model. With this in mind, we seek to understand if this program is making a difference to officers, but specifically asks if - (1) is there a change in KSM/org processes; and (2) to what extent did the program contribute to these changes?

This evaluation will assess the program on the following criteria:

Relevance of the program: The consistency of the program's impact and outcome in relation to the unmet needs of the officers. Here we will understand how significant a project is in the context of geography, culture and need.

Impact of the program: Changes and effects, positive and negative, planned and unforeseen, that have resulted from the program with respect to the target groups and other affected stakeholders.

Here it is worth mentioning that the evaluation study at this stage will not seek to examine the effectiveness of the program. Given that the program is yet to complete one full year of implementation in its current framework, the results of the program will be premature to draw any conclusions on the program's effectiveness in achieving its expected objectives/outcomes as listed in the ToC. The purpose of this evaluation is to shed light on 'what works and why' with respect to any given program modality.

5 METHODOLOGY

The current study used the evaluation research framework and is mixed method research as a methodology

Evaluation research, like explanatory research, is concerned with the assessment of cause and effect. The cause is the deliberate educational program that the extension officers are subjected to and the effect is the change in the understandings of the extension officers. Therefore, the paradigm for thinking about cause and effect in case of the present research is the "black box model". According to Martin Lipsey (1993), this model aptly depicts the research paradigm in most evaluation studies. The black box model is the situation in which a social program is applied, the input is the program, treatment or intervention, and output is its effects the connecting process within the box is not readily visible. The ideal design strategy in effect assessment is a true experiment, which is analyzed randomly & assigned to at least two conditions, one with the intervention present and the other with the intervention absent. However, whether this strategy may be implemented depends on whether the intervention is-

- a. Existing or new and

b. Delivered to all or only to some members of a target population.

Indeed, the crucial distinction for determining available design strategies is among programs or interventions was that:

1. Provide full coverage, whether existing or new
2. Are existing and provide partial coverage and
3. Are new and provide partial coverage.

Paradigm used for the study was Mixed Method Paradigm. In order to study the impact of the program. Quantitative data was obtained from the conduct of a pretest and posttest. The qualitative data was gathered to triangulate and explain the quantitative data by the conduct of semi structured interviews.

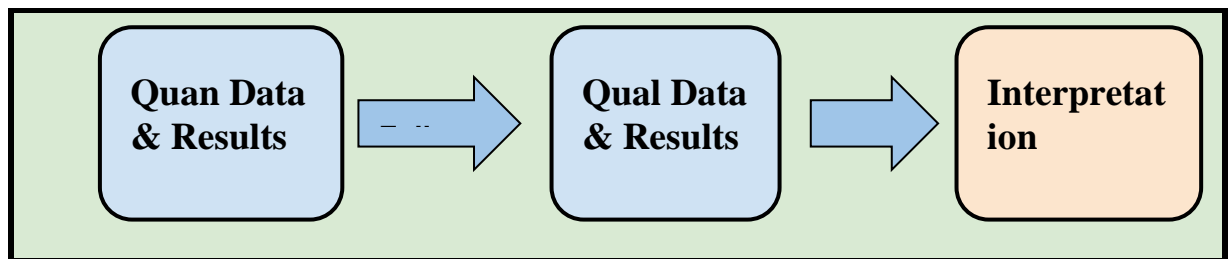


Figure 2

Mixed method design:

	Evaluation Questions	Method	Data
	Does the OPD program contribute to improving individual KSM?	Simple difference method QUAN	Program data on training feedback, pre and post training results, OPD rubric data
	How useful is the LEAD program approach to stakeholders? What works and why?	Thematic Analysis QUAL	Semi-structured in-depth interviews

The first research question will use a simple difference method, where data collected before program activities and after it will be compared to understand if a shift has been observed in any of the key variables. For the second research question, qualitative data will be used within a contribution analysis framework.

6 KEY EVALUATION QUESTION

The evaluation focuses both on the outcome of the program as well as examines the results of the program strategies. Following are the key evaluation questions:

1. Does the LEAD program contribute to improving individual knowledge, skills and mindsets (KSM)?
2. How useful are the three program approaches to stakeholders? What works and why?

6.1 SAMPLING

Stage 1: For the pretest post test data 210 has given pretest and 209 has given posttest, officers who had attended the course were given a test before the commencement of the course and after the completion of the course.

Stage 2:

Primary data was collected from 12 officers using in-depth interviews. Offices were selected based on convenience sampling method. However, it was ensured that participants from as many districts as possible were chosen. Participants from the following districts were included

Chandrapur (2 participants)

Osmanabad (1 participant)

Aurangabad (1 participant)

Ahmednagar (2 participants)

Beed (2 participants)

Jalana (1 participant)

Hingoli (1 participant)

Nandurbar (1 participant)

Washim (1 participant)

7 TOOL AND DATA ANALYSIS**7.1.1 QUANTITATIVE PHASE**

In the pretest and posttest had 20 questions where 4 options were given, the questionnaire was about the Monitoring and evaluation, backward planning, Kirkpatrick model of evaluation, tracker, how to collect data and ways of collecting data and about error and biases in data collection and how to minimize it. Total 210 officers took the pretest; the date and time was recorded of each officer and 209 officers took the posttest after the completion of the course. The tool was administered in Marathi and the responses were taken and analyzed to see the progress of the officers before and after they had taken the course. The details of the tool is included in the annexure.

