A Report of the Training Programme for DIET faculty of Andhra Pradesh on Lab-area Activities for improving the Quality of Elementary Education

Coordinator
Prof. C.G.Venkatesha Murthy

Regional Institute of Education (NCERT)
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Preface

The present training programme was organized in response to the request made by the Education Department of Government of Andhra Pradesh, in its State Coordination Committee meeting held in Andhra Pradesh. Since the concern of lab area activities is to be understood by the DIET faculty as well as faculty of SCERT, it was planned to invite one DIET faculty from every DIET and a few faculty from SCERT.

The training programme had 14 DIET faculty members representing different DIETs. In order to make this programme participant friendly, efforts were made to invite resource persons also from Andhra Pradesh. This programme had five Resource Persons; Prof. Rangacharlu, Former faculty of SCERT, AP, Prof. K. Ganeshwara Rao, DNR college of Education, Bheemavaram, AP, Prof. K. Ramachandra Achar, (Retd) Karnataka University Dharwad and Sri S. Krishnappa, of KSOU, Mysore. The coordinator is thankful to all the Resource Persons, without whom this work would have been successful. The coordinator is also thankful to Prof. D. Basavayya, Retired Professor of Mathematics, RIE, Mysore who has contributed substantially for the Handbook, which was a part of the training programme.

The coordinator is thankful to Prof. Prem Latha Sharma, Principal of RIE, Mysore who has constantly supported this programme. The support extended by Prof. B.S. Upadhyaya, Head, DEE and his entire team from DEE is sincerely acknowledged. The coordinator is thankful to the Director, SCERT, Andhra Pradesh for showing so much of interest in identifying the DIET faculty for the programme well in advance and also in informing the same to RIE, Mysore.

The present report attempts to capture the proceedings of the training programme. It is hoped that the readers of the report find it vivid and useful.

Prof. C.G. Venkatesha Murthy
Coordinator

Contents

1. Planning of the Training Programme

The present training programme was planned at the Regional Institute of Education, Mysore, for a period of five days from 23rd May to 27th May, 2011. This was attended by four Resource Persons. They were Prof. D.Basavayya, Prof. K. Ganeshwara Rao, Prof. Rangacharlu and the coordinator, Prof. C.G.Venkatesha Murthy. In this meeting the basic issues related to the concept of lab area was presented by the coordinator. This included, the lab area concept, lab are activity planning, Lab area proposal development, documentation and dissemination of lab area activities. All these issues were discussed and a formal schedule for the training programme was also drawn.

An approach paper prepared was presented before all the resource persons which is as follows.

Approach Paper

Lab Area Concept: An analysis

Objectives: At the end of reading this module, the reader would be able to;

(1) gain the clarity of the concept Lab area in the DIET context.
(2) understand the attributes / characteristics of Lab area.
(3) understand the misconceptions that exists about Lab area
(4) accept the need to have a lab area
(5) distinguish different functions of the lab area, and
(6) understand issues concerning planning of a lab area.

I What is lab area?

The DIET guidelines (1989) brought out by MHRD, mentions about the lab area, under different functions of P&M. Perhaps, it has not been elaborated and discussed for wider benefit at any other place. There is a need to understand the spirit and intent of having a lab area by any professional institutions. One can understand that the term lab or laboratory as a place used for experimenting

and creating new things, testing certain things etc. In the context of DIET's functions, a lab area will have to be understood as an area, which could be used for field-testing purposes. From this viewpoint, a lab area could be defined as follows.

"A Lab Area is an area chosen by a DIET within its jurisdiction to experiment, study and conduct research with the objective of becoming more professional in its working towards the improvement of the quality of elementary education." (A definition generated by a group of Educationists in a workshop held at RIE, Mysore.)

Explanation of different terms used: Different terms used in the above definition needs to be understood in the DIET context as follows.

(1) *An area:* is used to demarcate a geographic boundary of a DIET, which covers every thing there that relates to school education in general, and elementary education in particular.

(2) *Jurisdiction*: is used to indicate the geographic boundary in which a DIET operates.

(3) *Experiment*: is used as a field experiment. By field experiment, what is meant is a systematic activity of studying changes in social setting, which one can see objectively, as a result of the manipulation of certain variables. In field experiment, an idea, a process is tested and its results are verified. It could include all tryouts and innovations too.

For example: (a) Experimenting on efficient ways of introducing grades in lieu of marks in schools through tryout of different methods.

(b) Trying an alternate model of internship, or practice teaching in a DIET.

(4) *Study*: is used as an activity of trying to understand meaning out of existing situation/ information/ data. It is different from experiment

in the sense that here nothing is manipulated. The status is studied. After anything is implemented one may like to see how that is working.

For example: (a) Impact of mid day meal scheme on enrollment, quality of pupil participation and their achievement.

(b) Preparedness of D.Ed students to a new internship model.

© Evaluation of the worth whileness of new textbooks introduced.

(5) *Research:* is an activity of generating new knowledge. Any activity undertaken systematically which can generate new knowledge in educational context are educational researches. A research may have an experimental possibility built into it. Experiment by itself does not become research. In an experiment, it is attempted to study a cause and effect relationship. Building a new theory /model based on tested conjectures, there by generating a new knowledge is the task of research. There are very thin demarcating lines between studies and researches. Studies use secondary source of information mostly, while researches use primary sources of information mostly.

For example: (a) Comparative study of different methods of teaching in a particular context.

(b) Assessing the systemic preparedness in the introduction of English from class III.

