

## A Phenomenological Study of Master Trainers Regarding Induction Training Practices in Punjab

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### Abstract

A trainer's role is to assist his trainees in how to be a skilled and effective master trainer. A good trainer can grab the attention of the participants by guiding them on how to be effective in their work (Hasib & Azka, 2020; Parsley, 2018). The research aimed to find out master trainers' lived experiences related to induction training of elementary school teachers in Punjab. The present study was conducted in the phenomenological design because it is intended to gain deep insight into master trainers' perspectives related to induction training of elementary school teachers. For this study, six semi-structured in-depth phenomenological interviews were conducted for data collection. Only those master trainers were selected for research who had a minimum of five years of training experience in induction training. Both male and female participants were selected through purposive sampling. Three-stage coding methods and thematic analysis were used for data analysis. Qualitative data analysis revealed key four themes, namely being experienced as a master trainer, activities by trainers, skills developed by trainers, and the fourth theme was complicated with the challenges facing being a master trainer and suggestions from them. Findings from this research, point out that induction training has countless value for elementary school teachers. The study also explored and communicate the importance of master trainers' role in developing different skills of elementary school teachers through different activities. The study also investigated the master trainers' challenges and problems related to induction training.

**Keywords:** Master Trainers' Induction Training, Elementary School Teachers.

### Introduction

Induction training is provided to the school teachers to make a close relationship among the school environment, the school set up, and with their colleagues (Ingersoll, 2012; Krasnoff, 2014). The goal of induction is to train beginning teachers' teaching strategies. Induction can be helpful to improve the learning, growth, and success of their students (Kwanzaa, 2020). It is observed that induction programs of teachers assist newly recruited teachers to bridge the knowledge gap (Ingersoll, 2012). A research report revealed that an induction program normally includes professional development which incorporates professional learning communities (CCSESA, 2016). Induction is a process that assists novice teachers in their adaptability phase. A process that helps the trainees to integrate their new role and institution is called the induction process (Sheeba & Christopher, 2020). The new teachers feel difficulty to build up a healthy connection with the school settings and the school assignments. They need a strong support system and this support is provided by induction training and induction practices (Parsley, 2018). Newly appointed school teachers feel isolated, personally and professionally and they also feel the stress of their new job there for, induction training is provided the opportunity to create cordial relations and a conducive environment for working (Mabaso, 2012; Parsely, 2018). An explicit focus on fresh teacher induction is significant because the first few years of teaching are an uncertain time in the expansion of professional teaching (Davis & Higdon, 2008). Induction training and its practices help the newly recruited teachers to be well prepared to overcome the teaching challenges (Tews & Noe, 2017). So, induction training allows new teachers to enhance their professional skills and boosts their confidence. In the same way, Growler, Warmish, & Hartfield, 2002, as cited by Mabaso, 2012, described that by getting induction training and attending induction programs, new teachers can easily adjust themselves in the institutional working environment.

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Induction training cannot be achieved its objectives successfully without the involvement of master trainers. Master trainers have great importance in induction training. They play an effective role in the smooth conduction of induction training (Heikkinen, Wilkinson, Aspfors, & Bristol, 2018). Inhuman & Sultan (2017) asserted that the job of the master trainers is to make learning effective and remarkable by putting their all possible efforts. If newly teachers get the training from highly expert and skilled trainers, they can improve and polish their teaching and professional skills in a better way. Dubey (2016) mentioned that the trainers and master trainers should have the basic skills & habits for the training of the novice teachers, e.g. good listener, practitioner and skillful in new technology, etc. These habits & skills facilitate the master trainers to impart new skills and knowledge for better adjustment in the new working environment. It is also observed from the literature that the master trainers have to face different problems and challenges related to infrastructure, management, module updating, and implementation (Hasib & Azka, 2021; McGeehan, 2019).