7.1.2 QUALITATIVE PHASE

We have used semi-structured interviews and got training on how to conduct the interview with the officers, we did a mock interview where the questionnaires were restructured in hindi and then the interviews were scheduled. A semi-structured in-depth interview tool was created and piloted with one officer before data collection. Apart from an introductory question, the questionnaire discussed current job roles and challenges, experience with the course, experience with PLC, usefulness of the course,

learnings and application, and lastly, feedback on the course. The detailed interview schedule is included in the Annexure. They were related to the following areas:

- **Job role**

In the interview the participants were asked questions in order to know the areas of support that they received, whether they were helpful and their expectations in the future. The participants were further questioned about their best areas of learning.

- **Inputs and participation and Information about PLC**

In the interview the participants were asked to share their experience about taking this LEAD course and their views about the structure of the course with reference to visual, language, academic concept explanation, PLC. They were also asked to share their experience of attending the PLC and its structure.

- **Usefulness, Learnings and its application**

In the interview questions were asked to the participants to understand how the PLC had helped them in their work with examples. Questions were asked to know the new skills and knowledge they learnt in this course and how they would implement it in the future.

- **Feedback on the course**

The participants were further asked to give their feedback about the course and the areas for improvement in the course. Questions were further enquired to understand the enablers apart from the LEAD course that works for the participants.

The tool was administered in Hindi/ Marathi based on the comfort of administrators. The responses were audio recorded and transcribed in English. In this preliminary report, the key observations from the interviews have been summarized in detail.

8 LITERATURE REVIEW

Gary Husband, Catherine Lloyd (2018)^{vi} wrote a report on the Middle Leaders articles was written in a conference held at Birmingham City University, in this article they have several discussion streams tasked with identifying issues faced by current middle leaders. Middle leaders are responsible for a team and required to develop people management skills and carry out reviews and appraisals. They are into the senior managing body and the teaching staff but without a fixed chair in either. They often find themselves being pressurized both from above and below authority. Therefore, they juggle to the demands and expectations of each group. Middle leaders have a key role to play in shaping their departments and the experiences of the students. To be successful in this they need to be provided with opportunities to continue their

education and development as leaders. Middle leaders need to be empowered and encouraged to be bold in their leadership, critical in their thinking and clear on their purpose. Instead of this important group of individuals just managing to manage, they should be supported to embrace the opportunities of the position and keep on learning to lead.

Professor Vimala Ramachandran (2017)^{vii} guided to write the report on Middle management of education in India Model, the paper presents the topics related to B/CRCCS, their challenges and recommendations. Autonomy, responsibility, transparency is some of the main challenges faced by the middle management. The Middle management are critical intermediaries between state Policy and actual support. They suffer from Structural Diplomacy - Where overlapping and duplication of work is observed, Double charges are given to the officers especially academic and administrative roles, there is lack of permanent status to B/CRCC, lack of coordination with DIET. Recommendations for the above problems - a) Unification of departments which have the same functions, b) Avoid overlapping) Affiliate B/CRCC to DIET, D) Have separate cadre for BR/CRCCS Although the role of the B/CRCC's is to visit schools, Improve quality. But instead they have to face challenges: Focus on managing part, Duplication of data, Not empowered, Not appreciated for the contribution. Recommendations for the above challenges: a) Redefine and Responsibilities - release the teachers from their administrative work. b) Minimize making reports) should be made possible to visit schools d) should have good staff and provisioned) External agencies can be given administrative work.

Koichi Miyoshi, Naomi Stenning (2008)^{viii} this article has presented a response to the need for an alternative development that benefits rural communities. Participatory evaluation of a community. as evaluations are lacking Theory, therefore the using Method oriented evaluations. Thus, there is a need for Theory driven Evaluation for development approach in rural communities. Community uses its capacity to plan, implement and evaluate community policy structures the following are the characteristics of Community a) Sense of Community b) Commitment c) Ability to set and achieve objectives, d) Recognition and access to resources. In this Paper Community means people or society, it also means Government organizations, civil society organization, NGO's, NPO's, Private enterprise. This article has presented a response to the need for an alternative development that benefits rural communities. By conducting a participatory evaluation of a particular community activity, it is possible to bring about changes in the thinking and behavior of the evaluation participants and stimulate an endogenous community capacity development. This is contingent, however, on the ability of the participants to formulate appropriate evaluation questions that specifically address community capacity related issues and processes. In order to do this, appropriate guiding theoretical framework and concepts are required. Thus, the authors have presented a theory-driven participatory evaluation based on a community capacity development and community policy structure model. This model is useful for conceptualizing development in an alternative manner to the conventional focus on the economic sphere. It will prove a useful framework for both development planning and evaluation, although further elaboration of the model remains as a future task.

