

A Critical Analysis of Pedagogical Emphases in Guru-Dakshta Faculty Induction Programmes for Higher Education Faculty

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Abstract

Pedagogy is the core of the teaching and learning process. In higher education, faculty members are required to be knowledgeable about pedagogical practices, as these affect learning outcomes. Pedagogical development for faculty members is also important, as it allows them to integrate their subject knowledge with pedagogical knowledge and improve the quality of learning. One of the significant initiatives by the University Grants Commission to support newly recruited faculty in developing pedagogical skills and competencies is the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Programme, under which a Faculty Development Program (FDP) called Guru-Dakshta is offered. While existing literature evaluates beliefs, challenges, and participation statistics, fewer studies critically examine the pedagogical emphases in Guru-Dakshta FIP. The paper addresses this gap through a qualitative document analysis of the Guru-Dakshta programme framework and programme reports. The finding shows that Guru-Dakshta FIPs place less emphasis on pedagogical components. The sessions focused on pedagogy rely more on lecture-based teaching and emphasize oral and written assessments. The findings reveal a fundamental misalignment between the stated objectives and the actual outcomes of the Guru-Dakshta FIP in developing pedagogical skills among newly recruited faculty. The paper concludes with recommendations to redesign the Guru-DakshtaFIP to incorporate additional pedagogical components to benefit newly recruited faculty.

Keywords: *Faculty Induction Programme, FIP, Pedagogy in higher education, PCK, Guru-Dakshta, MMTTC, NEP 2020*

Introduction

What makes a higher education institution truly good? Not its rankings, not its infrastructure, but the quality of teaching. The quality of teaching improves through pedagogical practices by faculty members in higher education. Subject expertise matters, but it is not enough to facilitate learning; faculty members need pedagogical knowledge to enhance it. Here comes the need for rigorous pedagogical development of higher education teachers, which is lacking and leading to less effective teaching in higher education institutions (Mandal, 2018b). Knowing about curriculum and syllabus, how to choose teaching methods that engage students, how to assess what students actually understand, rather than what is not related to learners' learning, that is what separates a knowledgeable faculty from a pedagogically sound faculty. This distinction of faculty members providing sessions that are knowledgeable, interactive, motivating, friendly, and open-minded, along with information-oriented languages, sits at the heart of higher education quality (Mandal, 2018b; Mishra et al., 2022).

In higher education, faculty members need to integrate subject content, pedagogy, and technology into their planning to improve the quality of teaching and learning (Chai, 2019). The quality of higher education is fundamentally linked to the pedagogical competence of its faculty. Research has consistently shown that subject-matter expertise is necessary but insufficient on its own for effective teaching (Shulman, 1987). National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recognizes this reality explicitly in Chapter 13, titled 'Motivated, Energized and Capable Faculty,' calling for continuous professional development of higher education faculty with a specific emphasis on building pedagogical skills of faculty. Chapter 15 of the policy, titled 'Teacher Education', emphasizes the need for structured teacher training programs to ensure that faculty members are equipped not just with subject knowledge but also with pedagogical skills, and to use their experiences to further transform students into future-ready graduates capable of contributing to Viksit Bharat @2047.

Teaching is not merely about what to teach. As emphasized by Shulman, teachers require both subject knowledge and pedagogical techniques for teaching. In higher education institutions, teachers need to complete continuous professional development courses throughout their teaching careers (Sapkota, 2025; Subitha, 2018). In India, the University Grants Commission (UGC) recognized this importance and established the Malaviya Mission Teacher Training Centres (MMTTC). The MMTTC addresses several critical areas outlined in the NEP 2020, most notably teacher professional development in higher education. It helps faculty members upgrade their pedagogical competencies and skills, ultimately rendering the learning experience more student-centered, interactive, and analytical (Mishra et al., 2025). MMTTCs, through its nationally mandated effort, aims to ensure that newly appointed faculty do not just arrive at their institutions with knowledge in mind and degrees in hand, but also with some pedagogical knowledge of teaching and learning, through Faculty Induction Programmes (FIPs). FIPs are important for newly appointed and early-career teachers, as many who are not in the field of teacher education have no prior teaching experience (Benarroch et al., 2024; Mishra et al., 2022).