(6) *Professional*: Teaching is a profession. A teacher is a professional and he has the moral responsibilities of working towards all round development of the personality of his students. Therefore, a teacher provides plenty of learning opportunities by design, and thereby enables students to grow to their full potential. A teacher does not take teaching as a job, but as a profession. Therefore, their responsibilities are professional in nature.

(7) *Improvement of quality elementary education*: refers to all those processes covering activities and initiatives undertaken by which provision of access, better enrollment, higher retention of students in schools, arrest of wastage and stagnation, improving better standards of transaction and functioning, higher rate of learning as well as higher levels of attainments are achieved at elementary level in a district.

With the above explanation of the definition, it becomes clear that in the DIET context, a lab area is a chosen part of a district, which a DIET can recognize and adopt in order to work intensely investing its human and material resources and undertake activities by which new things are tested, innovations are tried out, new relationships are established, and new knowledge is generated. Putting together all these activities, it can empower a DIET in becoming more professional as well as become capable of informing and influencing educational planners and decision makers leading to qualitative improvement of school education. Therefore, understanding different issues and concerns of Lab area becomes necessary for all the faculty of DIET.

Every DIET has many different functions to perform. There are many functions, which DIET faculty will have to implement through out the district. These routine activities do not become the activities of a lab area, as they are to be implemented uniformly throughout. These are activities which are non-negotiable in nature.

A lab area is an area, which is not necessarily confined only to DIETs, or its context but also to any professional body, which may need to try out its own activities, programmes and innovations in order to test their efficacy, suggest certain changes based on tested strategies in order to bring qualitative changes in its functioning. In this sense, it is important to know the concept of lab area. This

could perhaps be, understood better if it is seen from its attributes and characteristics.

II What are the attributes and Characteristics of a Lab area?

Some of the attributes and characteristics of a lab area in the DIET context could include the following.

(1) *A chosen piece of a district:* A lab area is a chosen piece of a district, which is chosen by a DIET itself, by design, based on certain criteria.

(2) *Used for field experimentation:* This chosen piece of an area is used for field experimentation. Experiments are done in a reality situation, which may lead to professional development of DIET faculty as well as enable a district in working better towards improving the quality of elementary education.

(3) *Lab institutions are a part of a lab area:* A lab area is an area, which could have a lab school, a lab NFE center or a lab adult education center, etc. It only means that a lab area covers lab institutions. For example, if a DIET chooses a pocket as its lab area, all the formal schools, NFE centers, Adult education centers, the community, all will become a part of Lab area. All institutions, which have a bearing on elementary level education and adult education, will become the part of that lab area.

(4) *Different lab areas can also co-exist:* There can be different lab areas which may focus on different concerns, if need be in a pocket. Certain pockets can focus on formal elementary education, certain pockets on adult education, & non-formal education, etc. The point that is attempted to be made here is that it is not always necessary that there must be only one lab area at a given point of time. Yet, logistically speaking, it would be all right if a particular geographic piece is chosen as a lab area, as managing different lab areas could pose problems.

(5) *Can be a part of annual plan:* A lab area activities can emerge out of activities of annual planning covering different activities. It implies that activities of a lab area can be carved out of annual plans.

(6) *Lab area activities are non routine activities:* Activities that are undertaken in a lab area are those, which try to test some thing new and the outcome of which can enhance professional insights of DIET faculty, or provide suggestions to the educational planners, managers, administrators and organizers, or can also help a district education implementation authorities in implementing new ways of doing things based on tried out modes. Therefore, they are not routine activities, which any DIET does.

(7) *Activities are planned by DIET faculty themselves*: Lab area activities are those activities, which are planned by the faculty of DIET themselves.

(8) *Members of DIET have a role in it:* Indeed, faculty members of DIET have their roles in planning and execution of lab area of a district. From this viewpoint collective wisdom and work needs to be ensured in order to have good lab area plans. This point needs to be appreciated by all DIET faculty members.

(9) *Resources of DIET converge on lab area:* The DIET will have to converge its resources, lend support in working on lab area activities. Though there are different branches, their respective contributions will have to converge. Therefore, there is a need to develop a healthy coordination within and between different branches of DIET and they all will have to work as one team.

(10) *Cannot go beyond its legitimate DIET jurisdiction:* While planning a lab area, the DIET cannot go beyond its DIET boundary. With in the district boundary, it can select any pocket, on its own pre-determined criteria and priority and select as its lab area.

III What are the possible Misconceptions about Lab Area?

One can visualize certain possible misconceptions, which may obscure the clarity of the concept of lab area. In this light, it is perhaps necessary to discuss a few possible misconceptions about lab area. They can be explained in DIET context as follows.

(1) *Lab area planning is prepared by higher ups / state department:* Lab area planning will have to be done locally, by DIET faculty, based on the identified priorities. Therefore it is a misconception to think that Lab area planning is prepared by higher ups or state department.

(2) *Lab area should be physically attached to DIET:* The lab area is not an area, which is physically attached to the wall of a DIET. As the DIET has a responsibility for the entire district, lab area can be chosen belonging to any part of the district. Therefore, it is a misconception to think that a lab area should be physically attached to DIET.

(3) *There cannot be more than one lab area:* There can be more than one lab area at a time. Looking at the responsibilities of the DIET, on priority basis different localities or pockets of a district can be considered as a lab area for different concerns. For instance, a DIET might be studying the effectiveness of certain incentive schemes on enrolment and participation in schooling process of tribal children in one pocket, while they might be studying a different model of practice teaching/internship in another pocket, or they might be interested in undertaking a research study to see the systemic preparedness for the introduction of English at class III level in rural areas. A DIET can afford to have 3 lab areas at a time too. Therefore, there can be different lab areas at a time. BUT, it should be manageable by a DIET.

