

Exploring the School Principals' Responsibilities in Promoting Continuous Professional Development: Challenges and its Impacts on Teacher Advancement

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Abstract

School headteachers play a significant role in shaping teachers' professional development. However, in developing countries like Pakistan, the professional leadership role of headmasters remains underexplored, limiting their involvement in school improvement initiatives. This study aimed to examine the role of headmasters in school-based continuous professional development (CPD) and identify factors hindering its implementation. The findings revealed that teachers' CPD is neither included in government education policies nor integrated into school-level strategic planning. The education department has neither conducted activities nor allocated a dedicated budget for school-based professional development. Moreover, a lack of awareness, professional knowledge, and leadership skills among headmasters further impedes the process. The study concludes that while school-based CPD is a highly effective approach for teacher development, it remains largely absent in the context of Swabi. Based on these findings, the study offers recommendations to address challenges faced by headmasters and enhance teachers' professional practices.

Keywords: Professional leadership, School Head Teacher, Continuous Professional Development, Teacher performance

Introduction

According to the Hillier, Y. (2005). Professional development consists of all-natural learning experiences and intentional and planned activities that square measure supposed to be of direct or indirect profit to the individual cluster or faculty and that contribute through these to the standard of education within the room. Head of the school is the key skilled person in the school, who is responsible to organize the entire mechanism of the school. In every institution and organization, the representation of head of the department has always a key role in the success and failure of the organization. Similarly, the failure and successes of the organizational activities and over all development, directly or indirectly depend upon the head of the institution. The Head is the most responsible individual in a school. He is also called a headmaster or headmistresses, who are gender-specific terms, as a whole, they are called head teachers the principal is the person in charge of the various departments in a school.

According to the Bredeson, V. (2000) As a leading professional, principal is accountable to governing body, and responsible to provide direction, vision, and leadership for the school and is responsible to ensure that it is managed and

organized to meet its aims and targets. Skilled (professional) development refers to skills and information gained for each personal development and career advancement, skilled development encompasses every kind of expedited learning opportunity, starting from faculty degrees to formal work, conferences and informal learning opportunities located in use.

There are many forms of approaches to skilled development which includes consultation, mentoring, lesson study, communities of practice, coaching, reflective administration and technical support. But question is that how we can ensure all these in our schools. The basic purpose of educational institution is teaching and learning. Principal is a responsible person to ensure teaching and learning process in the school. An effective teaching is not easy without continuous professional development. The study intends to what is the function of principals in continuous skilled development of the teaching staff. Principal has responsibility of creating a fruitful and useful learning domain to meet challenges of the students. He has the responsibility of internal policy making in school.

Objectives of the study

The primary objective of the study was:

1. To explore the professional responsibilities of the principal with the concept of continuous professional development of teachers
2. To explore the role and responsibilities of head teacher's in continuous professional development of teacher
3. To explore the challenges faced by the school principal in professional development

Research Question

1. What are the responsibilities of school principals regarding Continuous professional development of teachers
2. Which challenges faced by school principals while facilitating or promoting continuous professional development for teachers
3. Which challenges faced by school principals while facilitating or promoting continuous professional development for teachers

LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section presents my learning and understanding about Teacher Professional development with special focus on School Based Continuous Professional Development. The literature also extended to different means and challenges of professional development.

Teacher Professional Development

There are different interpretations of professional development in the literature. According to OECD (2010). "Professional skills development is defined as tasks that will more enhance an individual's expertise, skills, knowledge, expertise and other properties as a teaching faculty"

In obedience to the thesaurus of the Educational Resources Information Center , debate professional skills development refers to "activities to improve professional career growth." these activities can be included independent improvement, continuing educational and in services education and also the peer collaboration, mentoring or peer coaching and study groups expanded the definition, which says "the sum total of informal and formal learning experiences throughout one's whole career from pre-services teachers' education to their retirement" (Grant, R. W. 2002).