The most important aspect of any FIP for newly recruited faculty members is pedagogy, which means how to teach, which includes teaching methods, instructional strategies, engagement with learners, learning environment, teaching-learning activities, assessment techniques, in addition to mastery of subject knowledge. Many teachers try their best to teach effectively but fail due to a lack of understanding of modern pedagogies and professional training and support from institutions (Mandal, 2018a). FIP needs to adopt an approach to developing both multidisciplinary and discipline-specific pedagogy. India needs to improve the quality of its higher education teaching without delay (Mandal, 2018b). A study conducted by Singh et al. (2023) concluded that pedagogical training in faculty development programmes led to many positive changes in faculty pedagogy, including student-focused approaches. It further recommended that the FDP should cater to skills in teaching methods and students' evaluation needs in higher education, with common ingredients and specific skills and methods related to the discipline and profession.

Research on faculty induction programmes remains limited and narrowly focused. Raheesh (2018) evaluated the UGC-HRDC orientation programme by surveying newly appointed teachers on a five-point scale across parameters such as content relevance, teaching awareness, skill development, and lecture quality and found a positive response from participants. However, the study did not examine the pedagogical importance embedded in the programme's design. Mishra et al. (2022) examined the Faculty Induction Programmes at Mizoram University through a case study that surveyed new faculty members and found the program to be well-organized and beneficial, aligning with NEP

2020. A study conducted by Mishra et al. (2025) explored the views and experiences of university teachers who participated in the FIP, as well as the program's impact on their professional development and overall effectiveness. The findings indicated that educators held positive views of Guru-Dakshata FIP, considering it an essential initiative for the continuous improvement of faculties and beneficial to educators, students, and institutions. Educators in this study preferred more immersive, hands-on experiences and flexible or self-paced modules, as these helped them improve their API scores and advance their careers. Similar findings were observed in a study by Kala and Chaubey (2015).

Studies on MMTTC effectiveness have consistently focused on participation data, views, feedback, and post-program career outcomes. There appears to be no research examining whether FIP's design, delivery methods, and assessment are constructively aligned with its stated pedagogical intent. There are not enough studies examining the pedagogical emphases in FIP's design, creating a gap, as NEP 2020 mandates that these programs must not only help faculty attend training but also transform them through the pedagogical orientation.

MMTTCs, established by the UGC across higher education institutions in India, are the most appropriate institutions for the pedagogical development of higher education teachers. The MMTTCs are established to equip faculty with the skills needed for enhanced teaching, learning, research, and academic leadership, while incorporating Indian values and updating their knowledge to align with societal demands and the directives of NEP 2020. Among the various programs offered by MMTTCs, the Guru-Dakshata Faculty Induction Program (FIP) is the flagship program, as completion of FIP is mandatory for all newly appointed faculty within one year of joining any higher education institution. Each FIP is offered for a total duration of 144 hours for over 24 working days (4 weeks), which could be split into parts as per requirement, conducted online or offline (hybrid) mode. FIP represents the foundational professional development experience for 16,07,839 faculty members across India's 1,153 universities and 48,291 colleges (UGC Annual Report, 2023-24). FIP is linked to capacity building for newly recruited faculty, and, as is the prevailing practice, higher education faculty do not receive formal pedagogical training. It is therefore vital to examine whether FIP addresses the pedagogical needs of newly recruited teachers and, if so, how. However, no study has critically examined whether FIP's curriculum, delivery methods, and assessment are pedagogically coherent. This paper addresses this gap and attempts to answer two research questions:

- (1) How much emphasis does the Guru-Dakshata framework put on pedagogy in its themes, activities, and assessments?
- (2) How much emphasis is put on pedagogy in Guru-Dakshata FIP's themes and teaching methods used?