The literature revealed that there are several studies on trainers' areas of expertise, practices, induction training's effectiveness, beginning teachers' perspectives, and their early experiences (McGeehan, 2019; Hodge & Harvey, 2015; Rohmann, Froncek, Mazziotta, & Piper, 2017; Smith & Grace, 2011; Mamaqi, Miguel, & Olave, 2011), in Pakistan, most studies focused on induction training practices & effectiveness, induction training' policy, newly teachers' experiences (Chaudhary, Imran Anju, Imran & Shahid 2012; Usman, 2015; Ahmad, et al, 2018; Butt & Farooq, 2019; Qureshi, Khan & Kalsoom, 2020; Khan & Malik, 2020). Limited studies are conducted on master trainers' perspectives and lived experiences. Most studies are conducted quantitatively. So, this study tried to listen to the voices of master trainers' and their perspectives about induction training. There is a need to explore this phenomenon with a qualitative lens. This study also supported exploring the phenomenon with the lens of a qualitative approach. The study also tried to be focused on the problems and challenges of the master trainers related to induction training in the light of their lived experiences.

### **Objectives of the study**

The objectives of the study were as under;

- To have an in-depth understanding of master trainers' lived experiences related to induction training of elementary school teachers in Punjab.
- To explore that what is the role of induction training for the professional development of elementary school teachers in the light of master trainers' experiences.

### **Research Questions**

The following guiding research questions were developed to get a deeper understanding and perspective of master trainers related to induction training.

- How do master trainers in Punjab describe their lived experiences related to induction training of elementary school teachers?
- What are the challenges and problems related to induction training in the light of master trainers' experiences?

### **Significance of the Study**

Trainers are those persons who provide relevant material in training such as, institution's introduction, knowledge about core concepts and also assist through different motivational activities like different games to enhance the academic and professional skills of the trainees. If the trainers are not skilled and experienced and having no expertise, such training will not be successful (Hasib & Azka, 2020). Qureshi, 2017 cited the view of Banilower, Heck, & Weiss, 2007, and explained that a successful training program and skilled trainers help school teachers to gain meaningful experiences. Among trainers, master trainers play a vital role in training programs. They are considered as a support for school teachers in induction training. So, this study will be beneficial for master trainers to improve the training experiences with the help of their training perspective. The challenges that occurred during induction training can be minimized with the feedback of master trainers. It is also significant that how the experiences of master trainers provide the guidance and measures for the betterment of the induction training. The study will also helpful in grabbing their personal experiences. This study will also be beneficial in improving the role of the induction training programs in the light of master trainers' experiences.

This study will be useful for training institutions of Pakistan in developing an appropriate mechanism for master trainers related to induction training. The present study may also assist the

educational institutions to overcome the weak areas of the induction training programs. The study will also be helpful for school administration, trainers, and mentors to use the best practices for induction training. This study may provide the basis for further research.

### **Literature Review**

Induction training provides the opportunity for the new and fresh teachers to be successful to overcome the educational challenges (Kelly, 2019). Induction training programs assist new teachers to enhance their teaching skills (Collahan, 2016; Loughry & Normore, 2013). Kwansawad (2020) described that induction training is very common among the training programs of any institution. Such training programs will support personnel in dealing with fretfulness. Mchete & Shayo, (2020) stated with the view of Gerhart & Wright, 2017 that induction training is one of the types of training, provided by the institutions and organizations to their newly recruited employees to assist them to be settled easily in their new working environment. The employees' competence and efficiency are based on training. This is one of the best and main ingredients for employees' professional development (Sheeba, 2020; Bantwini, 2019). The literature revealed that induction training is planned and working internationally (Callahan, 2016; Loughry & Normore 2013; Dilshad & Iqbal, 2010; Gills, Wang, Fish & Stegall, 2018). There are several studies like Rutaihwa (2013) revealed in his study, based on orientation programs of Tanzania public institutions' employees that staff commitment and motivation is the result of effective induction training. He further concluded that effective induction training also reduces employees' intention to refrain from the job. Another study was conducted by Alberta (2012). He researched the Ghana education service at the Greater Accra region and exposed that induction training develops job satisfaction and loyalty in employees. In the same way, Mugo and Guyo (2018) conducted research and explored noteworthy differences among employees' performance as the result of induction training. On the other hand, Kebenei (2014) highlights the hidden fact that many institutions carry out induction training to the recruits only for a requirement. He further elaborated that the only purpose of induction training is just to meet the requirements of the recruitment. On the other side, it is also said that induction training enhances the teaching skills of novice teachers and helps them in their adaptability phase (Kelly, 2019; Bantwini, 2019). There is a difference between professional development training programs and real-life practices in the context of teachers. There is no connection between them. Most of the institutions are not in a position to provide such training facilities to their employees for the improvement of their skills (Bantwini, 2019; Brule, 2008).