According to the Hillier, Y. (2005) The term professional skills development is frequently reserved for continuous professional skill development in school. The further elaborated professional development as Professional skill development is observed here as the body of organized activities to prepare teaching faculty for their work, which also include initial training, inductive courses in-service training and continuous professional skills development within school setting.

Concept of Continuous Professional Development

According to the Frayne, M. (2002) The main purpose of teaching and learning is the holistic development of Children. Students' outcome depends greatly on teachers' ability, skill and knowledge. Government, NGOs and local

implementer of education and the school management need to strengthen teachers' continuous skilled development so as to manage effectively with current changes and to make better the standard of education. Continuous professional development is essential to keep teacher up to date and conscious about day to day changes in teaching and learning process "Continuous professional skill development in schools has a special importance on the basis of co- operation within peer review, school teams and human resources development" Continuous skill development of teachers is the best way of peer review and to provide vision and easy support to teachers. Research study has specified that teacher's point of view concerning their own measure of competency and their sense of self-efficiency have an effect on their practices and student's performance.

Role of principal as Professional leader

According to the Hargreaves, A. (2000) Principal's professional profile, their duties and functions are very strongly rooted in the education system of every state. No one can deny the importance of principal in school improvement and staff development, support this view "There is no doubt about the fact that teacher themselves prefer principals who are honest communicative, collegial informal supportive and demanding, participatory and responsible in their expectations' with a clear prescience for the academic institution.

The principal is key person and liable for all the activities within the school setting. He has got to give leadership, vision and direction for the academic institution and ensures that it's managed and arranged to satisfy its targets, aims and objectives, that are founded by the administration. After thorough review of literature, I came to know that a principal can provide professional support and considerable effect on the learning of teacher. These include; the head of institute as learner and educational leader, the creator of learning surroundings and therefore he is the person who do assessment of skilled development outcomes.

Earwaker (2010) stated "The principal has responsibility for the internal organization, control and management of the academic institution. He has to formulates policies, aims and objectives and targets of the government and also responsible the set target and objectives by different way." [13]. Being a key person of the school, a principal has to supervise all the machinery of the school including professional support of teachers.

Alberta,R. (1998) stated that Continuous professional skills improvement plans gives a general stress on lifelong learning that has come to overcome human resource literature and government documents as well as perspectives on teacher improvement.

Joyce & Shower, (2000) describe Teacher training consist of four components: theory, modeling, practice, and peer-observation. The introductory talks correspond to the first component which is the exploration of theory through reading and discussion. The workshop corresponds to the second component, which refer the trying out the skill the real workshop and the mutual help between teachers during implementation.

METHODOLOGY

Design of the study

Considering the descriptive nature of the study, the quantitative survey research design was used to determine whether the role of head Master in school base continuous professional development at district wasabi. According to Gay & Pearson (2012), the questionnaire is better to collect data in quantitative research as it is time-saving, cost-effective and easy to use

Population of the Study

According to Masrur, R. (2010). "A population is the set of all the cases of interest." So, the research populations extend in broader area. The research populations of this research study were government school Head teachers of sawabi district, those teachers who are the part of cpd training and Officials of government education department.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

District swabi is a largest district of KPK. It was difficult for the researcher to extend this study in broad area of District Swabi. Therefore, Swabi and its surrounding regions were selected because it is easily approachable for collecting data. Due to limitation of resources and time, it was not possible to conduct the research study in a broad area of Swabi. Therefore, total Six Secondary Schools were selected randomly. One principal, three teachers from each school has been selected to fill the questionnaire and interview. Among these three teachers one teacher was observed in the classroom teaching.

Research Instrument

In this study, many data collection strategies e.g. interviews, questionnaire and informal classroom discussions methods were used. The data were taken from 6 principals, 18 secondary classroom teachers and District Education Officer (DEO) Education & Literacy District Swabi.