Helen Tilley, Sierd Hadley, Cathal Long, Jeremy Clarke (2015)^{ix} this paper is about understanding capacity development. This paper attempts to go beyond the question of how organizational capability develops, to ask what might be the path to sustained growth in capability. Capability means the ability to do something. This paper

analyses the collective capability of public sector organizations and unites within. It differentiates individual capability and Collective capability. It relates to the task being performed. We find that sustained improvements in capability are most likely to happen where there is high drive for reform from both the political leadership and the bureaucracy, within an institutional environment that provides supporting incentives. Factors can be access to resources or ownership of reforms, while an external factor could be the political system or settlement. External factors can be historical pathways, availability of natural and human resources, governance and politics, globalization and geopolitics, and social structure and norms. Leadership plays an important role in the development of capability. But there are other factors like structure and incentives and power of the state. Reforms can be made by government officials. Successful reforms are also drivers. Political and Bureaucracy support. High drive, combining political steering and bureaucratic drive, is the path where sustained improvements in capability were most likely to take place. This arises where the institutional environment, through the organization of elites and the structure of power, requires rule enforcement and legitimation through the provision of public goods.

Farhad Hossain, Anthony Sumnaya Kumasey, Derek Eldridge, Foteini Kravariti, Justice Nyigmah Bawole (2017)^x this paper focuses on the Public Sector Capacity building. The governments and stakeholders come together to solve various common problems which is termed as collaborative public management. This framework improves policy development, service delivery, infrastructure development, capacity building and economic development (Bangladesh). Human resource capacity building - A fundamental goal of capacity building is to enhance the ability to evaluate and address the crucial questions related to policy choices and modes of implementation. Public Sector Capacity building - It improved the level of efficiency and effectiveness. There are a wide range of internal and external challenges that are faced by established organizations. This study is a valuable understanding of the functioning of multi-stakeholder led public sector capacity building projects.

Christopher Gilson, Patrick Dunleay and Jane Tinkler (2009)^{xi} this paper focuses on Organizational learning is seen as a social and political process. knowledge management is to first identify the knowledge, it must then be captured for the organization. Sometimes people of the organization are keen to learn but lack of knowledge of how to do it is lacking, in such case motivation of the members to achieve the goals of an organization play an important role. Single loop learning where we ask questions like 'Are we doing it right? Double loop learning asks 'Can we do it Better? Triple looping is where Vision is defined for an organization after assessing, Performing, Strategizing. Innovations service improves productivity - inputs and outputs. Innovations were found to be most often triggered either by an expenditure cutback or need for saving. The four types of events designed to promote good practice are National learning exchange conferences - Open day visits to Beacon councils- Resource packs and web-based materials - Visitors may also request tailored knowledge exchanges. Learning can take place when managers retain the capacity to remain self-critical, and create a work environment that encourages reflective and reflexive questioning.

Michael Fullan (2004)^{xii} this paper focuses on leadership to this decade what standards-based reform was to the 1990s. This article discusses a new kind of leadership — what I call ‘system thinkers in action’ or ‘the new theoreticians’. These are leaders who work intensely in their own schools. The eight elements of

sustainability are defined in this paper: 1. Public service with a moral purpose; 2. Commitment to changing context at all levels; 3. Lateral capacity-building through networks; 4. New vertical relationships that are co-dependent encompassing both capacity-building and accountability; 5. Deep learning; 6. Dual commitment to short-term and long-term results; 7. Cyclical energizing; 8. The long lever of leadership. It is to challenge us to develop strategies, training, experiences and day-to-day actions within the culture of the organization whose intent would be to generate more and more leaders with a bigger picture in their mind. The key to better organizational performance and to enhancing the conditions for sustainability.

Muhammad Memon, Tim Simkins, Charles Sisum and Zubeda Bana (2006)^{xiii} this paper focuses on the training of the teachers of private and public school. This research was done by AKU in Pakistan: this research focuses on the school improvement. They are mainly focusing on the public schools and private schools. The decision is done on management and the organization in these school the research also focuses on the training given to the head teachers and teacher so that they can perform in the most efficient way AKU has formed programs for both teacher and the school head, so that they both are trained and work together for capacity building. All these programs help them to develop competency to do their role most effectively. PD programs were conducted by AKU so that the quality of school would improve if the school heads and teachers are trained with skills, knowledge, competency and attitude. Developing the leadership programs: AKU conducted workshops on a monthly basis. Committee was formed that included school heads from both public and private school. Impact of this program was all the school head come together to work as community of practice, there were follow up to know the progress challenges was to sustain the new change, lack of support from the education department and the heads also faced problems like lack of resources, autonomy, support from school

Salvatore Schiavo-Campo June (2005)^{xiv} this article discusses capacity building and M&E and 4 pillars of M&E of ECD: 1) Institutional capacity. 2) organizational capacity. 3) ICT capacity 4) human capacity. The current systems of monitoring, evaluation and program reviews emerged in advanced countries from almost 30 years of experimentation, learning from mistakes, and requiring sustained efforts at strengthening institutional, organizational, and human capacity. M&E should be an integral part of the government there should be both internal and external evaluators to give advice on the program performance. As is the case of all other major functions in public sector management, building an effective capacity for monitoring and evaluation is neither easy nor quick.