(4) *It is difficult to understand the concept and activities of lab area:* This misconception can be questioned by all of us if we intend to be professionals in our endeavor to serve the cause of school education. Therefore, it is left to us whether we want to retain this apprehension or throw it.

(5) *Only DIET faculty has to work for Lab area:* The concept of a lab area is not confined only to DIET but all professionals and professional institutions can have their lab areas. For example, Mysore Medical College has K.R. Hospital as its lab hospital. Theory is taught in the college and real cases are seen and discussed in hospital.

(6) *It has nothing to do with DIET's annual plan and programmes and it is an additional burden to DIETs:* It is erroneous to say that the lab area concept has nothing to do with DIETs annual plans. Activities related to Lab area can emerge from annual plans. Lab area activities enable a DIET to work systematically and meaningfully. This can facilitate them to be more methodical and professional. Therefore it is not an additional burden at all. On the contrary, it is a platform to become more professional.

(7) *Its planning and implementation is the responsibility of only P&M branch and not others in the DIET:* Though the guidelines for DIETs clearly mentioned lab area under P&M functions, it needs to be understood as a responsibility of the entire DIET, but, P&M can perhaps coordinate some of these activities. DIET as a unit has to generate basic data about the district seeking the cooperation of sub district functionaries. Based on the data, all the branches will have to provide necessary inputs in formulation of lab area planning of the district for identifying different roles of

different branches and different faculty members. From this perspective, lab area planning and implementation cannot be the sole responsibility of P&M.

(8) *Identification of lab area is time consuming*: It is indeed a misconception to think that identification of a lab area is time consuming. It is in fact an intelligent activity to identify a lab area. All DIETs have demographic details of the district. Educational indicators are also available. The nature of the proposed activity and its demand will enable a DIET to identify its lab area. Therefore, it is not to be understood as time-consuming activity.

(9) *Lab area activity is expensive*: It is a misconception to think that lab area activity is expensive. It is a miniature activity undertaken systematically. In fact these activities need to grow more and more. These activities are not at all expensive looking at the power they have in informing and influencing those who matter.

(10) *Specialized training is necessary to understand the concept and implement it:* There is no need for any specialized training in order to understand and implement lab area concept. A simple one-time training would be all right. Once, one gets clarity of the concept, one can continue to plan and implement.

IV Why a lab area is necessary?

A lab area is necessary in any DIET context as it enable a DIET to achieve certain objectives, through certain of its functions. They can be enumerated as follows.

(1) Objectives of Lab Area:

Any lab area in the DIET context will have the following objectives. Acceptance of the Lab area concept enables a DIET;

(a) faculty to conduct experiments, carry out researches and studies thereby enhancing its professional competence, and

(b) to work towards qualitative improvement of school education in the district based on their own experiments, studies or researches.

From this viewpoint, in a lab area, if any activity of DIET needs to be understood whether it could be considered a fit activity under lab area, one can ask herself / himself whether the activity satisfies any one of the objectives. If the answer is yes, then it can be an activity, which can be accepted under lab area.

(2) Functions of a lab Area:

Any lab area can serve two distinct functions, enabling functions and facilitating functions. Enabling functions are those functions, which enable a DIET to become more professional in their perspectives and practice. Facilitating functions are those, which facilitate a district to achieve quality elementary education in the district.

Therefore, acceptance and adoption of lab area concept not only facilitate a DIET to grow professionally, but it also enables a district to provide quality elementary education. Thus, it serves twin purposes, i.e., professional development of the institute, and educational development of the district, both based on experiments, studies and researches.

(a) Enabling functions: as explained above are those functions, which enable a DIET to become more professional, as the lab area planning and implementation requires systematic and methodical approaches and professional perspectives. Some of the possible suggestive functions can be listed as follows. Adoption of lab area by a DIET can;

(a) encourage try out of experiments and innovative ideas in a practical situation in lab schools, lab NFE centres or Lab Adult Education centers or community.

(b) enable DIET faculty to demonstrate how certain ideas theorized can work in actual situations.

(c) educate DIET faculty by orienting them to real problems that exist in the field and provide a reality orientation. This in turn can tune a DIET faculty to see problems of education realistically and work.

(d) enable DIET faculty to be methodical, systematic and reality driven in planning programmes based on priorities. Thus, it sharpens the professional perspectives.

(b) Facilitating functions: As explained above, these functions facilitate a district to provide quality elementary education based on tryouts, experiments, studies and researches, thereby working towards achieving the objectives of UEE. These functions though not exhaustive, can be listed as follows. The outcomes of Lab area activities, which are based on experiments/ studies/ researches, will be capable of ;

(1) suggesting alternative ways to facilitate schools to provide access to all children who are in the age group of 6 to 14.

(2) suggesting ways to provide alternative education to all those who have missed formal education.

(3) proposing different models to facilitate enrollment of all children in the district irrespective of caste, sex, disability, language and religion based on its own try out.

(4) proposing different strategies to retain students in schools and complete elementary level.

(5) providing tips to school education system in providing quality education.

(6) influencing the school education system to provide elementary education, which is rooted in their own culture thereby making schooling enjoyable and relevant through some suggested methods.

(7) motivating schools to ensure that minimum levels are achieved by all learners at different levels of schooling, by suggesting certain tried and tested teaching-learning techniques.

V How to identify a Lab area?

Lab area identification is important as many activities can be undertaken there. There are different considerations for identification of a lab area. A lab area is a pocket of a district;

(1) close by to DIET as well as potential area where research and experiments can be conducted conveniently by DIET faculty.

(2) where certain variations are desirably needed to be studied.