Training cannot be successful and effective without the services of master trainers and mentors (Smith & Ingersoll, 2004; Heikkinen, Wilkinson, Aspors, & Bristol, 2018). As, McGeehan, 2018 cited with the view of Schlechty, 1985 that one of the important aspects of an induction program is mentoring. Master trainers' role is very much important in induction training. They are like the backbone of any training program. The master trainers play a primary role to impart knowledge. The master trainers should be experienced and skillful in their field. Only competent master trainers can contribute well to the enhancement of newly recruited teachers (Inhuman & Sultan, 2017; Bertain, 2012; Dubey, 2016; Hasib & Azka, 2021).

According to Nally and Ladden (2020), mentors and trainers should be efficient in their training skills. The literature points out the unbounded benefits of trainers and mentors with their association in training and mentoring. Bliss, 2011 cited with the views of Villain, 2002, p.7; Wong, 2001, p.8, he asserted that mentors contribute as a guide, significant acquaintance, trainer, advisor, and supporter. A trainer's role is to assist his trainees in how to be a skilled and effective master trainer. A good trainer can grab the attention of the participants by guiding them on how to be effective in their work (Parsley, 2018). A trainer creates a safe and positive learning environment in which participants feel heard, can share their knowledge, and are free to ask questions (Şekerçi, & Karatas, 2019). In the same way, it is also said that in the role of a master trainer, you are not only an expert, you are also a coach and a mentor (Ahmed, 2019). Master trainers' role is to help participants to recognize how much they already know, to help them reinforce their knowledge through encouragement to ensure that they understand the training materials, and to empower and motivate participants to be effective master trainers themselves.

### **Methodology of Research**

The present study was conducted in the phenomenological design because it is intended to gain deep insight into master trainers' perspectives related to induction training of elementary school teachers.

Ben-Eliyahu (2017) asserted that to explain a phenomenon in detail and in-depth, phenomenology is best. The researcher tried to attain a deep understanding of how they construct their worlds, how people interpret their understandings, and what connotations they attribute to their understandings (Creswell, 2013). Phenomenological research is particularly used to get a deep understanding of how individuals experience their world (Penely, 2018; Smith, Jarman, & Osborn, 1999). In this study, the lived experience of each master trainer was used to assemble a list of sustenance systems used to explore whether there was a noteworthy association between trainers and induction training practices.

### **Participants**

Purposive sampling was used to identify the potential research participants. The research participants were approached with the contact of the administration of Quaid-e-Azam Academy for Educational Development. Prior consent was taken by the participants. The selection was restricted to those master trainers who had experiences of induction training because phenomenologists are emphasized the lived experiences of the particular participants. The inclusion criteria for the selection of potential research participants were as follows; (a) only those master trainers were selected for research who had a minimum of five years' training experiences in induction training or more than five years. (b) The master trainers who wanted to participate voluntarily were selected. The researcher communicated the purpose and methodology of the study to the participants. Six master trainers who had experiences of five years and a maximum of 12 years were selected for the interview and semi-structured in-depth phenomenological interviews were conducted to get the information.

### **The instrument for data collection**

The interview was used as a tool for data collection. Semi-structured interviews were developed by the researcher to gather the information. The literature review helped out to prepare interview questions. The researcher in this study used the interview guide approach. A list of interview questions was developed before the interviews to make sure to best use the limited time available for each interview (Patton, 2014). A domain expert examined the interview questions. Data were composed in Punjab, through face-to-face, semi-structured in-depth phenomenological interviews with six master trainers at their training centers. The interviews were conducted in the office of master trainers. All interviews were audio-recorded.

