



NEEDS ANALYSIS (DRAFT)

Academic Staff

ABSTRACT

The staff development needs survey was carried out by interviewing the Academic staff members of the University. The report summaries the responses of 102 staff members from all Faculties

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This report was prepared by the University Statistics & Data Monitoring Unit as per the request of the Staff Development Center of the University of Kelaniya.

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**Staff Development Needs
Survey
Academic Staff Module**

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1. Staff Development Needs Survey

The University's Staff Development Center aims to create an excellent and distinctive intellectual, social, and physical environment in which teaching methods and learning outcomes can flourish and all students and staff can achieve their potential. Staff development refers to all policies, practices, and procedures used to develop the knowledge, skills, and competencies of staff to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of both the individual and the university. It is recognized that the success of the university depends on all staff, regardless of their function, having the appropriate skills, knowledge, and competencies.

The University recognizes that its staff is fundamental to its success. A strategic approach to staff development helps the university attract and retain high-quality staff with the skills and competencies needed to achieve its goals. The University recognizes that, as an education provider, it has a unique responsibility to support and encourage the development of its staff and recognizes that staff development can play an important role in developing the capacity of its staff. The main objective of the policy is to provide a framework for university directors and staff that supports and encourages the development of all staff to achieve the goals of Kelaniya University and the faculties agreed upon during the annual planning.

The objective of the needs survey is to identify the professional development areas which requires further improvement and to assess the current activities.

2. Methodology

The study focused on measuring the current level of competency development, participation in professional development, and satisfaction regarding staff development to identify the needs of staff to improve their career path.

The permanent academic staff of the University was interviewed using a questionnaire delivered through google forms. The questionnaire consisted of four parts: general information regarding Faculty, Department, Designation, Age, and service period. And the second part was on competency development in which the objective is to identify the most important competency in staff development and measure the current performance in each competency. The competency development section consisted of 22 questions and one open-ended question. The third section was on participation in staff development activities, the type of activities and the duration of staff development programs, frequency, and suggestions. The final section was on satisfaction with the existing staff development procedures.

3. Analysis and Conclusions

3.1. Preliminary analysis

The survey collected data from 102 academic staff members and this section reveals the background of the respondents of the survey.

3.1.1. Respondents by Faculty

A total of 102 responded to the survey. Most of the respondents belong to the Faculty of Medicine, (21.6%, 22) while the least are from the library (5.9%, 6). The Faculty of Humanities, Science, and Social Sciences seem to have approximately equal respondents while the respondents from the Faculty of Commerce & Management Studies and Faculty of Computing & Technology are lower. Figure 3-1 illustrates the percentage of respondents by Faculty.

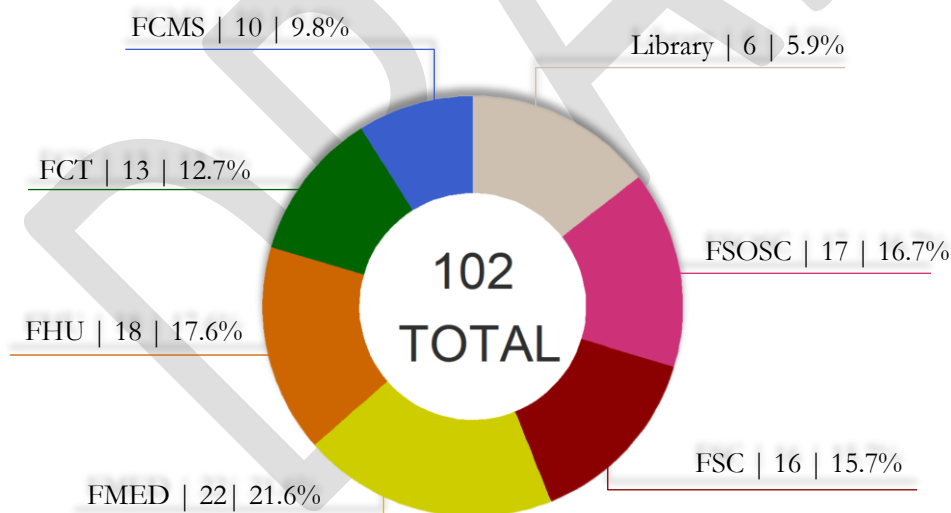


Figure 3-1: Respondents by Faculty

3.1.2. Respondents by teaching experience

38% out of 102, the majority, have teaching experience less than five years and 2%, the least, have teaching experience above 30 years. However, as shown in figure 3-2, a higher percentage of