(3) which is the requirement of the research / experimental work. (Ex. If certain institutions like multi-grade schools, tribal schools, minority schools, NFE Centres, EGS centers etc are to be studied, the area must have them.) So the research activity concern has to decide.

(4) where trying innovative ideas require an institution, which can match the context of innovation where it needs to be tried out. For example, if a DIET faculty wants to try out an innovation in an NFE center, the lab area must have an NFE center there..

(5) where certain indicators of access, enrollment, retention, drop out, wastage, stagnation, quality and achievement are not satisfactory. **Here in some cases, distance may not be a barrier.**

(6) where activities such as evaluation of textbooks, school effectiveness, testing innovations and such can be undertaken, which can truly represent all variations of the district. **Here again in some cases, distance may not be a barrier.**

With regard to the pre-service activities, a DIET has to reflect on improving its internship styles/practice teaching styles and work towards betterment and making it relevant. So objective evaluation and critical reflection becomes a necessity here.

From the above, it can be inferred that, while selecting a lab area, it is desirable that it satisfies the following conditions.

(1) **Potentiality of the pocket**: The pocket we identify as a lab area need to be potential enough to cover those components for which we want to study / experiment / innovate / evaluate.

(2) **Manageable in size and activities:** Make sure that the selection of a lab area is such which a team of DIET can manage easily without making it a burden from the viewpoint of management of functions of a lab area. Lab area activities are those activities, which are over and above routine activities. Therefore, let the activities not overshadow their regular functions.

(3) **Accessibility:** Easy accessibility is almost a requirement for identification of a lab area for testing reflective concerns. Almost the reverse is true for educational development concerns of the district.

VI How to plan a Lab Area activity?

Planning is an activity, which requires a systematic understanding of objective to be achieved, optimum utilization of the resources that are available including human and material through well thought out strategies, and considering the time targets that are to be honored. Interplay of these can enable one to plan well. Therefore, What are the objectives that are to be achieved for which we want to plan?, What area the available resources with which we can achieve the goals? What are the strategies that can be used? and Within what

time frame that needs to be achieved? are the questions, which are to be asked and addressed.

At this point, for the sake of illustration, it is worthwhile to list out a few activities, which can be considered under lab area. If these are found useful in the lab area, they could be recommended for wider implementation. Some of the possible activities that could be listed are as follows.

(a) Trying the alternate models of pre-service training programme. Ex. NCERT is trying how far two year B.Ed programme is better than the traditional one year B.Ed programme, through its lab institutions, the Regional Institutes of Education, located at Ajmer, Bhopal, Bhubaneswar and Mysore.

(b) Study of Systemic preparedness in the introduction of English at earlier levels.

(c) All innovative ideas proposed by DIET faculty could be tried out to see how far they might be effective.

(d) Acceptability and preparedness of trimester system in schools by stake holders.

(e) Tryout of different training models related to switching over to grading.

(f) Try out of strategies, which can persuade migratory population to enroll and continue education.

(g) Trying out of different methods by which community could be made to demand quality education from schools with their active collaboration.

While, planning activities under lab area, different activities require different styles, depending upon the nature of the activity. Let us try to plan a couple of activities as follows. These are only suggestive but not prescriptive.

Activity 1

Systemic Preparedness for the introduction of English at class III level

Lab Area: A representative area of a district.[This can be explained with more details]

Objective: To study the preparedness of the system for the introduction of English at class III level.

To achieve the above objective, the following strategies can be planned as follows.

Sl.No.	Sub activity	Resources required				Remarks
		Human	Material	Money	Expected Time	
1	Listing attributes / components of the system and planning activities	DIET faculty	-	-	7 days	
2	Identification and searching of tools	DIET faculty and some technical help	Literature	-	7 days	
3	Workshop on development and finalization of tools	DIET faculty and some technical people	Stationary items,	Rs.1,000	3 days	
4	Field Work: Assessment of (a) Teachers' competence to use English, (b) TLMs' suitability to introduce	DIET faculty	Tools, Tape recorders,	Rs. 5,000/-	8 days	

	English at class III level (c) Views of SDMC members					
5	Scoring and analysis	DIET team	Table work	-	10 days	
6	Report Writing and presentation	Activity Coordinator	Typing, Xeroxing Binding Multiple copies making	Rs 1000/-	10 days	
	TOTAL	DIET team	-	Rs 7000/-	45 working days	

The above activity requires 45 working days or nearly 2 months and requires around Rs.7,000/-. The output of this quick study could inform and influence the district authorities to feed to policy making. **On these concerns, it would still be a grand idea if all DIETs undertake the same study based on the same design, which will have a much better use in taking macro-level decisions.**

Activity 2

Training schoolteachers and educational administrators to switch over to grading in schools.

Lab Area: A representative area of a district.[This can be explained with more details]

(a) *Objective:* To train schoolteachers and educational administrators to switch over to grading in schools.

The above objective can be achieved by following the suggested steps.

Sl.No.	Sub activity	Resources required				Remarks
		Human	Material	Money	Expected Time	
1	Collect materials on need and importance of grading	DIET	Relevant materials	-	5 days	
2	Initial discussion with teachers across, on issues about evaluation in general and problems and inadequacies in specific	DIET team, school teachers and HMs	-	Rs.1,000/-	12 days	
3	Assessment of training needs on feedback – Workshop	DIET team	-	Rs.250/-	3 days	
4	Planning for a training programme	DIET team	-	-	2 days	
5	Training programme	DIET team	Training materials	Rs. 3,000/-	3 days	
6	Assessment of effectiveness of training programme	DIET team and participants	-	-	1 day	
7	Report Writing	Activity coordinator	Typing, Xeroxing, Binding, Multiple	Rs. 3000/-	10 days	

			copies making			
	TOTAL	DIET team	-	Rs 7,250/-	36 working days	

The above activity requires 36 working days and requires around Rs.7,250/-. The output of this training programme could inform and influence the schoolteachers to develop their preparedness to shift to grading.