Thuan Van Pham, Thanh Thi Nghiem, Loc My Thi Nguyen, Thanh Xuan Mai and Trung Tran. (2019)^{xv}, Vietnamese universities provide useful guidance for identifying professional development needs and designing training and professional development programs for current and future mid-level academic managers. They are also useful for middle managers themselves to consider when they are reviewing and revising managerial competencies, skills or knowledge requirements. Mid-level academic managers in Vietnam universities are currently having a significant role in the development of higher education and science in Vietnam, and their contributions will be even more important for a sustainable future of the higher education system in Vietnam. This paper was to identify the core competencies for mid-level academic managers in these 6 domains for the mid-level officers. 1) program management. 2)

Department governance. 3) HR management. 4) budgeting and resource management. 5) external communication. 6) office management.

R.S Tyagi (July 2016)^{xvi}, in this paper they were discussing about schools being given greater autonomy in educational decision making. Decentralization makes the planning process people friendly and participatory, plans more local specific. They aim to increase the effectiveness of education making it more relevant to local needs. They are means of democratically promoting people's participation by empowering local authorities and putting emphasis on performance accountability. They intend to improve the provision of services. There is a need to prepare and implement capacity building plans

The literature review gives a better understanding about the middle officers, and their work. Middle officers have a key role to play in shaping their departments and the experiences of the students. To be successful in this they need to be provided with opportunities to continue their education and development as leaders. These officers are generally a link between the school and the education officers. The literature review also focuses on the training to be given to teachers and officers so that there is capacity building in them. This helps in building the leadership quality by developing the competencies, skills and knowledge. The nuances of the issue and attempts to recommend structural and provisional solutions to strengthen this layer to perform in their role.

9 KEY FINDING

9.1 RESEARCH QUESTION 1

- What is the extent to which the LEAD program contributed to improving individual's knowledge, skills and mindset with regard to the extension officer?

In order to answer this question a pre test and a post test was conducted. The scores obtained by the officers were compared and difference in percentage scores was obtained.

9.1.1 PRE-TEST/ POST- TEST COMPARISON

As mentioned above, this evaluation study will use the data presently collected by the team in their program operations. pre-post tests conducted for any training programs and as well as measure of officers on officer skill rubric. While measuring the indirect impact of the OPD team's effort through co-created and co-implemented programs, relevant indicators for each program will be examined. These have been highlighted in the table below.

	Pre-Test Mastery of all 210 responses	Post -Test Mastery of all	Growth / Decline D - C
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		209 responses	
# of Officer Responses	210	209	
Average Marks Attained (on 20)	7.8	10.4	
Percentage	39%	52%	13% ▲

From the above table it is seen that there was a 13% growth in the post test scores as compared to the pretest.

9.2 RESEARCH QUESTION 2

- How do the extension officers perceive the LEAD program contributing to their individual knowledge, skills and mindsets (KSM)?

In order to answer this question, semi structured interviews were conducted. In order to analyze the perceptions of the extension officers the interview transcripts were analyzed and a visual diagram of codes obtained is given.

The Professional Learning Framework was being used to understand if the LEAD course had achieved its objectives of professional development of the officers. The framework had six different elements based to which the Professional Development of the extension officers was being judged. Apart from attaining the skills of Monitoring and Evaluation, the officers learnt concepts of Backward planning, Kirkpatrick model and Counterfactual Evaluation.

The responses received from the phone call interviews were then analyzed qualitatively by developing codes, categories and themes.

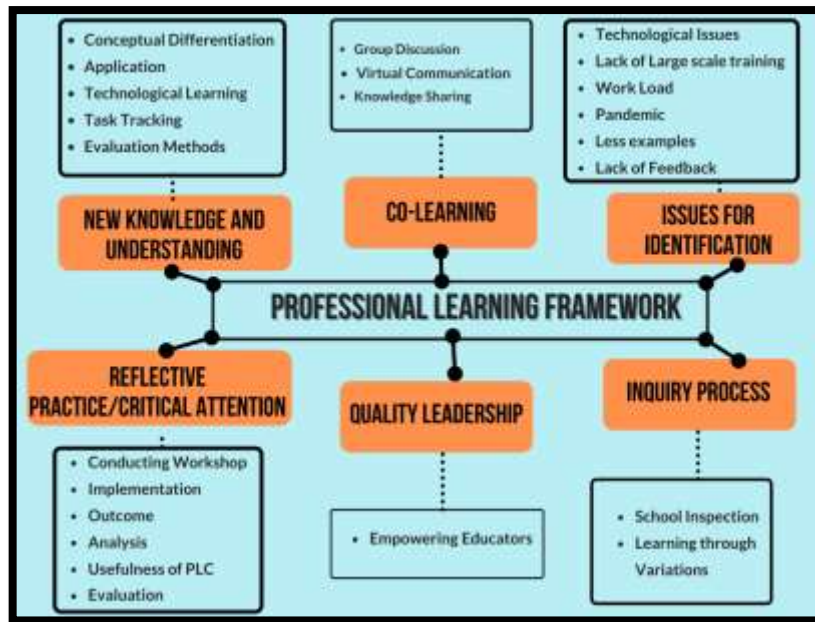


Figure 3: Professional Learning Framework

9.2.1 NEW KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

‘Facts, information, and skills acquired through experience or education; the theoretical or practical understanding of a subject.’^{xvii}

The officers in the interview told us that in this course they learned about the monitoring and evaluation also it should be done at all levels planning not at the end of the programme. They also learned about the backward planning, task tracker, kirkpatrick model of evaluation. They also learned how to collect and organise the data so that there is less duplication of work.