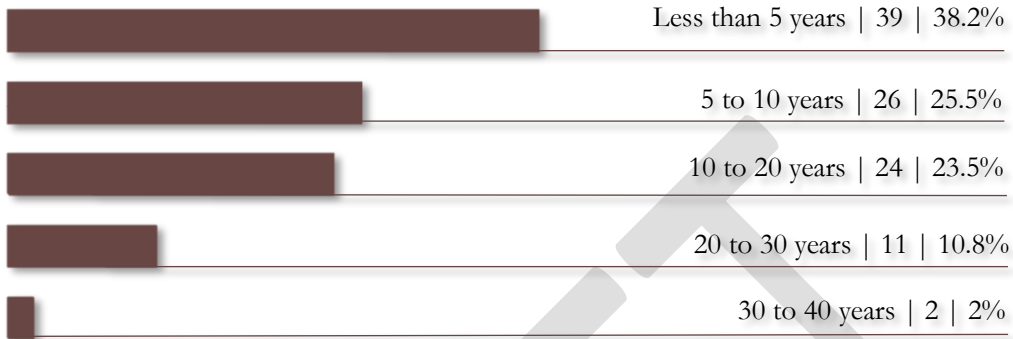


Figure 3-2: Respondents by teaching experience

respondents (>50%) has less than 20 years of experience compared to the above 10 years of experience. That is the respondents are quite less experienced and that is the kind of target group that needs professional development.

3.1.3. Respondents by the highest academic qualifications

A higher percentage of the respondents have obtained doctoral qualifications, which is more than 50% (51%, 52). Overall, most have obtained higher academic qualifications, and less than 40% have a first degree and up to master's level qualifications. Figure 3-3 illustrates the distribution of respondents by academic qualifications descriptively.

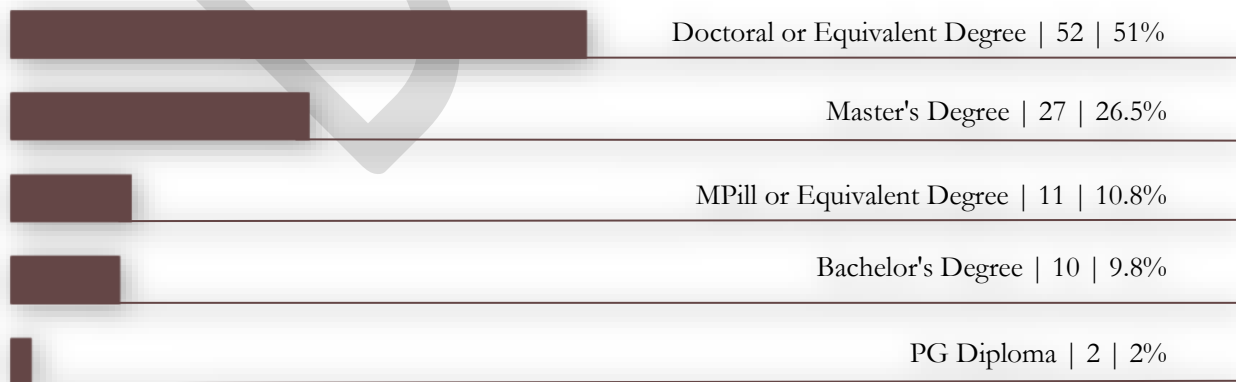


Figure 3-3: Respondents by the highest academic qualifications

3.1.4. Respondents by age

More than 50% of the respondents are less than 40 years old (53%, 54). That is, as stated in section 3.1.2 most of the respondents belong to a group that can be shaped to match the University's goals and objectives.