Keeping in view the above, lab area planning needs to be done. The above guidelines are only suggestive of lab area planning and it is not prescriptive. After the planning and its approval, it can be executed suiting time of the faculty responsible for this activity. The execution of lab area activities can go on as per the plan. However, depending upon the nature of the activity, certain flexibility can also be built in. The main objective of using the lab area must not be defeated in the name of other things.

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After sharing of the approach paper, the resource persons planned for identifying additional support materials which should become a part of the training package. Since lab area activities involve understanding and undertaking educational researches, different theoretical issues related to educational research issues were also identified. They included, introduction to educational research, experimental research, non experimental studies, sampling techniques, tools and techniques of data collection, documentation and dissemination of lab area activities apart from re-visiting DIETs, their roles and functions.

Accordingly, all the resource persons came out with the outlines of their write ups and they were discussed. They were also modified based on the feedback from the group. Based on the outlines, some write ups were also developed. In total, in the planning meeting ended with clarity as to what should

be done, what should be the training material, and what should be the training schedule. The scheduled planned was as follows.

Lab area Training Programme Schedule for DIET Faculty of Andhra Pradesh: Dec, 21-23, 2011, RIE Mysore

Day		Session 1 *9 am to 11.15 am*	Session 2 *11.30 to 1 pm*	L U	Session 3 *2 pm to 3.15 pm*	Session 4 *3.30 pm to 5 pm*
21.12.2011		• Registration of participants • Inauguration • Revisiting DIETs: *Presentation* . VR	• Lab area concept *Presentation* CGVM	N	• Research studies in lab area, issues and procedures (Experimentation, Other studies, Sampling and Tools) *Panel Discussion* CGVM, KGR, VR, KNP, RA	
22.12.2011	REFLECTION	• Lab area activity Planning & Proposal Development: *Presentation* CGVM	• Identification of Lab area activities. • Formulation of Lab area plans in small groups *Group Work*	C	Presentation of Lab area proposals and group discussions *Group Presentations*	
`23.12.2011	REFLECTION	Development of tools *Group work*	Revision and Refinement of Lab area proposals *Group Activity*	H	Documentation and dissemination of Lab area activities. *Presentation* CGVM	• Valedictory and Feedback Session. • TA-DA Disbursement

VR = Prof. V.Rangacharlu, CGVM= Prof. C.G.Venkatesha Murthy KGR = Prof. K.Ganeshwara Rao
KNP= Sri Krishnappa RA = Prof. Ramachandra Achar

2. Training programme

The training programme commenced on the December, 21st, 2011 as per the above schedule. The participants included only the DIET faculty of Andhra Pradesh. After the registration of the participants, Prof. V. Rangacharlu started the first session by revisiting the DIET functions, which was followed by discussions. Once the stage was set, in the next session, Lab area concept was presented by Prof. C.G.Venkatesha Murthy, the coordinator of the programme. This was the important session as the entire conceptual clarity on the issue of lab area had to be shared with the participants. This session went off till the lunch time.

In the post lunch session, there was a panel discussion on research studies in lab area, issues and procedures. This included experimentation, other studies, sampling and tools. The panelists were Prof. C.G.Venkatesha Murthy, Prof. K. Ganeshwara Rao, Prof. V. Rangachary, Sri Krishnappa, and Prof. K. Ramachandra Achar. This session covered research methods in simple terms, such that, even the DIET faculty could understand it easily. This session enabled the participants to brush up their memory as they have studied at some point of time in their education degrees. The days activity came to an end with this session.

The second day activity began with a reflection of the day one. This was followed by a presentation on Lab area activity planning and proposal development, by Prof. C.G. Venkatesha Murthy. In the second session, the participants were made to identify lab are activities in their own contexts. Then they were made to formulate the lab area plans in small groups. With this the team left for lunch. In the post lunch session, the proposals prepared were presented and discussed. This went on for the rest of the day.

The third day began with the reflections of the second day activities and then the third day activities began. The tools that were required for different lab area activities were developed with the help of different resource persons. Adding these tools to the already developed draft proposals were refined, fine tuned and handed over to the Coordinator of the programme. The writing work ended in lunch break. In the post lunch session, there was another presentation on the documentation and dissemination of lab area activities, by Prof. C.G.Venkatesha Murthy, the Coordinator. All the issues related to lab area activities were covered sequentially. The post-tea session was a valedictory session, where the Principal of the institute, Prof. Prem Lata Sharma, addressed the participants and the resource persons. She thanked all the resource persons and congratulated the participants. The views of resource persons and some participants were sought. The valedictory session ended with a formal vote of thanks by the Coordinator.

The presentations made are as follows.

Lab area concept in the DIET context: Conceptual issues

Prof C.G.Venkatesha Murthy

Lab area in DIET context

- In DIET Guidelines (1989) of MHRD, there is a mention of Lab area under Planning and Management (P&M) functions.
- A lab is a laboratory used for conducting experiments, testing certain things, etc.
- In DIET context, a district is the maximum possible boundary where experiments could be conducted. These are field experiments.

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What is a field experiment?

- It is an experiment where the researcher is willing to manipulate certain variables to see the effect of independent variables on the dependant variable under certain controlled conditions.
- Certain new things get tested.
- These are done at a mini level and after their completion could be up-scaled to the macro level.

