

THE INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF HUMANITIES & SOCIAL STUDIES

A Review Paper on Teacher Professional Development (TPD) and Teacher Effectiveness in Sri Lanka

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Abstract:

This paper reviews Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programs in Sri Lanka and the influences of TPD to develop teacher effectiveness and school improvement. Teacher effectiveness and school improvement are directly affected to quality of learning outcomes of the students. For this review paper the information were collected through relevant documentary, books, journal papers, websites, hand books and other related policy papers, finally analysed the collected information. This paper identified through the literature some models which related to teacher effectiveness. Further, some important activities were found in the reviewing process of the TPD programs in Sri Lankan context, these activities highly affected to teacher effectiveness and school improvement. Finally some recommendations were discussed in the paper which are should be important for further development of the Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programs in Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Teacher effectiveness models, effective teacher professional development, student learning outcomes

1. Introduction

Well planned Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programs, lead to teacher effectiveness and teacher improved. Therefore, the study attempts to review the literature of teacher effectiveness focusing on Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programs. Further, recent research findings show that there is a strong relationship between teachers' teaching quality and students' learning outcomes. Effective Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programs improve teacher quality which lead to changing classroom teaching practice as well, the final outcome is the improvement of student learning. According to some research findings, some factors (sources) have strong influences on student learning outcomes. These factors are students, teachers, principals, home, and peer effects. Among them, the students account for about 50 percent of the variance, the next highest is the teacher's effect that accounts for 30 percent, and the other effects are only 20 percent (AISV, 2006) therefore teachers contribution to develop students' outcomes is highly important.

2. Methodology

For this study qualitative data (information) were collected by reviewing relevant books, journals, websites, thesis, paper articles and hand-books. The collected information were analysed and finally this reviewed paper is prepared. Especially the paper was focused to review national and international literature which is relevant to Teacher Professional Development (TPD) and Teacher Effectiveness in Sri Lanka.

3. Teacher Professional Development (TPD) and Teacher Effectiveness in Sri Lanka

Lingam (2004) highlights the relationship of quality teaching and school improvement and asserts that the quality of teaching of teachers contributes to school effectiveness. In addition, some characteristics of teacher behaviours also contribute to teacher effectiveness. Lingam (2004) mentions characteristics of teacher behaviours are: demonstrate commitment; have subject specific knowledge and know their craft; love children; set an example of moral conduct; manage groups effectively; incorporate new technology; master multiple models of teaching and learning; adjust and improvise their practice; know their students as individuals; exchange ideas with other teachers; reflect on their practice; collaborate with other teachers; advance the profession of teaching; and contribute to society at large (Lingam, 2004, p. 36).

In addition, (Zammit et al., 2007, p. 5) articulates some characteristics of effective teachers as, "...use explicit, direct teaching but also give students a substantial role in the reflective reaction of knowledge through, for example, the negotiation of learning tasks and student-led questioning. They make transparent the links between student effort and accomplishment. Further, DETYA (1999) mentions two different approaches explained in teacher professional development: school effectiveness (e.g. management plans, performance indicators, and teacher appraisal) and school development (e.g. support teachers' development through school re-culture). These approaches are connected with some important concepts which are discussed in this study. As mentioned previously, teacher professional development is an essential part of the quality of education. Therefore, teacher professional development makes effective teachers, which can

lead to and enhance the quality of the teaching-learning process (Leu, 2004; Good et al., 2003; McGaw et al., 1992; Sachs, 2003; NSES, 2008). Considering the Sri Lankan education context, it is generally believed that at the beginning of the 21st century, the education environment has become more challenging and demanding because of the current rapid development in technology, socio-economy and the political environment. In such a situation, schools in the new century are expected to perform a wide range of functions, and the school has to understand the complex nature of teachers' effectiveness. This can be enhanced through changing management strategies.

Cheng & Tsui (1999) explain the models of teacher effectiveness in terms of the Goal and Task model and Resource Utilization model. Table 01 provides the description of the two models

Model of Teacher Effectiveness	Conception of Teacher Effectiveness	Conditions for Model Usefulness	Areas for Assessing and Monitoring
Goal and Task model	Achieves planned goals and assigned tasks in congruence with school goals.	Goals and tasks are clear, consensual, time-bound and measurable. Resources are sufficient to achieve goals and tasks.	Achievements of teaching objectives and tasks, performance standards. Student performance and learning outcomes.
Resource Utilization model	Uses allocated resources and acquisition of inputs for working process.	A clear relationship of resource to work process and output exists. Resources for achieving goals and education outcomes are limited	Management and utilization of resources for work. Allocation and acquisition of necessary and scarce resources.

*Table 1: Models of Teacher Effectiveness
(Cheng & Tsui, 1999)*

These teacher effectiveness models can be combined with Teacher Professional Development (TPD) programs. "Each model represents an important perspective that describes and emphasises certain factors that are closely related to teachers' performance and contribution in a schools' organisational context" (Cheng & Tsui, 1999, p. 142). Considering the above teacher effectiveness model, it mainly explains the Goal and Task model and Resource Utilization model including the conception of teacher effectiveness, conditions for model usefulness and areas for assessing and monitoring. Therefore this literature provides a complete guideline to TPD organizers on how to organise, implement and monitor TPD programs to develop teacher effectiveness. Moreover, the majority of Sri Lankan TPD organizers have problems about utilization of resources because more often they have to cope with limited resources. So that, considering the Sri Lankan education context, these models can be applied in connection to TPD programs for the secondary school system. Each teacher effectiveness model includes assessment and monitoring areas. Thus, the application of this model allows TPD organizers to organise teacher assessment programs also simultaneously. Further, considering the UNESCO report of 1980, (Down et al., 1995) responds to the criticism of teaching practice in the 1980s in Sri Lanka, it suggested that school-based teacher professional development is a desirable model for the development of teacher TPD.

