Inservice Training for School Administrators Using Individualised Learning Modules

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Modul-modul Pembelajaran Individu (MPI) mengandungi beberapa siri Modul Pembelajaran (MP) yang direka untuk meningkatkan kecekapan-kecekapan yang perlu diperolehi oleh para guru, para penyelia dan para pentadbir sekolah. Tiap-tiap satu MP telah dicipta untuk mengajar salah satu daripada limapuluh kemahiran yang telah diberi perhatian khas oleh McCleory (1973) dan dianggap sebagai kemahiran yang terpenting untuk seseorang pentadbir sekolah yang cekap. Modul-modul Pembelajaran ini memberi keutamaan kepada Pembelajaran Perseorangan di mana seseorang pelajar itu dapat mempelajari sesuatu bahan yang sesuai dan secara dengan kemampuannya. Di samping itu juga MPI menekankan kepada gerakerja kumpulan (perbincangan), memberi galakan dan dorongan kepada para pelajar berbincang dan menjawab soalan-soalan yang dikemukakan dalam Study Guide menerusi kumpulan-kumpulan kecil. Selain daripada memberi maklumatbalik tentang pembelajaran oleh seseorang pelajar Sturdy Guide ini juga dapat memberi maklumat secara terperinci tentang masa yang sebenarnya digunakan oleh seseorang pelajar dalam menjalankan sesuatu gerakerja yang telah disediakan dalam tiap-tiap satu MP. Kegiatan ini pada akhirnya akan membawa siapnya sesuatu hasilan perlakuan.

Individual Learning Modules (ILMs) are a series of competency based learning modules developed by the University of Utah for use in school (primary, secondary and tertiary) administration training programmes conducted in over 200 leading American, South American, European and Australian Colleges and Universities.

ILMs have three components:

1. A cassette tape of a lecture on an administrative problem area given by an acknowledged expert in the field.

2. A set of flip charts which contains written summaries of the most relevant sections of the lecture.

3. A study guide which ensures that each student learns the theory related to the administrative problem area being studied and how the theory can be used to improve the administrators' behaviour at his or her school:—

    a. Provision for recording details about the various activities the student has completed, e.g. time spent listening to the cassette tape, time spent on additional reading etc.

    b. A list of recommended articles and texts for additional reading.

    c. A set of individual study questions which can be used to test the student's understanding of the content taught.

    d. A set of group study questions which can be used to give students feedback on the effectiveness of their individual learning activities and to give students additional depth to their study.

    e. A list of suggested *performance products* that is, actions administrators can take at

work to **improve** their administrative behaviour.

    f.   An evaluation rating form which enables the course designer to obtain student opinions about the effectiveness of the training.

Training programmes which use the ILM techniques have many advantages over traditional training programmes.
The main advantages are:—

1. The competencies taught in the ILM series were isolated by McCleary (1973) from a national study of school administrators. McCleary isolated the fifty most necessary competencies for an efficient school administrator. An ILM was developed to teach each competency. Few training courses have been developed from such a detailed national assessment of needs.

2. The learning modules are *individualised* in that each student can study and learn at any one of three different levels:

    a.   **Familiarity.** In this level students only become familiar with the modules content and do not carry out any indepth study.

    b.   **Understanding.** In this level students accurately learn the content presented. If required, students would be able to teach this content to others. To satisfy requirements at this level a student would need to know accurately the content presented on the cassette tape and the flip charts and would need to have read widely on the topic to gain a greater depth of understanding.

    c.   **Application.** This level is the level most frequently used in training programmes. To complete a module successfully at this level students must demonstrate that they have gained a good understanding of the competency taught (see (b) Undertanding above) and they can use this understanding to improve their own school administrative performance. Suggestions for activities at the application level are included under the heading of *Performance Products* in the Study Guide for each ILM.

3. The ILM teaching format has been found to be a very effective method for teaching administrative competencies. ILM modular presentation is not simple programmed instruction but includes teaching techniques not found in other modular presentations of the programmed learning type.

    The ILMs emphasise the use of group discussion which is not a feature of programmed learning. Students are encouraged to meet in small groups to answer the group questions set out in each *Study Guide*. These group sessions allow students to gain necessary feedback on the effectiveness of their learning as well as enabling students to gain a deeper understanding of the concepts being taught.

    Students also answer a series of individual questions prepared for each *Study Guide*. These questions can be used to assess a student's understanding of the basic concepts taught in the module.

4. Each Module has a *Study Guide* which gives the course developer important information on student learning. The *Study Guide* gives details of the time a student spends studying the cassette and the flip charts, the time given to carrying out additional readings and the time given to completing recommended activities, and developing and implementing a performance product. Each study guide also has suggestions concerning performance products a student can undertake which will demonstrate (a) the student's understanding of the competency being taught; and (b) if the student can use this

understanding to improve his or her administrative behaviour.

Each *Study Guide* also has an evaluation sheet which students complete at the end of the course of training. Detailed information on the effectiveness of the tape-flip chart presentations, readings, group study guide questions, group discussion sessions, and performance products used are helpful for the course developer when making changes for the improvement of future courses.

5. The ILMs offer a flexible list of courses for a training programme. ILMs can be effectively used when a training programme does not have sufficient highly qualified staff to teach a particular course or when a large number of elective courses are needed and the necessary qualified staff are away sick, on leave etc. and are not available.