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Definition of a Lab area

- "A lab area is an area chosen by a DIET within its jurisdiction to experiment, study and conduct research with the objective of becoming more professional in its working towards the improvement of the quality of elementary education."

(Generated by a group educationists in a workshop at RIE, Mysore)

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Explanation of different terms used

1. *An area*: is used to demarcate a geographic boundary of a DIET which covers everything there that relates to school education in general and elementary education in particular.
2. *Jurisdiction:* is used to indicate the geographic boundary in which a DIET operates.

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3.Experiment: is field experiment. Here, ideas or issues or conjectures are tested under controlled conditions by manipulating independent variables to see the results in dependant variables.

Ex: Studying the effect of ICT mediated instruction in comparison to talk-chalk method.

4.Study: is used as an activity of trying to understand meaning out of existing situation/data. The status is studied.

Ex: (a) Impact of mid day meal on retention of students.

(b) Preparedness of D Ed students on new internship programme

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5. *Research*: is an activity of generating new knowledge.

Ex: Assessing the systemic readiness in the introduction of English from standard I

6. *Professional*: is one who practices a profession. Since teaching is a profession, a teacher is a professional.

7. *Improvement of quality elementary education:* covering access, enrolment, retention, and achievement. (Processes and products.) Systemic changes.

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Characteristics of a Lab area

1. A chosen piece of a district
2. Used for field experimentation
3. Lab institutions are a part of a lab area
4. Different lab areas can also co exist.
5. Can be a part of annual plan

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6. Lab area activities are non routine activities
7. Activities are planned by DIET faculty themselves
8. Members of DIET have a role in it
9. Resources of DIET converge on Lab area
10. Can not go beyond the DIET jurisdiction

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Possible misconceptions about Lab area

1. **Lab area activities are planned by higher ups/department.**
2. **Lab area should be physically attached to DIET.**
3. **There can not be more than one lab area.**
4. **It is difficult to understand the concept and activities of Lab area.**

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5. **Only DIET faculty has to work for lab area.**
6. **It has nothing to do with DIETs annual plan and programmes and it is an additional burden to DIETs.**
7. **Its planning and implementation is the responsibility of only P&M branch and not others in the DIET.**
8. **Identification of lab area is time consuming.**
9. **Lab area activity is expensive.**
10. **Specialized training is necessary to understand the concept and implement it.**

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Objectives of Lab area

Acceptance of a lab area concept enables a DIET :

(a) Faculty to conduct experiments, carry out researches and studies thereby enhancing its own professional competence, and

(b) To work towards qualitative improvement of school education in the district based on their own experiments, studies or researches.

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Functions of a lab area

Two functions:

- **Enabling functions**: are those where they enable a DIET to become more functional.
- **Facilitating functions**: are those by which it facilitates a district for systemic reforms based on tryouts, experiments, studies and researches.

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(a) Enabling functions

Adoption of a lab area by a DIET can;

(a) encourage a DIET to try out and experiment new things.

(b) enable DIET faculty to demonstrate how a certain idea theorized can work in reality.

(c) educate itself by exposing to reality situations in a district.

(d) sharpen professional perspectives.

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(b) Facilitating functions:

Lab area activities will be capable of;

(a) Suggesting alternate ways to facilitate schools to provide access to all children.

(b) Suggesting ways to provide alternative education all those who have missed formal education.

(c) Proposing different strategies of retaining students in the system.

(d) Propose innovative ways of enhancing learning.

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Identification of a Lab area

(1) Functionally close by to DIET where research, experimentation and studies can be conducted conveniently by DIET.

(2) An area which is the requirement of the study/experiment/study.

(3) Distance is not a barrier.

(4) More than one lab area can also co-exist.

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Planning of a Lab area activity

The questions that need to be answered are:

(a) What are the objectives that are to be achieved for which we want to plan?

(b) What are the strategies that can be used?

(c) What is the time frame available?

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Examples of Lab area activities

1. Trying out alternate models of pre service courses.
2. Study of systemic preparedness of introduction of English at class I.
3. Trying out different strategies which can persuade migratory population to enroll and continue education.
4. All innovative ideas proposed by DIET could be first tried out to see their practicability and workability.

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Lab area activity Proposal

Is it necessary to have a proposal for every lab are activity?

Yes. Indeed there is a necessity.A proposal will give a total picture of the activity, its nature, purpose, its implications and its budget. Therefore, it provides a total picture.

Components of a Proposal

Name of the DIET

(1) Title of the lab area activity

(2) Type of activity: Experiment/ Study

(3) Lab area:

(4) Composition of the lab area

(5) Need and justification

(6) Objectives

(7) Methodology Proposed:

(a) Units of Observation/ Sample

(b) Tools and Techniques

(c) Treatment of data

(8) Planning: (Incorporate planning in detail)

(9) Plan for utilization of the outcomes of lab area activity:

(10) DIET faculty involved: (Give the names based on their contributions and not seniority)

(11) Collaborators of the activity:

(12) Signatures of the:

(a) Coordinator/Team leader

(b) Principal DIET

Let us begin using this format and revise it when ever we think it is necessary. This is however not a prescription. It is only a suggestion.

Thank You

Documentation and Dissemination of lab area activities

Questions we need to answer are:

(a) **Why documentation of lab area activities is necessary?**

(b) **Why dissemination of lab area activities is necessary?**

Documentation of lab area activities

By definition, lab area activity in a DIET has a responsibility of informing and influencing self and the system, thereby it facilitates qualitative improvement of elementary education. In the absence of a systematic documentation of lab area activity nothing can be achieved.