Methodology

This study employs qualitative document analysis as its primary research methodology. The study first analyzes the Guru-Dakshata Framework and the Guru-DakshataFIPs conducted in accordance with it. Although MMTTCs across the country regularly organize Guru-Dakshata FIPs, reports of these FIPs are not readily available. However, a search of the websites of various MMTTCs revealed

four reports related to Guru-Dakshta FIP. Accordingly, the following five documents were analyzed for the study:

- Guru-Dakshtaframework (UGC), which constitutes the official FIP curriculum, comprises module-wise learning objectives, learning outcomes, focus areas/themes, teaching activities, and assessment approaches for each module.
- Report of Guru-Dakshta - Faculty Induction Programme-Institution I (July 11 to August 17, 2023)
- Report of Guru-Dakshta- Faculty Induction Programme-Institution II (July 31 to August 13, 2024)
- Guru-Dakshta - Faculty Induction Programme Schedule- Institution III (October 21, 2024 to February 01, 2025)
- Guru-Dakshta - Faculty Induction Programme Schedule- Institution IV (November 1 to 29, 2025)

The pedagogy here is defined as the combination of teaching methods (what instructors do), learning activities (what instructors ask their students to do), and learning assessments (the assignments, projects, or tasks that measure student learning) (University of Minnesota, 2025). The discussion follows on the available information: themes, session hours, and teaching methods and practices, with emphasis on pedagogy. Accordingly, the analysis consisted of themes, activities, methods, assessment, and aspects related to curriculum, teaching methods, teaching activities, learning environment, assessment, and classroom management in the FIP.

This study relies entirely on qualitative document analysis and examines FIP schedules, themes, and sessions indicated in reports, rather than what actually occurs during the sessions. Observation of sessions was not conducted during the actual practices. The classification of session hours as directly, indirectly, digital, or unrelated to pedagogy involved researchers' judgment. The data sources were inconsistent in their reporting: one of the report did not specify session hours, so days were used as a substitute, making its figures not directly comparable to the hour-based figures from the other two institutions. There are differences in reports uploaded by different institutions. The reports were retrieved only from publicly available institutional reports; some were incomplete or inaccessible and therefore excluded from the analysis.

Analysis of Guru-Dakshta FIP Framework

The Guru-Dakshta framework consists of ten modules. These modules are

- Module 1: Higher Education and its Ecosystem (17 Hrs)
- Module 2: Curriculum designing, Outcome-based learning and Choice based credit system (20 Hrs)
- Module 3: Teaching, Learning and Assessment (20 Hrs)
- Module 4: Technology for Teaching and assessment of I-generation (20 Hrs)
- Module 5: Personal-Emotional Development and Counselling (20 Hrs)
- Module 6: Research, Professional Development and Academic Leadership (20 Hrs)

- Module 7: Academic Integrity (10 Hrs)
- Module 8: Constitutional Values, Human Rights & Fundamental Duties (13 Hrs)
- Module 9: Environmental Consciousness and Sustainable Development Goals (10 Hrs)
- Module 10: Strategic Planning and Management (15 Hrs)

The total duration of these modules is 165 hours, with an additional 5-10 hours for project work and field visits.

The analysis of the Guru-Dakshta framework reveals that FIP comprises 10 modules spanning domains such as higher education and institutional rules; curriculum design; teaching, learning, and assessment; ICT integration; psychological foundations; research and professional development; academic integrity; constitutional values; sustainability; and planning and management. Of these 10 modules, only Module 3 (M3) is directly and exclusively dedicated to pedagogy, covering high-quality teaching-learning and assessment. Three additional modules (M1, M2, M4, M5) address pedagogy indirectly, embedded within broader themes of Constructivist pedagogy, curriculum development, use of ICT for assessment and understanding diversity in the classroom. The remaining 5 modules (M6, M7, M8, M9, M10) have no direct pedagogical contribution. This suggests that pedagogy is the exclusive focus of only one of ten modules and is not a central part of this framework, which is meant to develop faculty who will teach in higher education institutions. Rather, in the other modules, the focus is on how teachers should integrate these aspects into their teaching, not on how to teach.