### **Data Analysis & Interpretation**

Interviews were transcribed and then coding, categorization, and contextual themes emerged. At the semantic level, themes were identified throughout the data analysis. At the various stages of the study, the process of member checking was also done to verify the exactness of the gathered information, transcripts of interviews were given to the research participants. To lessen the possible prejudice, the interpretation related to findings was also shared with the participants and also with their peers (Dishena & Mokoena, 2016; Creswell, 2013). To ensure the accuracy of the transcripts, an autonomous individual who was not the participant of the study, listened to the tapes and made the comparison for transcriptions. The researcher tried to provide the objectivity of good qualitative research. Then it was concluded based on the consensus developed between the researchers' coding and a partial expert that the coding process was accomplished (Morse et al., 2002).

Themes were identified in the context and support of the research questions. Four main key themes were emerged from the data, namely being experienced as a master trainer, activities by trainers, skills developed by trainers, and the fourth theme was complicated with the challenges facing being a master trainer and suggestions from them.

### **Theme 1: Being Experienced as a Master Trainer**

Through interviews from master trainers, an emerging theme compound within their replies. The majority of the master trainers described how this induction training enhances their learning skills and helps them in becoming good master trainers. One master trainer, M1, shared his experience and stated that "I was also involved in induction training when educators SESE and SSE were deputed and reputed by the department, so I got the chance of pre-service, in-service and induction training as well. I am also a certified master trainer by British Council for induction training. So, I have a great experience of induction training as a master trainer." M2 "my experience as a master trainer was very good. Luckily, I trained many school teachers to be professional in their teaching career and as a master trainer, I have more opportunity to have close coordination with the trainees". M3 "As a master trainer, my experience was good. We have to follow the pre-planned scheme of studies and timetable. The trainees are newly inducted so, their responses and feedback are good. They want to

learn and participate. They are enthusiastic. They know the need and importance of induction training. They know that they are going to join the educational institution as their profession so they have to learn necessary knowledge and information about it.”

M4 “my experience as a master trainer is very good. I also love my teaching experience. However, the training is very informative and I always enjoy my training sessions. I experience different participants having different background". M5” Well, It's good. I have also learned many things from the participants that how to handle adult people, andragogy, especially because pedagogy is a different thing. It is a great experience to handle the persons.”

M6 "I have experience as a master trainer and as a general subject. In general training I focus on corporal punishment, leave rules, harassment, school facility, school environment, school leadership, school record keeping, and school administration, all these elements are general and in induction training, we focus on these elements except subjects.

All the research participants shared their common experiences of induction training as a master trainer and explained that it gives them a great opportunity to transfer knowledge and skills to other participants and provide them a golden chance to learned new things and information as a trainer. They all were quite satisfied by giving the induction training to the school teachers.

### **Theme 2: Activities by trainers**

All the research participants shared a lot of activities that are planned and used during the induction training to create interest and motivation during induction training. These activities are provided by the department and sometimes they created themselves. They also shared their experiences and described that these activities help them to make the training environment more conducive and attractive. These activities included (a) brainstorming activities; M1 "I search brainstorming activities on the internet and use them in my training sessions". M2 “I use different activities like brainstorming activities in my training sessions to create a conducive environment”. (b) Group & peer activities; M3 “The trainer should not be authoritative. Group activities and peer activities are planned”. M4 “I mostly encourage participants to take part actively in the discussion and group Presentations. I always try to make training sessions more attractive for the participants”. (c) Questioning technique & dramatization; M5 “I try my level best to provide a supportive and healthy training environment for my trainees. Most of the time questioning technique and dramatization is good for trainees’ learning and engagement. (d) Book review activity; M6 “Training activities are also included book review. All the technical things like stock taking, record keeping, utilization of funds, reporting, assessment & evaluation are included in the activities through book review”.

The participants shared their experiences and described some activities that have been used in induction training. All the participants expressed that they make their training sessions interesting and informative by using different types of activities because these relevant activities attract the trainees and grasp their attention in the training. One participant, M2, stated that brainstorming activities help the trainers to create a conducive learning environment in training sessions. Another participant, M5, told that most of the time, questioning techniques and activities performed through dramatization are seemed to be good for the learning of trainees. Most of the master trainers agreed that these activities help and assist them to make their training sessions more meaningful and attractive but one participant had a different view he was in favor of the democratic training style. M3, that the trainers should not be authoritative with their trainees. He reflected on group and peer activities for the trainees.