How to document Lab area activities?

The following points may be kept in mind while documenting.

(1)Very simple language

(2) Straight forward presentation

(3) Do not prepare document to please or displease any one.

(4) Objective reporting of factual truths

(5) Write as clearly as possible all details thinking that the reader is not aware of any of these issues. He is new to it.

Recall, Lab area activities serve two functions.

(1) Enabling functions (Enables a DIET faculty to become professionally better) and

(2) Facilitating Functions (Facilitates a district to do qualitatively better through offering suggestions based on tried out strategies.)

Documenting Format of Enabling Activities

Section A

PRELIMS

(1) Title Page

(2) Preface

(3) Contents Page

(4) Acknowledgements

1. Title Page

Problems of successful implementation of trimester System In Chittor District: A study

[Names of the study team members]

District Institute of Education and Training
Chittor
2011

2. Preface

It is an expression of the author(s)/ researchers about the write up, book or a report, as to;

(a) what made them undertake the activity?

(b) how the activity was undertaken?

(c) how that activity ended with this document?

(d) what is expected of its readers?

3. Acknowledgements

Here acknowledge faithfully all those who are responsible for the successful completion of the activity. It is.

(a) a professional responsibility to do so.

(b) not a platform to please higher ups

(c) here the maturity and dignity of author(s) gets reflected.

4. Contents page

Here list out;

Section B. Actual Report

(a) Title of the activity

(b) Nature of the Activity(Experiment, or Study)

(c) Lab area description and composition

(d) Background of the lab area activity

(e) **Introduction**

(f) Activity Questions

(g) Objectives

(h) Methodology

(i) Results and Discussion

(j) Conclusions and Implications

(k) Recommendations for self improvement

(a) Title of the study

Problems of successful implementation of trimester System In Mandya District: A study

(b) Nature of the Activity

Any Lab area activity could be either an experiment or a study.
Indicate that here.

© Lab area description and composition

A reader must be able to understand your lab area and its composition. Therefore, describe as vividly as you can. It can include the number of institutions, number of students, availability of other resources, geographical boundary, proximity to DIET, etc.

(d) Background of the lab area activity

- What made the DIET to undertake this activity?
- Who are the DIET faculty involved in planning and implementation of the activity?
- Any collaborators? And such.

(e) Introduction to Lab Area Activity

The purpose of this section is to make a reader of this document understand the activity in all its conceptual dimensions

(f) Activity Questions

Any activity, i.e., Experimentation, or study, will have been undertaken to answer a few questions. These questions will have lead to the formulation of objectives. Therefore,these questions need to be clearly written.

(g) Objectives

All the major and minor objectives which have been the basis for the lab area activity need to be enumerated.

(h) Methodology

This is the cream of the activity which will decide the goodness of the effort. This has to be elaborately written covering different sub-activities.

(h) 1. Plan of the Lab Area Activity

The plan that was prepared, approved and used need to be written here. In your case, you have already prepared them.

(h) 2. Respondent Institutions and Individuals

They are those institutions or individuals who have been associated with lab are activities. They are basically the participating actors or subjects of the activity. This is to be clearly written thinking that the reader is not aware of them.

(h) 3. Tools and Techniques

Elaborately explain;

- The nature of tools and techniques
- Description of the tools and techniques
- Kind and number of items
- Scoring method/Key
- Norms if any
- Standardized or non standardized, etc

(h) 4. Procedure of data / evidence collected

A clear description of the procedure of data collection used will make a reader appreciate the quality control measure undertaken in the activity.This will add to the quality of the reporting, as well as the activity.

(h) 5. Nature and Source of data collected

This may include,

(a) Qualitative or quantitative data
(b) Primary and secondary data
(c) Data collected through administering tests, interviews, observations
(d) Case studies, etc.

(h) 6. Scoring and Tabulation of the data

- **How the data collected were scored and treated is to be written separately for all tools and all kinds of data.**
- **After having scored the data, how they are tabulated also needs to be written, either qualitatively or quantitatively depending upon the nature of the data.**

(h) 7. Treatment of the Data

The scored and tabulated data need to be treated qualitatively or quantitatively in order to see meaning. Suitable methods used are to be explained.Using different suitable methods what inferences are drawn are also to be written.

(i) Results and Discussions

After the treatment of the data, the obtained results have to be discussed objectively. This is an elaborate & intelligent activity. This should lead to drawing conclusions.

(j) Conclusions and implications

- **Conclusions are those crisp statements, which have emerged out of results and their discussions.**
- **Implications are those statements what it means to different stake holders, i.e., educational planners, administrators, teacher-educators, teachers, students, parents and community at large.**

(k) Recommendations for Self-improvement

- **Let these recommendations be objective and idealistic, irrespective of the circumstances in which one is functioning.**
- **This can lead to reflection and professional development.**
- **This is after all the end point of enabling activities.**

Proposed format for facilitating activity

The format is not very different from that of enabling activity. In the enabling activity, self development is the purpose, while here, it is the qualitative improvement of elementary education of the district, (including the DIETs).

Components of facilitating Activity Reporting

- Prelims and Actual Report up to methodology remain the same.
- The style of writing results will be slightly different as the ultimate purpose of developing a report is meant for facilitating qualitative improvement of elementary education in the district.

(h) Results and discussions

- It should be as objective as possible.
- These are going to inform and influence policy making and change. Hence, it has to be done with full responsibility.
- Identify critical crucial components which are working so that they get focused in planning.
- It is a serious activity.

(i) Conclusions and Implications

It is a very responsible activity as it is going to inform and influence;

- Policy makers, administrators, teacher-educators(at DIET), teachers, students, parents and community at large.
- Implications will have to be written as elaborately as possible, as this is going to help further in writing the executive summary.

