

Professional Development of Teachers

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I. INTRODUCTION

Professional development refers to the development of a person in his or her professional role. Educator advancement is the expert development an instructor accomplishes because of increasing expanded involvement and inspecting his or her educating method (Glatthorn, 1995, P. 41). The conception of professional development is therefore, broader than career development, which is defined as “The growth that occurs as the teacher moves through the professional career cycle” (Glatthorn, 1995, P. 41). Today, societies as engaging in building serious educational reforms and one of the key element o these reforms is the professional development of teachers. Societies are finally acknowledging that teachers are not only one of the variables that need to be changed in order to improve their education system, but they are also the most important change agents in these reforms.

In my view and as this paper reinforces great training strategies have critical positive effect on how and what students learn. Learning how to teach and working to become excellent teacher, is a long – term process that requires not only the development of very practical and complex skills under the guidance and supervision experts.

II. BACKGROUND

Standard of education is essential in any country and Teacher development plays a significant role in standardizing it. In Pakistan, It is estimated that around (300) training centers and institutions are set up by the government and along with the government institutions there are also private teacher training centers. These centers train teachers and equip them with some pedagogical skills and provide them professional certificates. Research shows that, these short term programs trains almost 40,000/- teachers every year (Aly, 2007). Then again, the reports of National Educational Policy 1998-2010 recommend that these projects endure quality thought and don't meet standard instruction. An assortment of these projects rushed to prepare instructors need to center substance and instructional method of training (Government of Pakistan, 1998).

A vast assortment of research demonstrates that these preparation programs are not with no feedback. What's more, there are numerous reasons featured in disgrace of built up programs for instructors. Furthermore, these reasons are expressed in the investigation of Khan (2011).

1. Information based not application based
2. Enthusiasm to pass exams for affirmation
3. Remembrance to qualify the examination
4. No additional capability for coach

The Teacher development in Pakistan is lacking the implementations of through such centers and these all are theoretical base and these theories are most of the time not possible to be implicated due to the difference of environment and difference in learning abilities of students. To enforce these training to the teaching it is important either to mold the training methodology or to implement them under the supervisor of experts through in-house mentoring and training accordingly.

III. TEACHER DEVELOPMENT IN PAKISTAN

The existing level of teachers' professional competencies in our country (Pakistan) is not much promising. A survey was conducted in district Peshawar in which more than one hundred secondary school teachers participated, their classroom observations showed that only five percent of them partially applied their pedagogical understanding developed during their pre-service teacher training program. The survey further explained that many teachers were not aware on how to use such pedagogies in the classroom teaching. Teachers were trained but were still bound with the method of reading and writing to the students. This survey resulted that mentoring is the major aspect to let teachers learn the implications of teaching techniques in the classrooms and that can be done under the supervision of an expert.

Mentoring

Mentoring is a method of continuous professional development in teachers. A mentor perceived as a trusted, older, experienced and wise person who intensely guides a younger individual in many aspects of his/ her life (Yoder, 2001 & Carden, 2010). In this modern era, mentoring process has been emerged as a professional development technique in the fields of medicine, engineering, agricultural management and education to improve the professional skills of teachers throughout their careers development (Johnson, 2007).

For the purpose of this study, mentoring is defined as educational reforms designed by the Directorate of Staff Development to provide support and training to in-service teachers as part of their professional development. Smith and Ensher (2004) say that in an effective mentoring program the mentors and mentees should be paired from the same subject and grade level.

Mentoring is usually an intense, dyadic relationship in which the mentors further the professional and personal development of the protégé by providing information, assistance, support and guidance. Levinson et al., (1978) define mentor as “a teacher, sponsor, counselor, developer of skills, and intellect host, guide, and exemplar” (Merriam, 1983, p. 162).

Mentoring is additionally depicted regarding proficient connections that moderate educator segregation, advance the idea of an educative work environment and prompt the creation or comprehension of consensual standards in a school staff or review group (dialogic learning).

Mentoring in Pakistan

In Pakistan, mentoring process was initiated by the Punjab province during 2007 for the professional development of primary school teachers under the umbrella of Continuous Professional Development programs. The most important objective of mentoring program was to identify the professional development needs of Primary School Teachers and to accelerate students learning at primary level in the province. It should focus on changing the classroom practices, especially on changing how teachers teach and how children learn (Glasser, 2009).