### **Theme 3: Skills developed by trainers:**

The majority of the master trainers mentioned that induction training assists & helps to enhance different skills among elementary school teachers related to their working environment. Several skills were introduced in the induction training for the new teachers, e.g., pedagogical skills, professional skills, communication skills, time management skills, skills related to IT, and the most important skills that are used to increase knowledge regarding service rules. One master trainer, M1 shared his voice that "The basic objective or the purpose of induction training is to provide pedagogical skills to improve their professional skills when they are going to serve in their institutions". M2 reflected differently than “Induction training enhances professional skills and communication skills. It also provides opportunities how to build up a close relationship with other colleagues and with the school principal. It also increases knowledge regarding services rules and financial guidelines”.

Most of the master trainers were agreed that induction training developed pedagogical and professional skills in elementary school teachers but one master trainer, M3 said that “We prepare the

teachers for healthy communication. We help them to develop good communication skills. How to face the audience? What should be your position in front of the class? What should be the position of your face, your body gestures, and how should start?" Another master trainer, M4 added that "New ESE and SSE, are very much computer literate as compare to the older teachers. They know the utilization of computer, they know the utilization of internet but they have no so many skills, we have to introduce the information technology skills to them".

Two out of six master trainers have a different perspective and mentioned that induction training increases knowledge regarding service rules. One master trainer, M5 said "This training provides the newly recruited teachers, the basic knowledge and information regarding the educational institutions. The new teachers build up their understanding about finance and budget matters". Another master trainer, M6 added, "In general training, I focus on corporal punishment, leave rules, harassment, school facility, school environment, school leadership, school record keeping and administration, all these elements are general and in induction training, we focus on these elements except subjects". All the master trainers focused on implementing different activities during induction training. They agreed that these activities enhance the involvement of trainees in training sessions and as well as make the trainers' app better.

**Theme 4: Challenges Facing Being a Master Trainer and Suggestions from them:**

Master trainers point out a lot of challenges like resources and financial problems, delay in the financial guidelines, timing issues, problems related to the system, coordination and communication problems, behavioral and attitude problems by the trainees, traveling and conveyance problems. They indicated many challenges and problems during induction training.

As M1, indicated "I have to do multi-tasks. There are problems related to the system, coordination, and communication. Then I have to face behavioral problems. People don't want to change themselves. They are not ready to accept change". He also said that the administration should support the concerned master trainer and assist him to be comfortable in his assignment. He must not be overburdened. The majority of the participants were quite satisfied with the duration of the induction training. They were agreed and showed their consent on the proper and planned execution of the induction training. However, some research participants expressed that the timing for induction training is long and it is not comfortable for the trainees especially for female trainees to stay in the training centers for a long time. Most trainees have to come from far away For example, M2, stated that:

"Yes, As far as induction training is concerned, the most important is time. Timing issues are there because we as educators work on induction training and our timing is off at 2'o clock and the training continues at most till 5'o clock. So it is difficult for especially females because they have to see their kids and families on time."

The research participants observed that the school infrastructure also plays an important part. They shared that they had to face problems regarding training centers' physical facilities and financial problems. Sometimes, training rooms are not appropriate. Sitting plan is not working well and due to insufficient facilities, they had to face issues and problems related to trainees' attitude. M3 mentioned that "I have to face problems related to infrastructure and also having attitude problems by the trainees". The participants shared that sometimes induction training was not planned properly. They have to arrange sometimes on short notices. M4, for example, stated, "Yes, sometimes there is a problem of resources because training is arranged in hurry, in a rush, there is a delay in the financial guide-lines. Then sometimes resources are not available in the training venue. Similarly, M5 also observed the same problems. He said "There are problems related to the system, coordination, and communication. Then in our institutions, discipline & Financial problems are there. Financial guidelines are not matched with the needs of the field". Another master trainer added that the arrangements regarding human needs were not very much satisfactory. He mentioned "Well, human needs should be kept in mind. There is the arrangement of water but that was not up to the mark. We are providing training to the teachers so that we must give them respect and proper facilities or arrangements".

