

A REVIEW OF TEACHERS' PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MODELS

Roya Roustae
Shuhaida Abdul Kadir
Soaib Asimiran

Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM)

ABSTRACT

Attention to teacher professional development has increased rapidly in recent years. Teachers' professional development has an essential effect on school effectiveness and student achievement. The teacher is the key figure when it comes to influencing student performance and therefore teacher professional development programmes are in the centre of attention. This article precedes professional development, the underlying theories and models that may be appropriate to use in this process.

Keywords: *teachers' professional development, Situated Learning Theory, observation, action-research*

INTRODUCTION

Since current educational systems are under pressure to attain more efficacies and fulfil changes (Buchen, 2003; Desimone, 2009; Fullan, 1999; O'Brien & Christie, 2008), teachers carry heavier burden because the main responsibility in this regard has shifted from the administration to the teachers. Many researches showed that one of the most important school-related factors influencing students' achievement is an informed and inspiring teacher, so it is essential to pay greater attention to teachers' learning. According to Bransford, Derry, Berliner, Hammerness, & Beckett, (2005), in order to face the complex and new situation properly, teachers should launch effective life-long learning. Nicholls (2000) noted that one aspect of lifelong learning is professional development, so practitioners must be aware of the need for constant learning.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

According to Jackson & Davis (2000), teachers' professional development is a range of informal and formal activities that involve teachers in both inside and outside of the school for developing their teaching skills and knowledge. Glatthorn (1995) traditionally defined professional development as the progress in teaching skills which are attained through a systematic learning process throughout the whole career cycle. Hoyle (1982) believed that professional development is a process in which

teacher continues to develop the skills and knowledge which are required for efficient professional practice as new responsibilities are accepted and as situations change.

According to Elmore and Burney (1997), professional development is not a specialized function which is done by specific people. It is what administrative leaders do when they are doing their jobs. Daresh and Playko (1995) defined it as a continuing process for improving development rather than reconstruction. Speck and Knip (2005) believed that professional development is a sustained collaborative learning process that systematically nurtures the individual and collaborative development of teachers through job- embedded, adult learner-centered processes. Merkle and Artman (1983) noted that professional development is a planned experience designed to extract the behaviours that result in personal or professional growth and improved organizational success.

MODELS AND THEORIES IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Different models have been proposed for teachers' professional development, namely training/ traditional model, innovation- focused model, action- research model, inquiry, observation, involvement in development/ improvement process, training, individually guided professional development, the promoting change in teaching practice model, teacher study group, cognitively guided training model, training for conceptual change and situated learning theory.

Traditionally, most of the professional development models are based on stage model in which teachers move through stages of cognitive improvement which ranges from novice to expert (Rice & Dawley, 2007). In Dunlop's (1990) model, "innovation-focused" models have been separated from "action-research" models. "Innovation- focused" models contain microteaching, school-based professional development, one-shot seminars, participation in formal award courses, basing a curriculum consultant at a school, and workshops. Action- research model focuses on reflect-in-action through a planned process which is facilitated by a peer or consultant in order to adjust the theory-practice disparity through on-going and personal reflection.

Sparks and Louck-horsley (1989) recognized five different effective development models which are inquiry, observation, involvement in development/ improvement process, training and individually guided professional development.

1. Inquiry/action research that is the ability of teachers in asking questions and problem solving. Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) asserted that by studying on what they do, teachers can ideate on their practices. One important element in action research is teachers' link with knowledge sources and being stimulated by outside experts or perceptions which are assisting in the act of action research. One more factor in action research is a collaborative event with shared and documented results. Nonetheless, this model has some advantages and disadvantages. According to Sparks & Simmons (1989) by using this model, teachers would be more systematic problem- solvers, become more reflective and

more thoughtful decision- makers. Another benefit of this model is that this process would increase the individuals' awareness of their classroom issues, extend the vision toward learning and teaching, help to increase the feeling of confidence, be more thoughtful, and alter educational beliefs and put the theories into practice (Sparks and Loucks-Horsley,1998).They suggested that action research can change the school culture toward a positive path, unite the teachers and increase the collegial interaction.