The extension officers expressed their new learnings and their understanding during their interview and their responses are analysed below under the categories “Conceptual differentiation”, application”, task tracking”, “evaluation methods” and technological learning respectively.

Conceptual Differentiation

“The best thing that we learnt was the Monitoring and Evaluation and we were able to tell the difference.”

Application

“Input output outcome all these were very nice and how to use measurement, that we learnt in PLC.”

Technological learning

“We had to download the FIRKI app and in that there were modules, initially I did not know how to download the modules but when I learned I got really happy.”

Task Tracking

“How many students are sitting, how many aadhar cards are updated. All these things which are there, how much work is there, how many we can do? We could do it through a tracker.”

“Task tracker concept was a new concept we used to do it before but it was not perfect as this one”

“The module taught was related to planning of M&E. We put our work in the task tracker and we come to know whether the work is done or not. I learned that I can use it for daily work.”

“There was something about surveys where we can get information and there was a tracker, there was focus group discussion, inspection, so this knowledge I got from this course.”

Evaluation methods

“ It has increased my knowledge and my working skill that was needed to add such as Kirkpatrick method counterfactual method which has increased the speed of my work because of this training .”

“ I also learned when there is a need for training, when you should give training, how you should give training and what are the different ways in which you can give training. you can give offline and online through google meet, google form this way there are many ways you can give training. to have a group discussion that I learned from a PLC meeting.”

“There was something about surveys where we can get information and there was a tracker, there was focus group discussion, inspection, so this knowledge I got from this course.”

9.2.2 CO- LEARNING

Co-learning aims at the collaborative construction of knowledge, in which co-learners are able to expand their social networks, integrate open learning with collective research and co-author collaborative productions.^{xviii}

This course had PLC (peer learning circle) which was conducted after every module. In the interview when we asked officers about the experience of PLC, they felt the PLC helped them to know about the other extension officers and also were able to share their experience and problems. The officers also got ideas shared by their peers that would help them in their work. In PLC they also discussed the module and the new concepts that they learned that helped others to clarify their doubts.

The extension officers expressed their Experience of Co-learning in the Peer learning Circles during their interview and their responses are analysed below under the categories “group discussions”, “virtual communication”, “concept clarity”, awareness from colleagues as expressed below.

Group Discussion

“We would discuss such issues, how to work in a group, we had the opportunity, and we learnt a lot in it.”

“ Because of the group discussions, the participants who have studied the modules, it would help others to get their concepts clear and understand it better.”

Virtual Communication

“We used the chat box to communicate it was good experience before we had classroom training v/s online, classroom training has its own benefits but this training has also a different experience.”

Knowledge Sharing

“I also shared my experience and I got to know people from other districts. These people are also with us and share a lot of good information during the PLC.”

“Maharashtra officers from different parts had to discuss about a problem, the problem faced by the officers are discussed and their solution can be brought soon with the help of PLC.”

9.2.3 ISSUES FOR IDENTIFICATION

Issue identification aims at identifying issues or problems whereby one can act on them.

In this course few opportunities and techniques were provided by which officers could identify issues related to their work. A Counterfactual Model was presented to the extension officers. Through this model extension officers identify and explain errors and biases while evaluating and how to minimise them.

The extension officers expressed their Issues of Identification during their interview and their responses are analysed below under the categories “Technological Issues”, “Lack of Large-Scale Training”, Work Load, Pandemic, Less examples, Lack of Feedback.

Technological Issues

“When I registered through the Friki app I did module one but after that I could not register it again. I could not sign in.”

Lack of Large-scale training

“It should reach many people; it should not be limited to us. It is through us our teachers will get this training but if there was direct training such as teacher training.”

“If this course is taken by MIEPA there should be at least 50 extension officers participating and it should be compulsory.”

Recommend this course to our cluster head, if they get this training it would help them in school work.

Work load

“ There was a lot of work load and then it was told to give 2nd and 3rd assignment together since I was left behind, I was not able to complete it.”

“This online training, the study material could be downloaded by the Firki app but the office busy schedule I had to remove time i.e. 8-10 days but was able to do it”

“To complete there was an official time issue but rest was fine.”

“There were modules that we need to complete in 8 days /4days but due to office work I was not able to do so and that only 2-4 day would be left to complete the module.”