**Discussion & Implications**

The current research addressed the research questions. "How do master trainers in Punjab describe their lived experiences related to induction training of elementary school teachers"? And "What are the challenges and problems, master trainers have to face related to induction training in the light of

their experiences? The present research mainly examined the perspective of master trainers, indulged in induction training in Punjab (province of Pakistan). It is cleared from the findings that induction training is of countless worth for elementary school teachers.

Induction training provides an opportunity to build a healthy relationship with the school administration and help the newly joined elementary school teachers to understand school infrastructure. (Ingersoll, 2012; Krasnoff 2014; Kwanzaa, 2020). The results of the present study indicated that master trainers play an important role in induction training. All the master trainers seemed to be satisfied with the objectives of the induction training. They explained that induction training is completing its objectives and helpful in enhancing the pedagogical and professional skills of elementary school teachers (Kwansawad, 2020).

Master, trainer's role is to identify how much they already know to assist to strengthen their knowledge through reinforcement, to confirm that they understand the training materials, and to empower and motivate participants to be effective master trainers themselves. A good trainer can grab the attention of the participants by guiding them on how to be effective in their work (Parsley, 2018; Dubey, 2016). A study shows that it is helpful for teachers to collaborate by assigning a mentor and trainer in their early teaching career (McGeehan, 2019). A trainer makes such arrangements to create a safe and positive learning environment in which participants feel heard, they can also share their knowledge and are free to ask questions (Şekerçi, & Karatas, 2019; Hasib & Azka, 2021; Mohanty, 2016). Different activities are provided by the department and sometimes by the master trainers to make a conducive training environment for the trainees. These activities were brainstorming, group & peer activities, questioning, and book review.

The present research also revealed that master trainers help to develop different skills in school teachers like pedagogical skills, professional skills, communication skills, and IT skills. (Hasib & Azka, 2021; Inhuman & Sultan, 2017; Bertain, 2012; Dubey, 2016). The findings of the current study corroborated the pre-existing research findings on the studies about trainers' perspective and views regarding induction training, conducted in Pakistan and worldwide ( Muhammad, Hukamdad & Samiullah, 2021; Ozer, Duan & Tekke, 2019; Şekerçi, 2019; Wisshak & Hochholdinger, 2019 ). The trainers also provide guidelines to increase knowledge and information regarding service rules. So, induction training allows them to enhance their professional skills and boost up their confidence. In the same way, Grobler, Warnich, & Hartfield, 2002 cited by Parsely, 2018 described that by getting induction training and attending induction programs new teachers can easily adjust themselves in the institutional working environment.

Master trainers point out a lot of challenges like resources and financial problems, delay in the financial guidelines, timing issues, problems related to the system, coordination and communication problems, behavioral and attitude problems by the trainees, traveling and conveyance problems. The master trainers have to face different problems and challenges related to infrastructure, management, module updating, and implementation (Hasib & Azka, 2021; McGeehan, 2019).

The research endorses that administration has to come to be intricated in the procedure of induction training in instruction to inspire master trainers to involve completely in the practice. Moreover, the majority of the master trainers suggested that the school department and administration requisite confirms the distribution of adequate budget for induction training for every year. They agreed that it is important to increase training resources and take measures to make training centers accessible by the participants easily. It is also needed to get feedback and views of those school teachers who have got training. This will make the induction training more operative fruitful and also expand for the future.

### **Conclusion**

All the master trainers were agreed that induction training has great worth for newly appointed school teachers. They are satisfied with the duration, proper execution, and quality of induction training. The master trainers shared their experiences and explained that they focus on trainees' management, pedagogical, professional, IT, communication, and record-keeping skills in the induction training. It is also concluded from the master trainers' perspective that they use different kinds of activities like brainstorming, group and peer activities, questioning techniques, and book reviews to make their training sessions attractive and informative. The majority of the master trainers expressed that they have to face different challenges during their training sessions like lack of resources, printing issues, financial and administrative issues. Most of the master trainers suggested that the school



administration, training resource centers, and government must play a key role to cope with the challenges that are created during training sessions. Through this, induction training would be more beneficial for both schools and their newly inducted staff.

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