2. Coaching/mentoring/evaluative/observation which is a compilation of the work of Guskey (2000), and Little (1993) is based on the idea that precise teaching while open debates and managing behaviours of the outcomes, would result in increased effectiveness, awareness and learning (Little, 1993). An individual can increase his/ her own practice by others observations and perceptions (Loucks-Horsley,1998). Loucks-Horsley (1998) noted that perceptions and observations of someone else can increase individuals' reflection on his/ her own practice and teachers are knowledgeable professionals whose experience, observations and experience are precious source of inspiration for other teachers, skill development and knowledge. Guskey (2000) uttered that by using this strategy, a teacher can identify strength and shortcomings which is necessary for him/ her to progress as an individual. He suggested that an effective observation should be well planned, provide follow- up to documented improvements and concentrate on specific issues. Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1998) believed that the success of this strategy lies in collegiality, skill building through coaching; acclimate of trust, administrative support, on-going growth, mentoring, and a long-term commitment to interaction.
3. Although there is a great shift in professional development, the influence of training strategy is still regarded. Although many of the educators highlighted the importance of this strategy, some researchers asserted that overemphasis on it would make it ineffective (Killion, 2002). Killion (2002) believes that an effective training strategy contains demonstration or modelling, coaching, low-risk practice and other types of continuous support.
4. Individually guided activities concern that teachers are able to evaluate what they learn and plan some strategies to respond the emerging needs, i.e., review research, attend workshops or conferences, take courses, etc. It is based on the assumption that all the individuals have the best professional aims in their mind and when they initiate their own learning activities, they become more motivate (Guskey, 1999). Although the flexibility of this strategy and the offered opportunities for individualization and choice are among advantages of this strategy (Guskey, 1999) and is beneficial for teachers, it's noxious for the organization since it segments staff and restricts their effectiveness in working together in order to attain the organizational goals (Killion, 2002).
5. Development/ improvement process involves gather the educators together in order to dispel a problem or apply a new program containing resolving specific problems, designing strategies to improve instruction, planning novel programs, and reviewing curriculum. Guskey (2000) believed that in this program, participants must obtain new skills or knowledge via observation, discussion, research and reading. According to his point of view, by involvement in this

program, the participants can increase their specific content skills or knowledge, improve the ability of working collaboratively and involve in decision-making. However, a significant disadvantage of this strategy is the limitation in the number of participants. Personal differences may also hinder the process of reform (Guskey, 1999).

Guskey's (1999) model of professional development propose that professional development should precede the application of novel ideas in order to enable teachers to witness positive outcomes of students and try out new ideas before they fully accept a definite model of professional development. He also added study group to the work of Sparks and Louck-horsley (1990). This strategy enables teachers to address the issues which are related to learning and teaching (Loucks-Horsley, 1998). Studies show that within study groups, teachers are provided with a framework in which there are the opportunity to ask questions and study about those questions in a long time (Loucks-Horsley, 2002). Pursuant to Guskey's view (1999) the most important benefit of this strategy is that it brings coherence and focus to development efforts, especially when the groups are well-structured, carefully supervised and well trained. It also fractures intrinsic isolation in schools. However, Sparks and Loucks-Horsley, 1989) believe that it is difficult to sustain the study group and it requires spending too much time and endeavour of participants. Tillema and Imants (as cited Guskey & Huberman, 1995) reviewed four models of professional development namely, the promoting change in teaching practice model, teacher study group, cognitively guided training model and training for conceptual change.

The promoting change in teaching practice is a model in which the teachers assay their opinion and probably modify inoperative conceptions about expected change (Tillema and Imants as cited in Guskey & Huberman, 1995).