The New South Wales (N.S.W.) Department of Education conducts an inservice training programme for practising and potential school administrators using the competency based ILMs referred to above. This programme is discussed in detail below. Because of the flexibility of the use of ILMs in training programmes, course developers can closely examine the N.S.W. programme and see if it can be modified to suit their own educational needs.

N.S.W. Department of Education's Inservice Course in School Administration for Practising and Potential School Administrators

Stage 1

Schools are notified that the N.S.W. Department of Education will conduct an inservice School Administrators Training Course at a local inservice training centre. Recent trends have been to conduct these courses in schools rather than colleges or universities. Teachers are requested to apply to attend the course. A list of the ILMs produced by the University of Utah are sent to each teacher who is interested in attending the course. Teachers are asked to select one ILM which they would like to study.

Course Administrators select 30 teachers to attend the course. *Learning Groups* (3-5 teachers) are set up for each ILM selected. The ideal would be ten ILMs with three teachers per module. The thirty ILMs required for the teachers are purchased by the N.S.W. Department of Education (inservice committees). Cost per module is approximately A.$26. These modules remain the property of the inservice committee and can be used for all future courses at no additional cost. *Study Guides* and the additional learning materials necessary for modules can be purchased for twenty cents per teacher per module.

Inservice costs can also be kept to a minimum by using one of the teachers who satisfactorily studies a particular module as the lecturer for teaching this module in future inservice courses.

Stage 2

In Stage 2, teachers will be informed of the module's attempt to cater for their individual differences by allowing them to select the content they wish to study, the time when study will be done, and depth (level) of study required. For example school principals may wish to study a module at the application level, university lecturers at the understanding level, and school inspectors (superintendants) may require to study more modules but only at the familiarity level.

At the conclusion of Stage 2 teachers will have learned the philosophy of the competency based ILMs, the need for the use of learning groups and the purpose of individualised questions. Students will also have decided which module they wish to study, the time arrangements they will need for this study and the level depth of study they require. The time allocated for Stage 2 is approximately three hours.

The thirty selected teachers are informed they have been chosen to attend the course. The thirty teachers meet for one day's training. During this day the teachers will participate in the following activities:

a. The first session will concentrate on explaining the philosphy of the ILM to the teachers. This session is only required for those attempting their first module. When studying additional modules teachers can proceed without this session. In addition each teacher will need two, two to three hour after school sessions for every module they study (see Stage 3 and 4 below).

b. The second session is designed to introduce teachers to the *group discussion* and the individual questions sections of the programme. Group discussion is an important aspect of ILM study. Teachers will be placed into a *study group* (3-5 students) according to the module selected for study. The group discussion questions are designed to help teachers clarify areas of confusion and to give each student feedback on their learning performance. These questions also enable the teachers to demonstrate a greater depth of understanding of the competency being taught.

In addition to the group study sessions each module also has a list of individual questions which can be used to assess the teacher's understanding of the basic concepts taught in the module. The use of the individual questions will also be explained in Stage 3. The time required for this session is approximately one hour.

c. In the first session teachers will decide upon a performance product they will use to demonstrate their understanding of the competency taught in their module and to demonstrate they can use this knowledge to improve their school administrative performance. Examples of suitable performance products are included in each Study Guide. A teacher's performance product can be marked and used as an evaluation of his learning effectiveness.

Each teacher will discuss with course members the performance product they intend to use and how they intend to evaluate its effectiveness. Other course members will offer theoretical and/or practical suggestions which may increase the effectiveness of the performance product.

After considering these suggestions the final performance will be submitted to the course lecturer for approval. After each written performance product and method of evaluation as been approved by the course lecturer each teacher will return to his own school to put them into effect.

This session should take approximately three hours.

Stage 3

Approximately four weeks after the one day course has been completed and teachers have commenced their performance product, they will meet at the inservice centre (or nearby school) to discuss the problems experienced with their performance product and its evaluation. During this after school meeting teachers may wish to seek other group members' opinions of their work and select means to modify their plans to produce a more effective performance product and evaluation. Approximately two or three hours should be made available for this meeting.

Stage 4

Approximately eight weeks after the session in Stage 3, another two to three hour after school session should be held where teachers can report to the course members details concerning the teachers' final performance product and evaluation. This report will be given in written form and each teacher will, where necessary, be expected to answer any specific questions or add any additional

information which was not included in the report.

The report should be written under the following five headings:

a.   Description of the performance product carried out.

b.   Description on the evaluation of the effectiveness of the performance product.

c.   A comment on the effectiveness of the ILM module in teaching the administration competency.

d.   A bibliography of relevant articles and/or tests consulted by the student.

e.   The completed Course Evaluation Form supplied in the student's Study Guide.

In recent years there has been a strong emphasis for many colleges and universities to use competency based learning modules similar to those ILMs produced by the University of Utah in their administration training programmes. The ILMs offer an effective technique for ensuring that necessary administrative competencies are well taught and students can apply this learning in their own work environment. In small colleges the use of ILMs has enabled a training programme to present effective instruction in a wide variety of competencies necessary for an successful administrator. The ILMs allow colleges and universities to put theory into practice in a meaningful way.

Reference

McCLeary, Lloyd. 'Assessing Competency Needs in Administration' *C.C.B.C. Notebook.* Competency Based Curriculum, University of Utah, Spring, 1973.

Manual for ILM, Auburn, Sydney, Australia: ILM Publishers. 1973.