“There was no challenge in the course but the time because of the work it became difficult to cope, but the good thing was that we can continue the module and read the content ahead. The pre-test and post-test I gave at my house as it was difficult to find time at office hours.

“If anyone had problem you all extended the date but instead of extending time it should be that there is so much material and you must complete in so much time only.”

Pandemic

“Since the school are close so I have not used it”

Less examples

“I heard all the videos but if there were more example in it.”

Lack of Feedback

“If we could not give enough input in the assignment that should have been informed to us about our work by giving feedback it would have been better.”

9.2.4 REFLECTIVE PRACTICE/CRITICAL ATTENTION

“Reflective Practice is paying critical attention to the practical values and theories which inform everyday actions, by examining practice reflectively and reflexively. This leads to developmental insight” - (Bolton, Gillie 2010) [2001].

From the interview with the extension officers, we understood that when they visit the school, they collected the data about the learning outcomes, the student’s achievement and the methods used by the teacher to teach in the class. They gave training to teachers on how to use technology in teaching. These were evident during the course, when the officers were able to reflect from the assignment where they had to write about their experience and also in the PLC meetings, they would discuss the problems and get ideas of how to overcome it.

The extension officers expressed their Experience of Reflective Practice after the LEAD course and their responses are analysed below under the categories, Conducting Workshop, Implementation, Outcomes, Analysis, Usefulness of PLC and Evaluation.

Conducting workshop

“We selected 12 teachers who were innovative and creative, conducted a workshop for them and asked them to design a worksheet for students for grade 1st to 4th for all subjects done by these teachers.”

“Then we have to train the teacher how to teach and what kind of practicals they have to do with the children.”

“As a supervisor we have to take a lot of training for teachers so in ext officers 35-40 schools are there so in this online training we can take in different areas and for different subjects. If we call them in the training centre it will increase the cost of the training. The second method online is a very easy method .”

Implementation

“How to run a program, how to check it, how to implement its methods technically are clearly shown in this model.”

“The second one we had to make survey tool and I also participated in it and I really like it (PLC)”

“Learned about the survey, we developed a google form and with the help of google form what is the progress of the student education during the CORONA period. “

“ I have made 2-3 google forms, if I have to collect information about the school there is no need to write on the paper, just prepare the google form and we can get information from them. you can also get information about students progress through google form.”

Outcomes:

“Assignments were based on the modules that we learned and as we work at the root level that we had written in the assignment. This I liked in the LEAD course because it can increase our productivity and work capacity.”

Analysis

“Our work is both training and inspection and, in our work, if there is any problem or difficulty, or if we do not receive success or cannot achieve our target so how we should go step by step this we have learned from this training.”

Usefulness of PLC

“I thought this PLC is no good and they will waste our time.when I join they use to make a new group. I don't know how many groups were there and there was discussion in each group also used to participate in the discussion. In the PLC meeting it was what I have studied that would get repeated and was able to learn new things from the experiences shared by other participants. if there were any problems would get solved during the PLC meeting.”

“I benefit it like there was a discussion on backward planning, first we use to start with input to output/ goals like this we use to plan, could not understand how to do

backward planning but when we discussed in PLC and actual activity was done in breakout room so we come to know to how to do it.”

Evaluation

“This was well designed and we could do self-evaluation because there was pre-test and post-test so we come to know that we have gained new knowledge.”

9.2.5 QUALITY LEADERSHIP

“A basis for guiding, empowering and supporting the constant pursuit of excellence by the employees throughout the organization.” (Feigenbaum, 2007, p38)

The officers told us that they used to take training of teachers and the principals of the schools but after doing this course they come to know what training should be given and when there is need for the training and how they should conduct the training. With the help of task tracker officers can monitor that they have given to the teachers or the head of the school. This course helped them to be a mentor and not just an inspector. This collaboration will help to improve the education system at grass root level.

The extension officers expressed their Experience of Quality Leadership in the interview and their responses are analysed below under the category, Empowering Educators.

Empowering Educators

“Because COVID situation is the same this year also. today also we speak to our people on zoom meeting as person meeting is not possible. Very few people have personal meetings, but if we have to give training we can not call them so we do it on zoom or google meet to come in touch with each other. This is a good technique in today's situation if we need to share something or want to talk about the teaching areas.”

9.2.6 INQUIRY PROCESS

‘Inquiry is an approach to teaching that involves a process of exploring the natural or material world, that leads to asking questions and making discoveries in the search of new understandings.’^{xix}

Through the LEAD course the extension officers were able to explore new dimensions of Monitoring and Evaluation, backward planning, task tracker, Kirkpatrick model of evaluation. This led the officers to making new discoveries and have new understanding in their field work.

The extension officers expressed their Experience of Inquiry Process in the interview and their responses are analysed below under the categories, School Inspection, Learning through Variations.

School Inspection

“We are using it in the office. Tracker we are using because all the schools are closed”

Learning through Variations

“ The PLC meeting was very helpful. When I did not understand the assignment during the meeting, I was able to understand it.”

9.3 RESEARCH QUESTION 3

- What are the challenges faced by the extension officers who went through the LEAD program? What works and why?