1. Teacher study group that endeavours to reconstruct the work environment via encouraging teachers to attend study groups. The function of study group according to Murphy (1997) is to simplify the application of efforts, and study research on learning and teaching.
2. Cognitively guided training model is an instruction-oriented model that enables teachers to integrate research literature into the process of their problem solving.
3. Training for conceptual change looks for changing the base knowledge of teachers and the instructional strategies.

Elmore (2002), Hyde and Pink (1992), and Lortie (2002) believe that learning in groups is more precious because teachers attain experiences that they can't gain them on their own. According to Waller (1965), teachers acquire empirical insight into the processes of professional interaction by working in groups.

Teacher practice is a model that sometimes is overlooked. This model focuses on what teachers actually do. According to Brown and Duguide (2000), "practice is an effective teacher and the community of practice is ideal learning environment" (p. 127). They asserted that a teacher can be competent only by talking about the work from inside and engaging in the work.

Some researchers believe that situated learning theory is appropriate for increasing professional development both individually and collaboratively (Kwakman, 2003; Mawhinney, 2010; Sato & Kleinsasser, 2004). Situated learning theory is the task that learners do in an environment that shows the various expected uses of the knowledge (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989). The following table has illustrated the models and their functions briefly.

Table 1: *Situated learning theories and models*

Name of Model/ Theory	Function
Innovation- focused (Dunlop, 1990)	microteaching, school-based professional development, one-shot seminars, participation in formal award courses, basing a curriculum consultant at a school, and workshops
Action- research (Dunlop, 1990; Sparks & Louck- horsley, 1998)	Reflect-in-action through a planned process which is facilitated by a peer or consultant in order to adjust the theory- practice disparity through on-going and personal reflection
Inquiry (Sparks & Louck- horsley, 1998)	The ability of teachers in asking questions and problem solving.
Observation (Sparks & Louck- horsley, 1998; Guskey, 2000; Little, 1994)	Increase one's reflection on his/ her own practice
Involvement in development/ improvement process (Sparks & Louck- horsley, 1998)	Gather the educators together in order to dispel a problem or apply a new program containing resolving specific problems, designing strategies to improve instruction, planning novel programs, and reviewing curriculum.
Training (Sparks & Louck- horsley, 1998)	Courses containing coaching, practical feedback, stimulated practice, modelling of skills, and background theories would present as effective training strategy
Individually guided activities in professional development (Sparks & Louck- horsley, 1998)	Teachers evaluate what they learn and plan some strategies to respond the emerged needs, i.e., review research, attend workshops or conferences, take courses, etc
Promoting change in teaching practice Tillema and Imants (1995)	Teachers assay their opinion and probably modify inoperative conceptions about expected change
Teacher study group Tillema and Imants (1995)	Simplify the application of efforts, and study research on learning and teaching
Cognitively guided training Tillema and Imants (1995)	Enables teachers to integrate research literature into the process of their problem solving
Training for conceptual change (Tillema and Imants, 1995)	Change the base knowledge of teachers and the instructional strategies
Training/ traditional	Stage model in which teachers move through stages of cognitive improvement which ranges from novice to expert
Teacher practices	What teachers actually do. According to Brown and Duguide (2000) "practice is an effective teacher and the community of practice in ideal learning environment" (p. 127).

Situated learning (a model of learning in a community of practice) (Lave and Wenger, 1991)	The task that learners do in an environment that shows the various expected uses of the knowledge
Teacher Change (Guskey, 2000)	teachers try new ideas and encounter the positive outcomes of students before they entirely enter any model of professional development

CONCLUSION

The most important goal of any school is students' achievement and teachers are the heaviest lever in attaining this goal. So, models should be established and implemented to help teacher find out the best way of teaching content. They also should be equipped with skills and knowledge that enable them to be successful in this way. In order to reach this end, some ways should be implemented to support professional development programs to empower teachers within an on-going process.

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