In Pakistan, research studies, especially those pertaining to Balochistan, were conducted (see. Qaisrani et al., (1999) & Lalwani, 1999) and these provided some useful insights into the effectiveness of mentoring programs. Some of the available literature (Ganser, 1995; Memon, Lalwani, Meher, n.d.) studies the voices of mentors by discussing the mentors' role in professional development. Qaisrani and his associates (1999) consider mentoring program as an innovative program of in-service teacher education. They show that the cluster-based mentoring program has had a significant impact on students' learning.

Mentoring is an ongoing process that helps teachers to effectively teach and archive the best outcomes through students. A mentor guides the mentee to incorporate the best pedagogies possible. As mentioned in the paper that, A mentor is the experienced one who knows the best of the environment, students ability and also teachers teaching ability and can help teacher to integrate its knowledge and ability according to the need and advise of the expert.

A Teacher has an open room to select his / her mentor, who can guide them to best of his/ her ability. A mentor is willing to listen and support. But the willingness of the mentor is also important, rather he agrees to be a mentor or vice versa. Both mentors and mentees consider the quality of 17 interpersonal relationships between mentors and mentees as an important determinant factor of the success of a mentoring program (Kadji-Beltran et al. 2013). Within mentoring both the mentor and the mentee have specific roles in a mentoring relationship and these roles shape the outcomes of the mentoring (Cherian, 2007; Scanlon, 2008).

The preparation for mentoring phase focus on the training for mentors and mentees that centers on the nature of mentoring, the processes of mentoring, the roles of the mentor and mentee and conflict resolution. The pre-mentoring phase focus on the initial meeting before the mentoring begins. The actions in this phase are defining the expectations for the relationship, outlining of goals for each participant, defining

of roles for the mentor and mentee, mapping out a timeline, setting up communication channels and setting up meeting schedules. The focus of the mentoring phase is the development of the relationship and progression towards the achievement of the set goals. Opportunities for development of competencies and capabilities (skills, knowledge and processes) through teaching and coaching, active participation and collaboration, feedback approaches, reflective opportunities and interactions that endorse reciprocity (sharing, modeling, and facilitation) are the main actions in this phase. During the post-mentoring phase the focus falls on the continuation or completion of the relationship. If the mentoring continues, the main actions will be to do a progress review (formal tasks and duties) and to redefine needs/goals and mentoring roles. If the mentoring ends, the main actions in this phase will be to do an assessment on the goals achieved and an evaluation of the relationship (Ambrosetti et al. 2014). Everyday reflective practices should be followed so that each day can become better through the innovative ideas and better teaching practice can be executed through the expert mentoring and observations.

The process of mentoring works best as a form of support for colleagues who are aware of their learning needs. The mentors conduct training sessions/ programs for mentee, intending to create a multiplier effect in improving classroom practice. Mentee and mentors has an open door for asking questions and the answers of these questions should be effectively executed in the classroom teaching.

As mentioned in the Paper, and in my opinion, Mentoring is an ongoing method of gaining expertise in daily classroom practice for teacher and this method helps teacher to use their best abilities and knowledge in the supervision of an expert.

IV. CONCLUSION

The mentoring of teachers had a large positive impact on the student achievement in these subjects. The positive impacts were achieved from the first year after mentoring started, and were still present until 4 years after mentoring started. It seems that the impact of the mentoring is not influenced by the settings of the disadvantaged poor-performing schools.

These findings agree with the findings of Thompson et al. (2004), Fletcher et al. (2008), Fletcher & Strong (2009) and Rockoff (2008) that found positive impacts on student achievement after one year of mentoring teachers. It, however, differs from the findings of Glazerman et al. (2010) that found no positive impacts on student achievement over three years of students of teachers that received only one year of mentoring. They found positive impacts on student achievement of students of teachers that were mentored for two years, but only at the end of the third year after mentoring started.

The study used hierarchical linear modeling techniques to examine the relationship between student test scores and each teacher's degree of mentoring engagement (high, medium, or

low), after controlling for a number of key factors, including school-wide academic performance, student socioeconomic status, and student English language-learner status, nested within individual teachers' classrooms. The impact on

students of a change in teacher practice depends on the nature, frequency, and centrality of the teaching practice. Therefore, the impact on student achievement might be expected to be smaller than 0.32 (Thompson et al. 2004).