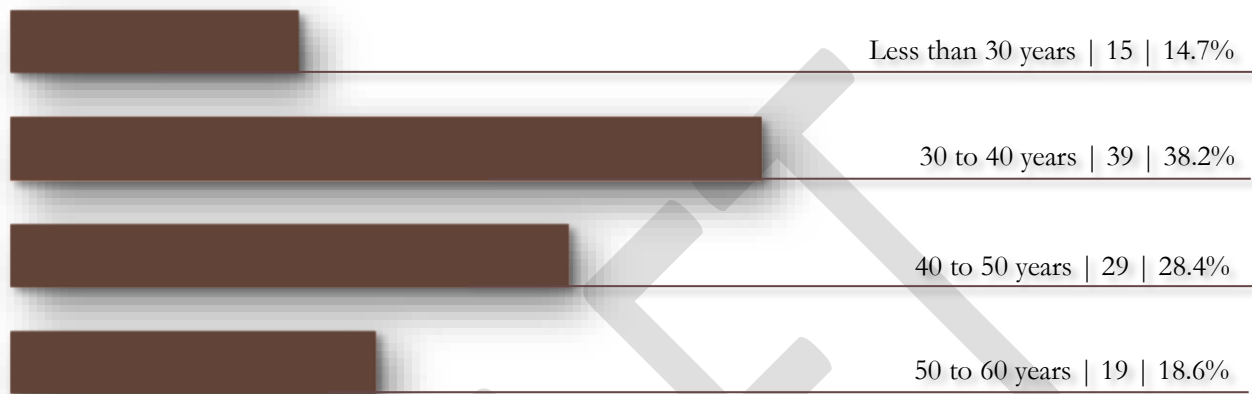


Figure 3-3: Respondents by age group

3.2. Competency Development

Competencies are a combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, and attributes which defines what is needed to successfully perform a job. And competency development is a tool that enables employees to sharpen their skills to improve their performance. Identifying and defining the competencies of the staff of the University, helps the employees of the University to understand what kind of behaviors are required to support the goals and objectives of the institution. This further enhances the individual skills of staff and as well as the team performance.

As a University, the study asked the academic staff about the importance of 22 identified competencies and the current level of performance of each competency. The list of competencies is as following.

1. Teaching large and small
2. Student-centered learning methods and facilitation of student learning
3. Communication and presentation skills
4. Use of technology to enhance ICT skills
5. Online teaching and assessment methods

6. Professional and ethical values
7. Administrative, managerial, and leadership skills
8. Research skills (Writing grant proposals, scientific writing, research project management, data analysis, presenting research findings, etc.)
9. Time and stress
10. Developing and planning courses/ curricula
11. Assessment of learning
12. Interpersonal Skills (teamwork, assertiveness, conflict resolution, emotional intelligence, etc.)
13. Course evaluation
14. Quality assurance and quality management skills
15. Academic supervision of students
16. Developing learning resources and course materials
17. Giving feedback to students and colleagues
18. Counseling students and supporting students
19. Critical reflective skills and continuous professional development
20. Managing diverse learners and inclusive teaching
21. Understanding of educational philosophy and educational principles
22. Educational leadership

The study focused on identifying the most important competencies for the academic staff of the University and assessing the level of current performance for each competency. The below table 3-1 describes the level of importance indicated by the respondents and average performance of each competency.

As depicted in table 3-1, on average, all the competencies have more than 80% of importance. Among all the competencies, communication and presentation skills, professional and ethical values have more importance (>95%) than others and have a current level of performance of more than 80%. Moreover, current performance is higher for professional values and ethics compared to communication and presentation skills. However, these are two types of competencies in which professional values and ethics can be considered as human qualities and communication and presentation skills as soft skills.

