

**Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous
Professional Development at Secondary Level:
A qualitative Study**

Ahmad Bashir¹ & Dr.Shabbir Hussan²

ABSTRACT

The world is changing so rapidly. Education and researches make the knowledge double in every five years. Professional development is also changing so frequently all around the world. We are aware that the old methods, models, experiences are no longer being implemented in a particular country. This research can be applied at secondary school level teachers' training .It can apply for short term, long term, co-learning in Schools, Mentoring, reflection process, getting knowledge from experts, creating a collaborative learning culture and training by observing students ' performance etc. This research is helpful for teachers for these kinds of purposes. With the help of this research It is recommended that short and Long term of CPD trainings may be arranged for teachers, CPD trainings may consist of professional as well as subject base development and for the CPD may be arranged technological, co-learning, reflection process, getting knowledge from experts, creating a collaborative learning culture and training by observing students 'performance etc.

Keywords: Perceptions, Continuous Professional Development & Secondary Level

1

² Assistant professor, Department of Islamic Studies, Mohi-ud-Din Islamic University Narian Sharif Aj&K

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

Introduction

Allah Almighty said to the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) that “وَقُلْ رَبِّ زِدْنِي عِلْمًا” “O Prophet (PBUH) say that O the Lord increases my knowledge. (Alquran), So human being needs to improve the knowledge and he must ready always to gain the knowledge. There is no end of knowledge so that the teacher is also need to improve his/her professional knowledge and development. To give quality education it is necessary that we have to give our teacher training and develop their professional skills. For the development of teacher continuous professional skills, arrangement of training work Programs, improvement of the quality of teacher education, a continuum of teacher education, Professional values encouraging all teachers to be reflective practitioners, an attractive profession Qualifications for teaching and supporting teachers High-quality teacher education are the main factors.

The word perception is defined in Oxford Dictionary as: “The ability to see, hear or become aware of something through the senses” (Oxford Dictionary). The other variable is profession. According to Oxford Dictionary it is a paid occupation, particularly one that involves make longer training and have a formal adaptation Continuous professional development makes the teacher effective but effective teacher need to be aware of current

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

trends. But we have to see that what is professional development?

Teaching professional development is its growth, its upgradation and growth which occurs as a result of its permanent experience and reform work who conducted research in teaching and beyond (Althorn ,2010).

According to Gander, Filding and Schaback (2010) the base of Professional development is on continues procedure of authorities by setting targets for the permanent changing of teaching and teaching environment implementing the range of targets (Stip, 2010).

According to Hay Mizel the term professional development we normally understand that this is a proper procedure like a conference, seminar, or workshop, cooperative or special courses in schools, colleges ,universities or any other organization. However the continuous professional development may also be done through informal system of education as well such as discussions among work members, self-reading and research, observations of a colleague's work, or other learning from a peer or any friend etc (Mizel, 2010).

The higher education for teachers is very important for teacher's professional development particularly in professional subjects such as M.Ed. or higher education.

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

About the 21st century teacher Fullan (1994) argues that Teachers' abilities must change with the changing of the time, learn from it and help students learn from their wishes and be critical for the future development of culture and society. We need a new mindset to think deeply. These kind of mindset will prepare educators to become agents of change (Mizel, 2010).

The 21st century teacher must have a well perception about professional development and he must fulfill all requirements of the modern competent teachers. He must prepare himself to educate the students according to the today world needs and requirements. With the help of this article we will be able to understand the need and importance of CPD at secondary level. We can get the answer of what is the CPD and how it will be done at secondary level of education.

Literature Review

Continuous Professional Development

Education, Teacher training and the professional in-service teacher training at all levels of education is the responsibility of Training Agencies. Teachers' continuous Professional development refers to development of teachers' professional role.

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

Continuing Professional Development is the process of in advance and getting experiences, skills and the knowledge that we gain through formal in organized training organization or informal ways as we work beyond any preliminary training. CPE is very important experiences to learn and apply for the betterment of students learning and teacher's professional development. It will be the physical development as well as professional development. It is the development of in service teacher's professional learning development, recording and reflecting on their learning and professional learning development.

Professional development is the approach of the educational organization which use to ensure that the teachers' continue to make strong their practices and educational activities during their professional career from starting of their teaching jobs to till the retirement. Focusing on the student learning needs, team development, technical development, up to date and new teaching strategies, aim, goals and objectives of education are few important effective professional developments of continuous professional development at secondary school level. Professional teachers must learn to solve the problems of students and new teaching methods and strategies and their applications for the better achievements of the students. The professional education organizations

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

must arrange interdependent and collaborative learning environment for teachers (Mizel, 2010).

Learning about how teach and how to convey or transfer the knowledge to the student in better ways as compare to their earlier applied ways is professional development of teachers. The professional growth of teacher is the combination of multiple process, which needs emotional and cognitive participation of teachers individually and collaboratively. The practical participation of teachers is the crucial thing in the continuous professional development (Beatrice, 2011).