In Guru-Dakshta Modules, only M3 is the sole module directly dedicated to pedagogy, revealing a fundamental connection between the objective of FIP and the framework designed for it. Module 3 focuses on high-quality teaching, learning, and assessment, which encompasses all aspects of pedagogy. Its learning outcome suggests that participants will develop and apply learner-centered teaching strategies and explore the link between teaching, learning, and evaluation. However, analysis of the module 3 activities (teaching methods) reveals that, here as well, lectures remain part of the activity, supplemented by discussions. However, assessment uses multiple methods; it does not require demonstration of actual teaching competence, such as microteaching or lesson-planning activities in module 3. Further, the assessment activities included oral presentations, written assignments, note-taking, objective tests, discussions, and talks, which highlight the misalignment of assessment with the intended learning outcomes.

The same pattern repeats across other modules of the framework. Module 1 introduces constructivist approaches to student learning, yet employs lectures as its primary means of content delivery. Module 9 addresses pedagogy for integrating the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) into teaching, yet relies on lectures for delivery and requires participants to speak about and take notes on the SDGs as the assessment tool. Although FIP instructs faculty to move away from teacher-centered methods, it itself uses lectures to deliver its content.

Shulman (1987) argued that PCK, the knowledge of how to make a specific subject more easily understandable to a learner, is what distinguishes a teacher from a subject expert. The faculty knows which examples work well and what common mistakes students might make while learning the concept. The Guru-Dakshta framework emphasizes implementing curriculum reforms in the context

of interdisciplinary, multidisciplinary, and applied approaches to knowledge, but, in contrast, it emphasizes faculty development in general pedagogy across all modules, followed by subject-specific knowledge. MMTTP provides separate Refresher Courses for the faculty members, which is seen as a problem because they are not offered together. No module addresses how to apply the principles of Bloom's taxonomy, constructive alignment, or learner-centered teaching differently across disciplines, thereby making education multidisciplinary. The pedagogies of different disciplines are different, and newly appointed faculty need to understand how to integrate subject knowledge with pedagogical knowledge.

Analysis of Guru-Dakshta FIPs conducted

Institution I, conducted a Guru-Dakshta FIP from July 11 to August 17, 2023. The analysis of the program report reveals that a total of 144 session hours were conducted over 24 days. Out of these 144 hours, 58.5 hours were directly or indirectly related to pedagogy. The remaining hours were related to research, the SDGs, the environment, constitutional values, and leadership and management, as prescribed in the framework.

Table 1: Distribution of session hours in a Guru-Dakshta FIP, MMTTC, Institution I

Domain	Approx. Hours	% of Total
Pedagogy-related content (direct, indirect)	58.5	40.6%
Non- pedagogy	82.5	57.2%
Presentations+ Test + valedictory session	3	2.08%
Total	144	≈100%

Institution II, conducted a Guru-Dakshta FIP between July 31, 2024, and August 13, 2024. It was found that there is no mention of the exact number of hours per session and no proper schedule of themes as a timetable; therefore, it was difficult to analyze the report. If we consider each day as a theme with a 3-hour session, then 5 days were dedicated directly or indirectly to pedagogy, comprising 35.7% of the total FIP program. Although the FIP was conducted under MMTTC, the program was conducted for only 14 days.