Table 3-1: Importance and performance of competencies

Competency	Importance	Performance
Teaching large and small	89.4	77.8
Student-centered learning methods and facilitation of student learning	90.3	76.4
Communication and presentation skills	96.9	80.1
Use of technology to enhance ICT skills	90.8	78.5
Online teaching and assessment methods	80.2	75.9
Professional and ethical values	96.5	88.7
Administrative, managerial, and leadership skills	89.0	75.8
Research skills	93.7	69.4
Time and stress management	94.2	71.3
Developing and planning courses/ curricula	90.4	73.2
Assessment of learning	90.4	76.0
Interpersonal skills	92.2	79.6
Course evaluation	89.4	72.3
Quality assurance and quality management skills	88.8	72.2
Academic supervision of students	92.2	76.1
Developing learning resources and course materials	92.6	77.2
Giving feedback to students and colleagues	91.7	75.1
Counseling students and supporting students	89.9	73.1
Critical reflective skills and continuous professional development	93.5	74.1
Managing diverse learners and inclusive teaching	88.4	69.5
Understanding of educational philosophy and educational principles	89.1	68.4
Educational leadership	89.6	71.7

Furthermore, time and stress management, research skills, critical reflective skills and continuous professional development, development of learning resources and course materials, academic supervision of students, and interpersonal skills have more than 92% of importance. And each of these competencies has on average around 70% to 80% performance. Out of these, the least average performance is recorded for research skills in which staff development programs should focus on developing the research skills of the staff. Apart from that, stress management also shows a less average performance than other competencies.

Giving feedback to students and colleagues, student-centered learning methods and facilitation of student learning, use of technology to enhance ICT skills, developing and planning courses/ curricula, and assessment of learning also have an average importance level above 90%. The current performance of these competencies is within the range of 70% to 80% and developing and planning courses/ curricula has the least performance.

Counseling students and supporting students, educational leadership, teaching large and small groups, understanding educational philosophy and educational principles, course evaluation, quality assurance, and quality management skills, managing diverse learners and inclusive teaching, and online teaching and assessment methods have average importance between 80% to 90%. And the performance of each of these competencies has an average value between 68% to 78%. And understanding educational philosophy and educational principles have the least performance.

3.3. Participation in professional development

The Staff Development Center is currently conducting some professional development programs. The respondents were asked about which type of programs they've participated in, in the past, the frequency, and the duration. And they were requested to suggest a time duration in which they would prefer participating in professional development programs and to rank skill development activities based on their preference.

On average, the survey respondents have participated to approximately 6 professional development programs in the past year. And a higher number of respondents have spent about 5 hours per month for these programs. Participation in each type of staff development programs by the respondents is depicted in the table 3-2.

Table 3-2: Participation in each type of staff development programs conducted by the SDC

Type of Program	Participation
Faculty level seminars/ workshops	68%
University level seminar/ workshop	49%
International seminar/ workshop/ conference	46%
National seminar/ workshop/ conference	34%
External course (International)	18%
University level course	17%
External course (National)	14%
Faculty level course	9%
Outbound training programs	7%

Most of the survey respondents have participated in faculty level seminars and workshops while very few of the respondents have participated in outbound trainings.

The respondents were asked how frequent professional development programs should be held and the responses are summarized in the figure 3-4.

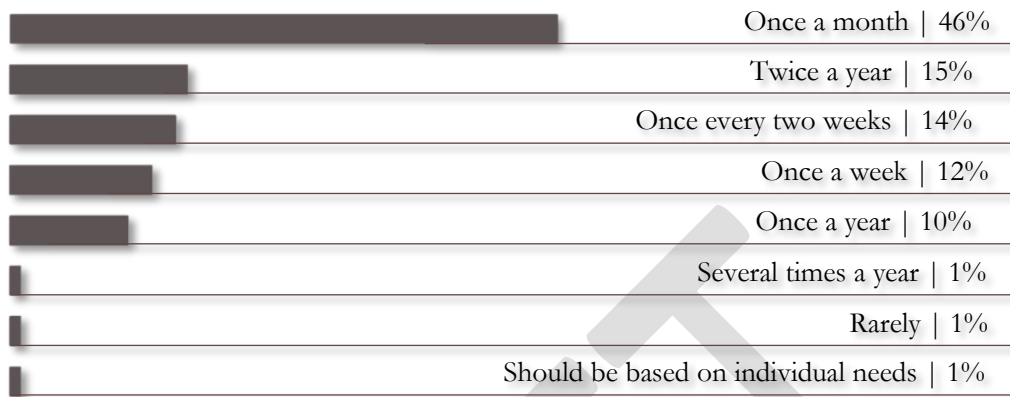


Figure 3-4: Suggested frequency for staff development programs

According to the respondents, most state that the professional development programs should be conducted once a month and least states that it should be once a year. However, very few respondents have suggested that, apart from the options given, the staff development programs should take place rarely or several times per year or based on individual needs.