Gunasekera (1996) believes that in the Sri Lankan education system, 90% of the teachers use traditional and old inappropriate (without innovation) teaching methods, such as, recitation of historical stories in front of the students and lecture methods. Students often even read text books without any idea of the context. As a result, students could not achieve quality education. In addition, the majority of teachers enter the classroom without sufficient preparation of the lesson (Gunasekera, 1996). Under such a situation, teachers' preparation programs need to be developed in National level, particularly through the TPD programs. Furthermore, Monyatsi, (2006) points out that school-based staff development can enhance the quality of student learning by identifying, clarifying and meeting the individual needs of staff within the context of an institution. Trainers and teachers also work in partnership to direct training programs in such a way to meet the identified needs of the school and learning in the classroom. In addition, (Monyatsi, 2006, p. 151) describes School-Focused Staff Development as, "A process through which a school's strength and shortcomings utilizes such information as a basis for school improvement. The process is accomplished from school or building level planning, that are goal-directed, outcomes-focused and consistent with the school system's strategic plan".

Effective teaching and learning is one of the significant aspects of effective schools. This reports that "...effective teaching and learning at the heart of all schools and teacher development is being reaffirmed" (Ryan, 1997, p. 1). There are different kinds of programs implemented in schools for developing effective teaching and learning. The 'PEEL' (Project for Enhancing Effective Learning) is one of the significant examples. The PEEL project was implemented in Australia by the Faculty of Education of Monash University. PEEL is relevant to this study, because the model of this project was included in some important aspects of TPD programs. PEEL was first implemented in Laverton High School, Melbourne, Australia. Laverton High School is a typical secondary school which is located in an outer industrial suburb. PEEL is a long-term project focused to improve the quality of students' learning in everyday classrooms. A group-based action research method was used with teachers at the beginning of the project. Further various activities (strategies) were used to improve the quality of students' learning, such as student-centred learning, discovery learning (Baird & Mitchell, 1986; Baird, 1992). The PEEL project is aimed at enhancing the quality of students' learning whereas this study aims to investigate school-based teacher professional development, but more teacher professional development components are included in the PEEL project. After seven years, the PEEL project was evaluated, and it revealed that teachers learnt how

to teach and students learnt how to learn. Therefore, the PEEL model upgrades the teaching-learning process and teacher professionalism.

The PEEL project at no stage has received large scale financial support, but teachers have achieved their desired goals. The PEEL project was focused on improving the quality of students' learning in every day classrooms by developing professionalism of teaching, teachers' satisfaction and fulfilment. "Effective management of teaching was based on a method used throughout PEEL. This method is entitled Collaborative Action Research" (Baird & Northfield, 1992). In Collaborative Action Research, teachers contribute as informed participants in the research process. Considering teachers' participation in PEEL, "PEEL allows teachers to act to change their educational ideas and practices. Change occurs through collaborative reflection on practice" (Baird & Northfield, 1992).

The next example for TPD programs is the 'Parent Project'. This project is a workshop approach to increasing parent involvement in their children's education. This project was implemented in New York, in the United States. The Parent Project could strengthen the relationship between home and school-teacher, parent, and child because many "workshops" are organised in the project in which workshops, group of parents, teachers, and school support staff work together for the betterment of children and families. The Parent Project was implemented to improve students' education, but under this project teachers and principals have benefitted as well. They understood children's and parents' needs as well as teachers possessed new knowledge, and developed their skills, attitudes. Each of the workshops generally lasted two hours and the workshops were organised conducting a mix of experimental activities, guest presentation, journal writing and shared books. Vopar (1994, p. 14) outlines instances for the successfulness of the workshops – this is, "we see teachers and parent as equals". The teacher-parent relationship is used to enhance school outcomes as well as teacher professionalism. The next section articulates the range of activities which are applied in TPD programs. Different methods are used in TPD programs, some of which are traditional and one-shot, for example, workshops, seminars and conferences (Smith et al., 2003). Others are job-embedded teacher professional development methods (Smith & Gillespie, 2007) such as study circles, practitioner research and inquiry projects. Various types of activities are applied in the above methods, which are group works, peer learning, projects, team teaching, and observation of model schools. These activities help to increase the quality of teaching-learning processes in schools, as "...the success of professional learning activities depend on teacher motivation, enthusiasm and commitment" (Yates, 2007, p. 215).

In addition, Smith et al (2003) outlines some school-based continuing professional development activities, which are listed below:

- Induction (pairing with a master teacher or mentor when beginning to teach, offered by the school).
- Ongoing inquiry activities (practitioner research or study circles, organised by the school).
- Coaching (whether peer or mentor).

The Department of Education & Training (2005) provides some effective professional development activities: action research, study groups and case discussions.

4. Conclusion

This paper reviewed the Teacher Professional Development (TPD) and Teacher Effectiveness in Sri Lanka. The paper recognized the relationship of quality teaching and school improvement and quality of students' outcomes. Further the paper has articulated some models of teacher effectiveness and some important activities which are supported to enhance teacher effectiveness through the TPD programs.

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