Since the research was on Academic leaders, a framework was used to bring the challenges that the officers usually face in their day to day job as well as the challenges that the officers faced while doing the LEAD course. Among the three aspects that this framework highlights, the first element is that of Academic Leadership, it was being noticed that the extension officers have multiple expectations from the authorities as well as the school heads and there are multiple demands that they need to fulfill in a short time. Second element of the framework focuses on Resource Management which

highlighted the non availability of transport, technology and lack of support from the authority. The extension officers were not able to correlate with the examples that the course offered. In order to understand the above research, question a semi structured interview was conducted. Given below is the outline of the semi structured interview.

The Participants who were the extension officers were initially asked to introduce themselves and about their job. The participants were then asked ‘What challenges they faced in their job and their causes?’. Another question for which was asked is ‘What challenges the extension officers faced while doing the LEAD course?’

Looking at the research on academic leadership, the researchers have used the following themes to code the data with regard to Challenges faced by Extension Officers.

The broad themes are: “academic leadership stress”, resource management and administrative complexity is

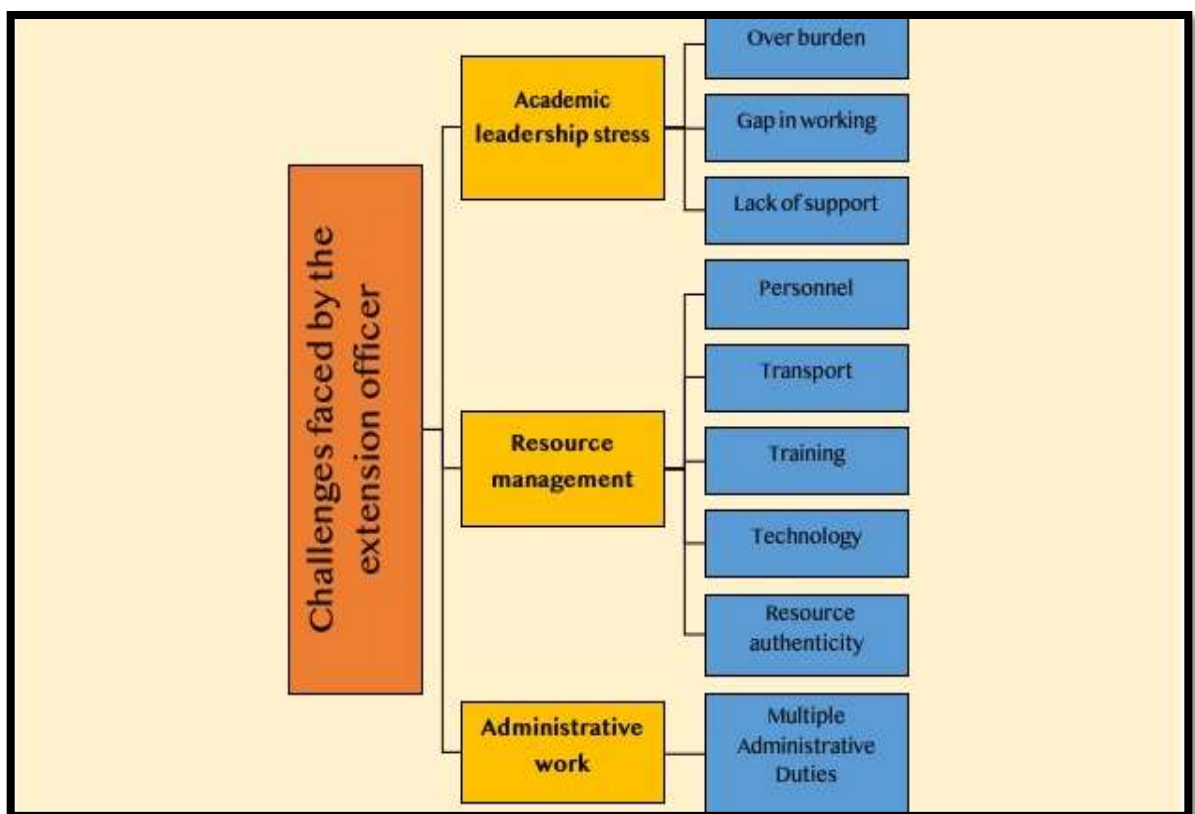


Figure 4: Challenges faced by the extension officers

9.3.1 ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP STRESS:

Academic leadership, approached as middle-level academic leadership is stressful, given the fact that there are multiple expectations and demands that generally lead this level to conflict of an academic leaders leads to academic leadership stress.^{xx}

The Academic Leadership stress was analysed during the interview and the categories that emerged out of the interviews are, “Over-burden”, “Lack of support”, Multiple tasks and “Lack of Knowledge.

Overburden

- They have too many schools to monitor and they have excessive of paperwork.
- *“5 centres of zilla parishad and there are 62 schools, 5 centre heads and approximately 270 teachers”*
- They get less time to complete their work and also have to do multiple tasks at the same time,
- *“As with field work, we also have official responsibility, we have lack of time, but in this course, we could select time according to our convenience and we could attend the training”*
- The ad hoc tasks like election duty, duplication of paperwork Due to which they have less time for the course completion, but the officers used to do it after office hours.