Moreover, the survey respondents had ranked currently existing staff development programs conducted by the SDC. Accordingly, the number 1 activity which is preferred by the respondents is induction program/course for newly recruited probationary lecturers. The rank given for each program is summarized in the figure 3-5.

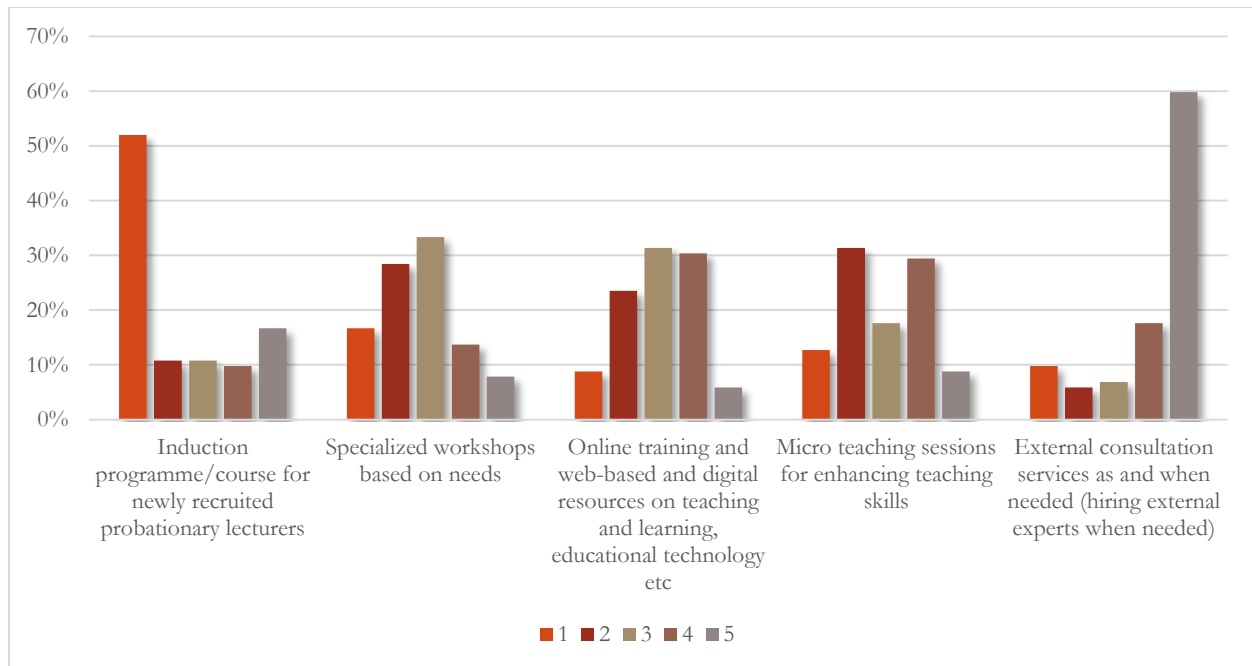


Figure 3-5: Rank for current staff development programs – rank 1 is for the most recommended program

Based on the responses, the current programs can be ranked as following:

1. Induction program/course for newly recruited probationary lecturers
2. Micro teaching sessions for enhancing teaching skills
3. Specialized workshops based on needs
4. Online training and web-based and digital resources on teaching and learning, educational technology etc.
5. External consultation services as and when needed (hiring external experts when needed)

Similarly, the suggested programs for professional development were also ranked and the average rank of each program is summarized in the figure 3-6. accordingly, the respondents have ranked training on educational research as number 1.