Different researches narrate the importance of CPD as:

1. CPD is important to many teachers as a means to upgrade and they make up to date their skills and knowledge for the benefit of themselves and their pupils.
2. The CPD activities beneficial for school development plan, presented by expert practitioners, provide the opportunity for teachers to work collaboratively and for active involvement.
3. It provides the teachers to create the new initiatives, techniques, strategies and take new responsibilities.

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

4. It is helpful for teachers to motivate themselves if they feel any kind of needs and help in teaching and CPD.
5. Teachers can improve their classroom skills and pedagogical approaches and teacher will remain touch with different teaching styles.
6. We can make aware the teachers about different websites, online materials concerning CPD/ education so that they can take it easily but monitoring is required for this purpose.

In service teachers training is also the kind of CPD. About in-service teachers training a group of researchers say that In-service teacher trainings revives and increases the professional effectiveness of teachers by techniques, activities and learning experiences. Continuous professional development of teachers by in-service teacher education activities have different types for example group or individual, formal or non-informal. CPD are in the form of regular courses of study, educational workshops, lectures, discussions, interviews and supervision of individual study of the professional literature by teachers themselves and collaborations of each other (Shah, 2011).

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

Teacher's perceptions about continuous professional development at secondary level

Reflection Processes

The reflection process is very much necessary for the development of teacher. It analyzes the needs, problems, changing processes, feelings, beliefs, content based knowledge and teaching methods and strategies are the important factors that have more contribution in the development of teachers' professional development. All these factors can be developed and tested by reflection process. Reflection is applied in research for several purposes. According to the studies of this decade show that the reflection is used as an instrument for change. In various ways reflection can be developed. For collaborative learning environment some teachers can be given chance to teach some lessons and other teachers and the trainer can give the feedback so that the teachers may get reflection from their collaborative fellows and their trainer. Similarly in now a days video can be recorded in the classroom and the teacher himself can make correct his mistakes and also can feedback from the evaluators and trainers as well (Beatrice, 2011).

Technological training

Now a days teacher must know the use of technology in their professional life. It is essential for

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

teachers to use the technology in their classrooms. At secondary level many teachers do not know the use of technology so they must be given training of the usage of technology. Teacher can use internet and get help from internet to teach the students in better way. For example getting help from a video clips, online websites related articles and books (Beatrice, 2011).

Mentoring for Beginning Teachers

When a new and untrained teacher comes in education system then the seniors and management of the school pay their attentions towards mentoring of the particular teacher for the professional development of that teacher. In starting a teacher may face some difficulties particularly when he is not well experienced and professional. School management and seniors may take part the role of mentor for the betterment of new teacher or their colleague. Mentoring brings changes in the mentor and the person who is mentored.

Mentor must know that what mentors bring to the training process, their identity development during this process, how to give training to the teachers through mentoring, how they take part in the identity development of beginning teachers, must aware of the problems which concerned with the mentoring process, having knowledge of best practices, and he can use of tools, Teaching

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

Methods, teaching strategies and uses of other resources etc (Feiman-Nemser & Parker, 2012).

Secondary Schools Partnerships with Universities or other Training Organizations

Education is interdependent process so schools must have link to the universities and other training organizations to gain training their teachers. If secondary schools join partnerships with universities and teachers' training organizations then it will be the bridge for their different professional learning and practices. The training institutions and universities have more experts. Experts have more knowledge and more experiences to train the teachers. They are connected to new researches and modern professional needs so they can train the teachers in the best way (Beatrice, 2011).

Teachers Co-Learning

Collaborative learning is the most important learning way. The teachers can learn a lot from their colleagues. They may be provided chance to understand how to teachers to each other, help them in sharing their experiences , developing teacher networks and teams like What Sapp group, sharing their researches/ experiences/ different contents or methodologies in that group, freely communicating of practices and strategies, doing peer coaching and team teaching. Collaborative learning or team

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

learning has good influence on quality of learning it will develop higher level thinking and reserve information and knowledge for longer times than learning through individual way. The positive points of collaborative and team learning is that it focusses on the collection of data, can be used problem solving methods, can share the problems and take feedback, can arrange group discussion, may organize peer coaching for teacher development (Gregory, 2010).

Workplace learning

Work place learning is concern only in schools' facilitators and it is not concern with facilitators of outsiders. This term is formally or informally some extent a particular for professional development. A situation learning theory will be drawn in contexts to teachers' learning in school. This activity reflects that learning may be through individual or collaborative by the facilitators (Mawhinney, 2010).

School Cultures

The spirit of school is its culture, its tradition and beliefs which indicates environment of the school. It contains the organizational and management structures in which we have to provide for teachers interaction to each other, facilitate teachers workplace learning. Comparative research studies of schools in diverse geographical places

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

showed that how the schools have given chances for teachers to learn and serve that what sort of school culture they provided for the teachers to illustrate their beliefs, traditions, types of organizational arrangements, teachers' informal concentration was given in educational interactions (Caena, 2011).

