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Chapter 1

Introductory Chapter: Reimagining New Approaches in Teacher Professional Development

Vimbi Petrus Mahlangu

Additional information is available at the end of the chapter

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1. Introduction and background

The book aims at providing new approaches in teacher professional development, geared towards improving quality teaching and learning to increase trust in our teachers' pedagogy at educational institutions. Professional development opportunities take time to accomplish, and the increase in workload could result in more feelings of stress and burnout in some teachers. Similarly, teachers could easily experience job stress from personal and environmental influences. Generally, other stress may emanate from behavioral problems of students and low teacher motivation. Again, another source of stress may come from work issues such as high teacher workload, unusually high numbers of students in their classes, or too many professional responsibilities given to them [1]. Teachers need development in communication skills for them to collaborate within different contexts and school cultures and to have administrative support to influence their professional development [2]. They need to have greater teaching efficacy. Teaching efficacy is a teacher's judgment of his or her capacity to cope with the teaching situation in ways that bring about desired outcomes and ought to revolve around teachers' confidence in being able to implement instructional strategies that could boost students' learning, engagement, and desired behaviour [3].

On the other hand, teacher professional development ought to focus on mediating outcomes (teacher knowledge, beliefs, and practices) for understanding the process by which professional development programmes might affect student learning. In addition, the focus should also be on content, on classroom applications, and on opportunities for teachers to interact with and learn from each other in different contexts [4]. The quality of teacher-student interactions plays an important role in fostering desirable affective-motivational learning outcomes in students. Prolonged development interventions and continuous reflection are necessary for teachers to change their practice and make changes sustainable, even if on the way towards

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those goals, teachers might show their individual learning path [5]. Key components needed for successful implementation of professional development should include shared beliefs, values, and mission; shared and supported leadership; supportive conditions; caring and respect among members; and collective learning with intentional sustained focus on student needs. Core elements that teachers should know in their development should include the promoting of the culture within and outside school, gaining active engagement from families and community, and building sustainable leadership. This type of professional development ought to be aligned to transformational learning theory in that teachers need to be empowered to take ownership to identify and solve problems that affect their teaching and outcomes for their students [6].

There is a tendency for professional development activities to focus on technology and not on pedagogy. *Pedagogy* refers to the 'essential dialog' between the activities of teaching and learning and how we think and talk about, plan, and structure those activities. Pedagogy involves a way of knowing as well as a way of doing. In various professional education situations, teachers are not only expected to act professionally but to behave professionally. Therefore, teacher professional development focuses on assisting them in acquiring on-the-job knowledge, skills, and abilities relevant to their discipline. In addition, advanced teacher professional training need also to adopt the professional values and behaviors that society associates with being a professional. Rather than being explicitly taught, however, much of what is learned ought to be acquired tacitly through observation of role models and enculturation in professional practice settings, often termed the 'hidden curriculum' [7]. Decision-makers and schools are expected to weigh the advantage of professional development against the disadvantage of adding a time-consuming activity to the lives of already burdened and busy teachers.

2. Structure of the book

In this section the editor provides an overview of what each author covers in their chapter. The book comprises of eight chapters covering the idea of reimagining new approaches in teacher professional development. In Chapter 1, Vimbi Petrus Mahlangu of the University of South Africa (UNISA), Department of Educational Leadership and Management, argues that the book provides new approaches in teacher professional development, geared towards improving quality teaching and learning to increase trust in our teachers' pedagogy at educational institutions. Teacher professional development ought to focus on mediating outcomes (teacher knowledge, beliefs, and practices) for understanding the process by which professional development programmes might affect student learning. Key components needed for successful implementation of professional development should include shared beliefs, values, and mission; shared and supported leadership; supportive conditions; caring and respect among members; and collective learning with intentional sustained focus on student needs.

In Chapter 2, Ulas Kayapinar of the American University of the Middle East, Kuwait, discusses the reflective practitioner development model (RPDM) for professional development of teachers based on principles of reflection and measurement of the development of teachers'

reflective abilities and self-efficacy. Teachers are required to manage their students' study skills, enthusiasm, motivation, and other skills of themselves as self-control, conflict management, and decision-making. Therefore, self-efficacy belief has a role as a tool for management and control power for teachers to provide effective teaching for themselves and effective learning for their students. The reflective practitioner development model (RPDM) to work should have the following elements, namely, (i) measurements of teacher reflection using Teacher Reflection Scale (TRS), (ii) measurements of teachers' self-efficacy beliefs using Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES), (iii) professional development (PD) workshops, (iv) reflective (classroom) observations, (v) feedback, (vi) focus group discussions, (vii) co-planning, and (viii) peer observations.