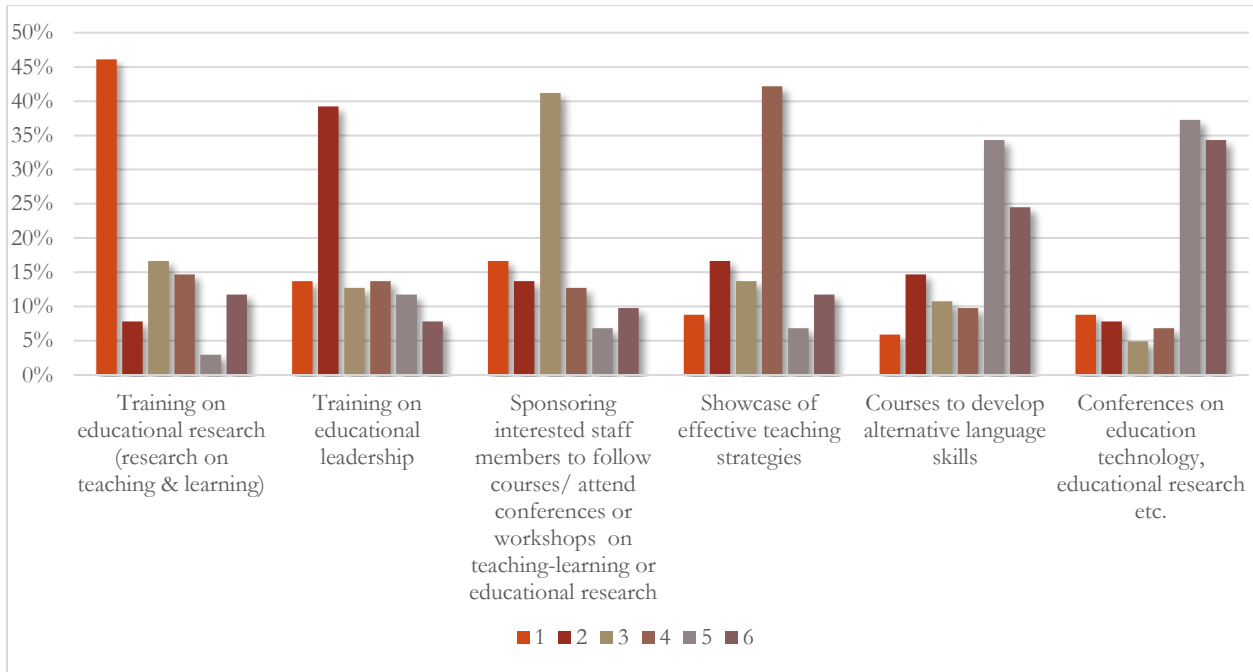


Figure 3-6: Rank for suggested programs on staff development – rank 1 is for the most recommended program

Based on the study, the rank given for each suggested program is as following:

1. Training on educational research (research on teaching & learning)
2. Training on educational leadership
3. Sponsoring interested staff members to follow courses/ attend conferences or workshops on teaching-learning or educational research
4. Showcase of effective teaching strategies
5. Conferences on education technology, educational research etc.
6. Courses to develop alternative language skills

3.4. Satisfaction regarding the staff development activities

Finally, the survey focused on assessing the level of satisfaction regarding the current activities of the SDC. Table 3-4 depicts the summary of the analysis.

Table 3-3: Feedback on continuous professional development

Statement	Level of agreeing with statement
I have received adequate training to effectively perform in my job	77%
The faculty/ university provides me with adequate training opportunities to achieve my career goals	73%
High quality staff development program is carried out by the faculty/ university	75%
I am satisfied with the training I receive from the faculty/ university to perform my job	75%
My promotion and career path are clear to me	83%
The university supports me in exploring my career goals and interests	72%
I have adequate access to resources on job related knowledge and skills	74%
I have adequate opportunities to engage in continuous professional development	72%
I have adequate time to participate in continuous professional development activities	57%
I am interested in participating in continuous professional development activities	83%

Except for the statement about the time to participate in continuous professional development activities, respondents have agreed more than 70% for all other statements. Thus, it can be concluded that, the respondents are somewhat satisfied with the stated continuous professional development activities.