Table 2: Distribution of session hours in a Guru-Dakshta FIP, MMTTC, Institution II

Domain	Approx. Hours	% of Total
Pedagogy-related content (direct, indirect)	15	35.7%
Non- pedagogy	27	64.2%
Total	42	≈100%

Institution III conducted a Guru-Dakshta FIP between October 21, 2024, and February 01 2025. It was found that, out of the total 180 session hours (as mentioned), 72 hours were directly or indirectly related to pedagogy.

Table 3: Distribution of session hours in a Guru-Dakshta FIP, MMTTC, Institution III

Domain	Approx. Hours	% of Total
Pedagogy-related content (direct, indirect)	72	40%
Non- pedagogy	108	60%
Total	180	100%

The Analysis of the Guru-Dakshta FIP by institution IV held from 1.11.2025 to 29.11.25 reveals a total of 147 session hours across 21 days of instruction, followed by three days of presentations and valedictory sessions. Of these 147 hours, 43.5 hours were identified as directly or indirectly dedicated to pedagogy-related content. The remaining sessions covered orientation, institutional governance, constitutional values, academic integrity, environmental sustainability, strategic management, and leadership. These domains are professionally relevant but fall outside the pedagogical competence that NEP 2020 mandates for faculty in higher education.

Table 4: Distribution of session hours in a Guru-Dakshta FIP, MMTTC, Institution IV

Domain	Approx. Hours	% of Total
Pedagogy-related content (direct, indirect)	43.5	29.6%
Non- pedagogy	82.5	56.1%
Presentations+ Test + valedictory session	21	14.3%
Total	147	≈100%

The MMTTP Guidelines (UGC, 2023) prescribe a total of 170-175 session hours but mandate no minimum proportion of pedagogical content in the FIP. NEP 2020 mandates that faculty develop pedagogical capacities to produce graduates with 21st-century skills; therefore, there is a need for a structurally supported program to deliver it, but its absence is seen as a concern with the framework.

In the FIP documents, it can also be seen that 2 of the FIPs were conducted in online mode, in which most of the sessions were based on lecture cum discussion method through resource persons. Online sessions provide less scope for learner-centered activities due to various constraints. Even in the offline course, most of the themes were delivered through presentations and lectures.

Another significant finding from the day-wise analysis of the schedule is an inverted sequence of themes. In the first week of the institution IV FIP program, on day 5, a three-hour session titled 'From ICT to Immersive Learning: Leveraging AR, VR and MR in Higher Education' was delivered, an advanced digital pedagogy topic that requires familiarity with basic teaching-learning theory and methods. Nevertheless, foundational pedagogical sessions such as Essentials of

Teaching in NEP 2020 (Day 11), Bloom's Taxonomy and Integrating Pedagogy for Better Process (Day 16), and the core M3 teaching session (Day 18) were conducted later in the FIP schedule.

This sequencing contradicts a basic principle of instructional design, in which advanced application must follow foundational understanding. Introducing AR/VR/MR on Day 5, before Bloom's Taxonomy on Day 16, means faculty are exposed to advanced technological pedagogy without the conceptual vocabulary to evaluate or critically contextualize it. The sequencing reflects a technology-first approach rather than a pedagogy-first orientation, indicating that pedagogy is less important than digital technology and ICT.

Discussion and Recommendations

The findings collectively show that Guru-Dakshta FIP presents pedagogy as a value without embedding it as a practice within its own framework, modules, and programs. It prescribes learner-centered teaching in faculty classrooms while also delivering its own training through teacher-centered methods (the lecture method) and an assessment consisting of MCQs, oral presentations, and written assignments. The pedagogy content taught in FIP, delivered across different sessions over days and predominantly through lectures, discussions, and expert talks, and assessed through objective tests, MCQs, note-making, oral presentations, and written assignments, can never bring about the transformation NEP envisions.

Guru-Dakshta FIP mandates pedagogical development, while Institutions FIP are allocating less than 50% of total hours to pedagogy-related content. At least 60% of FIP session hours must be devoted to pedagogy-related content. The MMTTP Guidelines and Guru-Dakshta framework should be revised to specify not just the total hours for each module but also a minimum pedagogical content requirement, ensuring that pedagogy is central rather than peripheral to FIP design.