Chapter 3 is a critical review of the kind of training or professional development typically offered to teachers. Tebogo Mogashoa of the University of South Africa, Department of Curriculum and Instructional Studies, College of Education, is of the view that high-quality teacher training or professional development is essential for producing quality education in all schools in the Republic of South Africa. Continuing training or professional development programmes can only have the potential to be transformative and life-changing if they have personal meaning for the participating teachers. Teachers should work together and create learning area or subject clusters in order to resolve common curricular issues. The initial and continuous professional training of teachers should always aim at developing them with knowledge and skills that will enable them to fulfill their tasks as facilitators of learning processes. Professional development of teachers ought to be guided by research and practice knowledge about how effective transformation happens in education environments.

In Chapter 4, Evon MO Abu-Taieh, of the University of Jordan, Aqaba, Jordan, discusses cyber security body of knowledge and curricula development. The author attempts to put basic step and a framework for cyber security body of knowledge and to allow practitioners and academicians to face the problem of lack of standardization. The physical security of data software and hardware from authorized and non-authorized access includes, but not limited to, protecting the server room, its location, the switches, the cable, data, and data storage devices from fire and excessive heat intruders. As such, server rooms are typically equipped with fire distinguisher, air conditioned, and insulated from fire, and its floor is raised to docket the cables. For authorized personnel, another layer of protection to access the IT systems should be to set up password-protected access or magnetic card to retina scan to lock and key.

In Chapter 5, Yitzhak Ezuz of the Beit Berl College, Kfar-Saba, Israel, discusses about moving from training/taming to independent creative learning: based on research of the brain. For survival and energy-saving purposes, the brain developed in such a way that the learning process is as short as possible, while most energy is devoted to converting the results of learning into automatic activity. The move to automation of learning outcomes is based on mechanisms, which can be used to tame animals, including man. Humans yield most of the time to the processes of self-taming/training of the brain, even empowering them through the Western concept of learning which idolizes focused narrow specialization. Through automatic learning, the brain suppresses the vast majority of the information that floods it through its representative use of the brain's ability to create basic patterns, which are then complemented

through information already stored in the brain unconsciously. In this way the brain does not need to make an effort every time to convert all the information to brain information; flexibility enables the brain to avoid having to remember entire knowledge schemas but rather builds them again every nanosecond. Therefore, without developing man's creative potential, humanity will fade away.

In Chapter 6, Welcome Mswazi Kubeka of the University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa, discusses corporal punishment as a disciplinary measure as it was abolished in South African schools since 1994. The chapter is about the views of teachers about the different disciplinary measures they use as alternative to corporal punishment at selected primary schools in Tembisa, Gauteng Province, South Africa. The findings revealed that the majority of teachers had not received any training pertaining to the management of discipline after the abolishment of corporal punishment in Tembisa schools. Teachers view poor academic performance of learners as affected by the lack of proper discipline. Disruptive and anti-social behaviour can have a harmful influence on teaching and learning. Schools should involve parents to assist them with the discipline of their children.

In Chapter 7, Idar Lyngstad of the Nord University, Levanger, Norway, discusses hiding techniques in physical education—categories, causes, and pedagogy. The author proposes that the teaching of physical education in schools across cultures and countries should be a safe area for all pupils. The teacher at a deeper level than just to observe their physical-motor skills and sports achievements should follow up pupils who use hiding techniques in physical education in the class. The need for a pupil to use hiding techniques should be analyzed and prevented. Different pedagogical tools must be considered and used. Being seen in physical education relates to how the teacher establishes a good relationship with the pupils, caring, helping, and supporting them if physical education classes are experienced as difficult. In addition, hiding techniques in physical education are indicators of pupils' poor self-confidence in their subjects, which will adversely affect the learning process and learning outcomes.

In Chapter 8, Isaac Buabeng[1], Lindsey Conner[2], and David Winter[3] of the [1]University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana; [2]Flinders University, Adelaide, Australia; and [3]University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand, discuss about professional development and physics teachers' ongoing learning needs. Physics teachers are not happy with the lack of formal physics-focussed professional development opportunities available to them to support their professional growth. On the other hand, teachers tended to rely on personal critical inquiry and infrequent practitioner meetings to inform their practice. Physics teachers tend to view centralized government-funded professional development as being ineffective. Physics teachers can be supported through induction, mentoring, and opportunities for collaboration because they have the capability to deliver the best physics instruction. Professional development organized for teachers should enable them to take ownership of the learning process through reflecting on their practices, identifying their own needs, and connecting their practices with relevant theories, and connecting together in professional learning groups. Physics teachers need professional learning development in the areas related to understanding student thinking in the subject to deepen their own content knowledge.

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