(j) Recommendations for the system including others and DIET faculty

- Separately write recommendations for separate set of people i.e., Educational planners, administrators, teacher-educators, teachers, schools, students, parents and community at large.
- Recommendations drawn out of serious lab area activity will carry a lot of weight.

(k) Whom can these results influence?

There is a need to list of important functionaries who have the ability and responsibility to bring changes thus leading to qualitative improvement of elementary education. It could be DDPI, Principal, DIET, BEO, MEO, BRP, CRP Subject inspectors, Teacher-educators, teachers, Parents, PTAs, SDMCs, etc.

(i) Executive Summary

- This is necessary as the reader, who is an officer/ a person who with his power and authority can bring in certain changes under his control. This can lead to qualitative improvement.
- Generally they are crisp abstract kind of report highlighting only those outcomes which are relevant to them.

Components of an executive Summary

1. **Background of the study**
2. **Nature of the activity**
3. **Target Group**
4. **Outcomes of the activity (only those which are relevant for the person)**
5. **Specific recommendations**

[C] Dissemination of lab area activities

Documentation and Dissemination are like two faces of the same coin. Since any lab area activity has two objectives, i.e., one to enable one's own professional develop and two, to facilitate a district in bringing qualitative improvement of elementary education, their dissemination also has to vary.

Dissemination of Enabling Activities

These activities enable DIET faculty in becoming more professional.

Dissemination modes of Enabling Activities

1. Presentation of lab area activities after the documentation, in the DIET.
2. Sharing of experiences in professional publications meant for DIET faculty. **(Journal of Field Studies, any other journal)**
3. Publish in professional journals.
4. News paper, Radio, TV etc too.

Dissemination of Facilitating Activities

These activities can facilitate the district and the sub district functionaries in bringing about qualitative improvement of elementary education. Therefore, the outcomes of lab area activities need to be shared among district functionaries, school authorities, teachers, students, parents and community at large differently as every thing may not be relevant to everyone.

Dissemination modes of Facilitating Activities

1. Executive summaries for different sets of people.
2. Sharing seminars **(With in district involving all functionaries)**
3. Sharing of outcomes in official meetings

This is not the end.

~~This is the~~
beginning.

3. Outcomes of the Training Programme

The DIET faculty of Andhra Pradesh participated well in all the three days. They were enabled to understand the basic concept of lab area activities. Some preliminary exercise of identifying their own lab area was attempted. There were supported to have a lab area activity plan –though crude— developed. Some of the titles they came out with are as follows.

Lab area Titles

Proposal no	Name and address	Title
1	Sri P. Jayarama Naidu Lecturer, DIET Karuetinagar Chittoor District Andhra .Pradesh	Identification of learning styles of learners at elementary level.
2	Sri Sriram Modaiah Lecturer, DIET LMD Colony, Karimanagar Andhra Pradesh	Role of Action Songs in joyful Learning of Alphabet among Class- 1 students
3	Dr. A.M. Jayashree Senior lecturer DIET, Bommur Rajahmudry East Godavari District Andhra Pradesh.	Impact of utilization of *Snehabala* cards in developing language skills among class 1 pupils- A study.
4	Sri M. Obula Reddy DIET, B. Thadrapadu Kurnool. Andhra Pradesh	Impact of Mathematical game on maths learning in 2nd class.
5	Sri S. Purushottam Lecturer, DIET Vomaravlli, Srikakulam. Andhra Pradesh	Impact of innovative multipurpose science kit on Achievements of class-III, children's in E.V.S- II
6	Sri Dasaratha Rami Reddy DIET Rayachoty Kadapa District	Impact of no cost material in developing additions and subtraction for class II children.

	Andhra Pradesh	
7	Sri Mohd. Merajullah Khan Lecturer DIET Mahboob Nagar Andhra Pradesh	Impact of some game's on four fundamental operations of arithmetic's by using sticks & Abacus – A – Try out.
8	Sri K. Devarajam Senior Lecturer DIET Warangal Andhra Pradesh	Telagu Akshara Kit.
9	Ms G. Vasundhara Lecturer DIET Nalagonda Andhra Pradesh	Impact study of "Black Box" & "Guess What" techniques on EVS, achievement of IV standard students.
10	Sri G. Annaji Rao Senior Lecturer DIET Angaluru Krishna District Andhra Pradesh	A study on the impact of mother's educational package learning of child.
11	Dr. D. Ramamani Lecturer DIET Bheemuniratanam Andhra Pradesh	Impact of improvised science apparatus learning material for enhancing the understanding of certain identified difficult concepts in science of V class
12	Sri Sista Vijayasaradhi Senior Lecturer DIET Boyapalem Guntur District Andhra Pradesh	Impact of planned physical education programme (Games & physical exercises) in the primary school time table on student regularity of attendance
13	Sri Kemparaj Manaiah Senior Lecturer DIET Bukkapatnam Mandal Anatapur District	A study on the impact of Puzzles, Riddles, Mathematical games on the achievement of children of class III.

	Andhra Pradesh	
14	Sri B. Rajeshwar Lecturer DIET Adilabad– 504 001 Andhra Pradesh	Learning Telugu language other than mother tongue by students of 1st class.

There was an attempt to develop proposals by the participants. The draft proposals developed were presented and discussed to reflect the adequacy and inadequacy of the proposals.

The training programme ended with a formal valedictory session in the presence of the Principal, Prof. Prem Lata Sharma on the third day i.e., 23rd Decmeber, 2011. Participants gave their feedback as satisfactory.