Lack of Support

- No support from the authority and since their role is not defined that leads to academic leadership stress. They have to coordinate with both the heads of school as well as their authority like educational officers, Block educational officers.

Gaps in Working

- *“I have done a lot of training in M&E previously also. but in this training, we have minutely seen what we have not done and how well we should do”*
- *“I have also done different type of training and I also work practically with the teachers like I have not kept nothing to keep the data what work I have done”.*

9.3.2 RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

Resource management is the efficient and effective deployment of an organization's resources when they are needed. Such resources may include financial resources, inventory, human skills, production resources, or information technology.

The Extension officers expressed their views with regards to Resource Management during the interview and their responses were analysed and the categories emerged are, Personnel, Transportation, Training, Technology and Research Authenticity.

Personnel

- Lack of support from authorities, Behavioural issues from teachers, Difficulty in collecting data, Non-acceptance by the teachers and Communication barrier between students and authorities.
- *“In terms of teachers, there are challenges on the behaviour of certain teachers and that time many questions are raised.”*

Transportation

- Some of them being, lack of transport facility to visit schools.

Training

- One of the common challenges that all the extension officers faced where no training is being provided to them with regards to their job functions. The extension officers learn their job responsibilities by practicing it on field, thus the need for a training program arises. While training for the LEAD programme the extension officers had to undergo a few challenges.
- *“But unfortunately, I feel bad about this designation, that there is no training given before you join, directly as a teacher you join and then as an officer you have to work.”*

Technology

- One of the greatest challenges that many extension officers faced was ‘Incompetent technology and other internet issues. The extension officers do not possess devices which are competent and strong enough to present online courses, or the devices would hang up. In these cases, the extension officers would have to begin the modules from the beginning.

Resource authenticity

- Few officers felt that the course was translated from English to Marathi, therefore the true meaning of the concepts was not translated, this was another challenge that the extension officers faced.
- Another challenge that the officers faced that they were not able to correlate the examples in the modules, as they expected the examples to be related to their job.
- “I feel that translation was done from English to Marathi so while doing it many factors were not clear, it was not developed in giving its true meaning.”

9.3.3 ADMINISTRATIVE COMPLEXITY:

When a role of leader takes many guises, including educator, manager and a teacher, all of which is bundled up with administrative expectations, it results into Administrative complexity.

The Extension officers expressed their views with regards to Administrative Complexity during the interview and their responses were analysed into the following category – Multiple Administrative Duties.

Multiple Administrative Duties

- An extension officer is also utilised by the authority or the government to do other administrative work like conducting Gram Panchayat elections which were conducted in December - January 2020-2021. These election duties clashed with the LEAD programme course.
- *“Gram Panchayat elections were held while doing this course, we have to wait for at least two months for election.”*

10 CONCLUSION

Professional development is the planned, progressive, life long process of education, learning, self-development and experience. Professional development is the path toward a leadership role that helps officers do the task more efficiently. Professional development develops the potential of the extension officers to the fullest by training and workshops.

The professional development program by LFE in collaboration with MIEPA has developed this LEAD course which helped the officers to improve their knowledge, skill and mindset. This course has helped in capacity building, administrative capacity, to improve educational outcomes for students. From the interview we found that the course helps the officers to understand M&E, the methods of evaluation, planning and training and use it effectively in their work.

The key challenges faced by the extension officers were that they had too many schools to inspect, they had a lot of administration work and had to maintain the data collected from the schools and also got election duties. The officers also act like intermediaries between the schools and higher authority, they get very less support from the higher officers like BEO, EO, teachers and principals. As these officers have to look into the level education that the students are at and also how the teachers teach. They also need to train the teachers.

Relating to the article titled Academic programme leadership in African Higher Education, the paper evaluated the design of the programme into two themes i.e systemic challenges and Required Skills for Academic Leadership. The first theme systemic challenges include the analysis of timing, delivery mode and venue of the programme. The second theme includes the analysis of the course modules, pedagogical dimensions, communications and reflective practices adopted during the programme.

The paper found that the program designed for the officers has strong alignment with the **Professional Learning Framework CEASA (2006)** as the program aims at professional learning that is collaborative, planned, focused on the fieldwork,

based on inquiry processes, data collection and analysis and supported by quality leadership. The program supports teachers to reflect on their knowledge, skills, practice values and beliefs through reflective and inquiry processes. The program provides a comprehensive, structured approach in the form of modules, PLC (Professional Learning Community) and reflective assignments.

11 ANNEXURES

Quantitative Research Tool

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/13kmViPkb74ONv7OYBteDLZgwCxmRfSpCcJF193dGruI/edit?usp=sharing>

Qualitative Research Tool

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1cjAYIp8d65tPFEhJqnel__NPBTxBYCecJMxTrJDCZ-c/edit?usp=sharing

Schedule for Interview

<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1ddQm6T1Q14uEBYgvyfkCBROvtSHV3a4MSoFN79v6Mbw/edit?usp=sharing>

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