Training by Observing Students' Learning

The student evaluations whether it is summative or formative and other evaluations which shows the weakness and success of teacher professional and academic capabilities. Management of schools can arrange training of their teachers through the student's results and learning outcomes. The management team of schools can resolve the weaknesses of teachers through arrange short term and long term trainings according to the needs of students' learning outcome. If student's learning outcome is better and comfortable than the management may give any sort of awards to the teachers so that the teachers can be motivated (Beatrice, 2011).

Objectives of the Study

Objectives of the study are:

1. To describe the concept of the continuous professional development.

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

2. To explore teachers' perceptions about continuous professional development at Secondary level.

Research Questions

Here are main two questions that we are having as research questions.

1. What is Teachers' Continuous Professional development CPD?
2. What are teacher's perceptions about continuous professional development at secondary level?

Research Methodology

Qualitative and descriptive research was carried out in the research.

Findings

According to the research there are some findings as:

1. Continuing Professional Development is the process of in advance and getting experiences, skills and the knowledge that we gain through formal in organized training organization or informal ways as we work beyond any preliminary training during their services.
2. Continuous professional development may be done at secondary school level the teachers by reflection

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

process, technological learning process, mentoring by the senior teachers, gaining professional knowledge from experts and university teachers, collaboration of teachers, workplace learning ,creating learning culture in school for all teachers and training by observing students' learning.

Conclusion

According to the findings of this research the conclusion of this research is as:

The approach of continuous professional development teacher is that teachers always be ready to make strong their practices and educational activities during their professional career from starting of their teaching jobs to till the retirement. Focusing on the student learning needs, team development, technical development, up to date and new teaching strategies, aim, goals and objectives of education are few important effective professional developments of continuous professional development at secondary school level. Professional teachers must learn to solve the problems of students and new teaching methods and strategies and their applications for the better achievements of the students. The professional education organizations must arrange

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

interdependent and collaborative learning environment for teachers.

We can train the teachers by reflection process by which we can analysis of the needs, problems, changing processes, feelings, beliefs, content bas knowledge and teaching methods etc. Education is interdependent process so schools must have link to the universities and other training organizations to gain training their teachers. If secondary schools join partnerships with universities and teachers' training organizations then it will be the bridge for their different professional learning and practices. Collaborative learning is the most important learning way. The teachers can learn a lot from their colleagues.

For collaborative learning environment some teachers can be given chance to teach some lessons and other teachers and the trainer can give the feedback so that the teachers may get reflection from their collaborative fellows and their trainer. Similarly in now a day's video can be recorded in the classroom and the teacher himself can make correct his mistakes and also can feedback from the evaluators and trainers as well. Work place learning is concern only in schools' facilitators and it is not concern with facilitators of outsiders. This term is formally or informally some extent a particular for professional development. A situation learning theory will be drawn in

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

contexts to teachers' learning in school. This activity reflects that learning may be through individual or collaborative by the facilitators. The student evaluations whether it is summative or formative and other evaluations which shows the weakness and success of teacher professional and academic capabilities.

Management of schools can arrange training of their teachers through the student's results and learning outcomes. The management team of schools can resolve the weaknesses of teachers through arrange short term and long term trainings according to the needs of students' learning outcome. If the learning outcome of students is better than the teachers must be given any sort of awards which will motivate particular teachers and other teachers as well.

Recommendations

With the help of this research, it is recommended that

1. Short and Long term of CPD trainings may be arranged for teachers at secondary school level.
2. CPD trainings may consist of professional as well as subject base development.
3. For the purpose of The CPD short term teacher trainings may be arranged during vacations so that the education may not be affected.

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

4. For the CPD may be arranged technological, co-learning, reflection process, getting knowledge from experts, creating a collaborative learning culture and training by observing students ' performance etc.

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

References

- Beatrice. (2011). Avalos. *Teaching and Teacher Education* University of Chile, Alsacia 150, Depto. 33, Las Condes, Santiago, Chile.
- Caena, F. (2011). Education and Training 2020 Thematic Working Group 'Professional Development of Teachers. *European Commission Directorate-General for Education and Culture Lifelong learning: policies and programme School education; Comenius*, 20.
- Clifford, M. (2011). 20 Collaborative Learning Tips And Strategies For Teachers. *opencolleges.edu.au*, 20.
- Feiman-Nemser, S., & Parker, M. B. (2012). Mentoring in Context: A Comparison of Two U.S. Programs for Beginning Teachers. NCRTL Special Report. *National Center for Research on Teacher Learning, East Lansing, MI*.
- Mizel, H. (2010). Why professional development matters. *Valerie von Frank*, 28.
- Stip, B. (2010). The need of continuous professional teacher development. *Snezana Jovanova-Mitkovskaa*, 6.

Teachers' Perceptions about Continuous Professional Development at Secondary Level: A qualitative Study

Syed Makhdoom Ali Shah, K. M. (2011). In-Service Training of Secondary Level Teachers: a Followup of Teachers' Performance in Comparative Perspective. *SS Eng. Govt. Denny's HSS, Rawalpindi, Pakistan (Ph. D Scholar, Preston University, Islamabad)*.

Qur'an (2013) translated by Abdullah Yusuf Ali. Ware, Hertfordshire: Wordsworth Editions Limited.