Resource persons delivering sessions on learner-centered teaching must themselves employ learner-centered methods. This requires training resource persons in content delivery before they are deployed - a prerequisite that should be formalized in the Guru-Dakshta framework. If a session is conducted online, it should not only be lecture- or discussion-based but also more hands-on and experience-based. This policy-practice gap is evident in the analysis, as NEP 2020 mandates that faculty first develop their own capacities to produce future-ready graduates with 21st-century skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, digital/ICT skills, and decision-making. Studies have found a lack of subject expertise among resource persons skilled in pedagogy (Mishra et al., 2025), and Guru-Dakshta FIP requires resource persons who are themselves skilled in pedagogies such as problem-based learning, collaborative learning, flipped classroom approaches, and formative assessment design. Guru-Dakshta FIP, as per current designs and practices, does not equip faculty with the pedagogical capabilities envisioned in NEP 2020.

Guru-Dakshta FIP sequencing must follow foundational-to-advanced logic. Bloom's Taxonomy, teaching, learning, and assessment, and the essentials of teaching must be addressed before digital pedagogy, immersive learning tools, MOOC development, and advanced ICT integration themes. The UGC may prescribe a standard sequence within the Guru-Dakshta FIP framework rather than leaving sequencing entirely to individual MMTTCs, as this can sometimes lead to poor-quality programs.

The Guru-Dakshata FIP assessment must be redesigned to focus on applied and demonstrated pedagogical competence. MCQ-based, oral, and written assessment techniques are inadequate for assessing the application-level learning outcomes that FIP claims to develop in higher education faculties. Portfolio-based assessment, reflective journals, microteaching observations, and hands-on experience activities should be included to achieve the intended learning outcomes. In addition to generic modules in Guru-Dakshata FIP, there needs to be discipline-specific modules, as different disciplines require different pedagogies, and faculty members from different disciplines need to be trained to address diverse students' needs in their own subjects.

Conclusion

This study examined the emphasis on pedagogical aspects in the Guru-Dakshata FIP under the UGC-MMTTC and found it structurally inadequate to the ambitions of NEP 2020. Despite being a valuable initiative to introduce pedagogy for the professional development of faculty across various disciplines in higher education, the Guru-Dakshata framework on which these induction programs are conducted shows some misalignment among the objectives, teaching activities, and assessment techniques prescribed in the document. Further, across four primary report documents, a consistent pattern emerges: pedagogy is not pivotal. Rather, it is part of a few modules; also, there is extensive lecture delivery in the program, which is organized to develop learner-centered learning in higher education. The themes were sequentially inverted, teaching advanced topics before foundational topics in teaching and learning, and the absence of discipline-specific PCK (Pedagogical Content Knowledge).

However, these findings do not diminish the significance of the MMTTC as a national initiative. Training approximately 16 lakh faculty members across India's higher education system is no easy task. However, an ambition without pedagogical coherence risks producing adherence to the policy rather than bringing about transformation in the quality of teaching and learning in higher education institutions.

One basic flaw in the formulation of FIP is that institutions or policymakers still view it as a one-shot affair rather than as a continuous process of professional development and collaborative engagement in teaching and learning, along with a positive organizational learning climate for the successful professional development of teachers (Panda, 2018).

The sample for this study was small and selective, including one framework and four institutional FIPs chosen based on document availability. Though the findings show a pattern, they cannot be generalized to all MMTTCs across India without a broader, large-scale systematic sampling procedure.

Future research should gather more primary data, such as participant observation, interviews, classroom interactions, and data on the effects of post-FIP programs, to identify gaps in the framework and in the FIPs conducted. A broader comparative analysis across MMTTCs nationwide can help determine whether the challenges are systemic or specific to certain institutions.

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