A self-developed questionnaire was validated before data collection. Furthermore, the validated research instrument was pilot-tested, and the reliability of the instrument was found to be .88 Cronbach's alphas was reliable, according to Yusuf, Shinta, & Fransisco (2020). The instrument was a point Likert Scale that was (Strongly Agree, Agree, Undecided, Disagree, Strongly Disagree) was used to collect data from 6 principals, 18 secondary classroom teachers and District Education Officer (DEO) Education & Literacy District Swabi.

Data Collection Procedures

To conduct this research study, three quantitative research instruments were developed: a survey questionnaire, structured interviews, and a classroom observation tool. Prior to designing these instruments, the researcher reviewed relevant literature to build a strong conceptual foundation on the topic. The selection of data collection methods and the development process of the research instruments were discussed with the research supervisor. Based on these discussions and a clear understanding of the research objectives, it was determined that the survey questionnaire and structured interviews were appropriate tools to gather quantifiable data and effectively address the research questions.

Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected, organized and interpreted in terms of table quantitatively. Conclusions were drawn on the basis of data analysis and interpretation.

Interpretation of Data

The following tables demonstrate the analysis of the data and interpretation accordingly.

Table 1

Is School based continuous professional developments of teachers necessary for teachers' development?

Response	Yes	To some extent	No
Numbers	5	0	0
percentage	100%	0%	0%

Analysis The table of quantitative data shows that 100% principals strongly agreed that school based professional development is necessary for teachers' development.

Table 2

Should the principal play a main role in school based continuous professional development of teachers.

Response	Yes	To some extent	No
Numbers	3	2	0
Percentage	60%	40%	0%

Analysis The data reveals that perception of 60 % principals fully agree and about 40 % agree to some extent; about the positive role of principal in school based continuous professional development?

Table 3

Are teachers professionally sound and there is no need to help them?

Response	Yes	To some extent	No
Numbers	1	0	4%
Percentage	20%	0	80%

Analysis The table also indicates that 80% principals disagree with the question that professional development is an automatic process and there is no need of expert support.

Findings

The study finding show that the table of quantitative data shows that 100% principals strongly agreed that school based professional development is necessary for teachers' development.

The study finding also show that the data reveals that perception of 60 % principals fully agree and about 40 % agree to some extent; about the positive role of principal in school based continuous professional development.

The finding of the study revealed that the table also indicates that 80% principals disagree with the question that professional development is an automatic process and there is no need of expert support

Discussion and Conclusion

The study highlights my learning from the study and its importance for me as educator and for all the head Masters as professional supporter of teachers. The lesson learnt would be useful to the official of government education department and researchers. Finally, the findings and recommendations will provide a base to understand the importance of principals' jobs and their role and responsibilities the recommendation will also help full to the government education department in evaluating head Masters performance. Continuous Professional Development is not a popular practice in Pakistan especially in District Swabi because of the little attention given to it in the strategic plan of the education. This research study revolves around the role of principals in school based continuous professional skill development of teachers. It was found that neither principals have sound and up dated knowledge, skills about continuous professional development nor government education department had focused teachers school based professional development. A number of studies in different countries on principal's professional role and responsibilities recommended various professional supports to teachers. In these studies teachers mentoring, providing vision, peer coaching/observation and collaborative learning are prominent. It is found that there is no culture of professional development of teachers in the school. However, principals can provide professionals support through different way such as mentoring; observing classrooms activities, encourage teachers' collaborative activities and developing learning communities in the school. It is concluded that school based professional development of teachers are not accruing in the school with proper planning and understanding of the concept, although teachers are facing problem in lesson planning, content knowledge and classroom management. Principals are considered responsible of school based continuous professional development of teachers but practices of principals are not satisfactory, however principal perception are quite positive about school base staff development and feel it intense need of teachers' professional development. Both government education department and the head teachers are responsible for professional development of teachers. For this purpose, principals should be trained to minimize hug investment in teachers' professional workshop, ensuring school based professional development because it is more economical and practical approach towards teachers' professional development.

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