



MINISTÈRE DE L'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR ET DE LA RECHERCHE
SCIENTIFIQUE

Expériences Pédagogiques

Revue en ligne éditée par l'Ecole Normale Supérieure d'Oran-Algérie

<http://exp-pedago.ens-oran.dz>

Numéro 1- octobre 2016

« Evaluer l'enseignant »

Auteur : Nassira BOUDERSA

Appartenance : Ecole Normale Supérieure de Constantine- Constantine- Algérie

Courriel : bouderssa.nacira@ensc.dz

Titre de l'article: *The Importance of Teachers' Training and Professional Development Programs in the Algerian Educational Context: Toward Informed and Effective Teaching Practices*

Introduction

Education has always been a powerful agency in any society and it is considered as an indispensable instrument for bringing positive change in the social, political, economic and cultural life of people. The whole process is shaped by many important agents, and the teacher is one of them. The teacher is claimed to play a central role in education. Preparing teachers for the teaching profession is conceived as being a higher priority in any country since this profession is considered as being challenging and critical, and may lead to nations' rising and progress in the different domains. As a huge agency, education has great importance in building strong and developed societies, and the teacher is one of the primary agents for achieving that. For such reasons, it is always an urgent educational need that teachers should receive adequate educational and professional training to possess adequate knowledge and teaching skills and to be able to dedicate themselves to the teaching profession. Most important also is the fact that, if provided to teachers, programs of training

<http://exp-pedago.ens-oran.dz>- Numéro 1- octobre 2016

« Evaluer l'enseignant »

and professional development have to be introduced, mentored and evaluated, on a regular basis, by experts in the field.

Learning is a changing process since knowledge is not something static. For this reason, teaching should be boosted and should move beyond traditional and theory-based foundations; it should also be research-based and should have data-driven-evidence. McMillan (2007: xiii) states that “[...] there is renewed interest in the importance of “scientific” research and “empirical data” as sources of knowledge about what works in education.” Since good teachers are considered as the backbone of good education and learning is perceived as being an ongoing process, efforts to develop and improve teachers’ teaching skills and knowledge are highly needed and appreciated in the field of education. In many worldwide schools and universities, a variety of teachers’ training and professional development programs are available to help teachers learn and improve themselves year after year. Besides that, it is a common belief that learning is a continuous process that contributes in improving teachers’ teaching skills and acquiring new knowledge in subject areas, and this will, in turn, help improve students’ learning.

Given the central importance that education has in any society, teachers are expected not only to be competent but also to be professional in their related fields and subject-matters. For this reason, they have to possess a great deal of knowledge and skills with regard to both teaching and assessment practices in order to meet the high demands and standards of quality education. Good quality teacher training and professional development programs alongside motivating environments will have positive impacts on the teaching/learning improvement. In-depth and up-to-date knowledge, teaching and assessment skills, clear and well-set educational goals, love and dedication, commitment and positive attitudes toward the teaching profession are, inter alia, central factors that all educational and teachers’ training institutions have to consider and give due importance. Educational institutions have to make great efforts to equip prospective teachers at all levels with the necessary knowledge and skills to promote a positive professional attitude in them.

1. Teacher Training and Professional Development

Today, teacher training and professional development are seen as central mechanisms for the improvement of teachers’ content knowledge and their teaching skills and practices in order to meet high educational standards (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). Year after year, demands for quality in teaching and learning increase in higher education to meet academic standards, and this calls for attention to be directed to the provision of effective professional development on the part of teachers, researchers, educational institutions, and so forth.

Teacher training and professional development are two broad goals in education. According to Richards and Farrell (2005:03), the term training refers to,

activities directly focused on a teacher’s present responsibilities and is typically aimed at short-term and immediate goals. Often it is seen as preparation for instruction into a first teaching position or as preparation to take on a new teaching assignment or responsibility. Training involves understanding basic concepts and principles as prerequisite for applying them to teaching and the ability to demonstrate principles and practices in the classroom. Teacher training also involves trying out new strategies in the classroom, usually with supervision, and monitoring and getting feedback from others on one’s practice. The content of training is usually determined by experts and is often available in standard training formats or through prescriptions in methodology books.

They (*ibid.*) identified the following goals as examples form of a training perspective:

- Learning how to use effective strategies to open a lesson
- Adapting the textbook to match the class
- Learning how to use group activities in a lesson
- Using effective questioning techniques
- Using classroom aids and resources (e.g. video)
- Techniques for giving learners feedback on performance.

The term professional development, on the other hand, is usually used to encompass ‘all types of learning undertaken by teachers beyond the point of their initial training’ (Craft, 2000:9). The term is used to refer to processes, actions and activities which are designed for the purpose of enhancing the teachers’ professional knowledge, teaching skills and attitudes in teaching to improve students’ learning (Guskey, 2000). Teacher training usually involves providing training in curriculum subjects to teachers by organizing workshops over periods of time. The main objective of such workshops is to keep teachers up-to-date in their subject area (OECD, 1998). Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications (2014: 03) recognize the importance of teacher training and professional development by stating that, “The most important factor in the quality of students’ learning is the quality of teaching and school leadership. Teachers and leaders need to develop their professional thinking and practice continuously throughout their careers.”

Another definition of professional development has been provided by Clarke (1990: 01) who says that it refers to “any activity or process intended to change any combination of the following: teachers’ beliefs and attitudes, teachers’ knowledge and teachers’ classroom practice.” Schoenfeld (2000:20) points out that, “Teacher knowledge leads naturally to the issue of growth and change of teacher knowledge and hence to issues of teacher learning and professional development.” In the same line of thought, Sowder (2007:161) maintains that professional growth is characterized or “marked by change in teachers’ knowledge, beliefs, and instructional strategies.”

In the definitions provided in the literature about professional development and teacher training, focus is placed on the aspects of change and growth in knowledge, beliefs and attitudes, and practices of teachers. Guskey (2000) maintains that professional development is an intentional process, an ongoing process and a systematic process. It should be seen as a process that is intentional and purposeful; it consists of planned or outlined events which have a well structured outline with clearly defined goals. Teacher training and professional development should never be conceived as what Guskey (2000:17) described as “a set of random, unrelated activities having no clear direction or intent.”

Richards and Farrell (2005 : 04), provides a further description of what is meant by professional development. They (2005:04) say that it refers to “general growth not focused on a specific job. It serves a long-term goal and seeks to facilitate growth of teachers’ understanding of teaching and of themselves as teachers. It often involves examining different dimensions of a teacher’s practice as a basis for reflective review and can hence be seen as “bottom-up”.”

They (ibid.) state that the following goals are examples of a PD perspective:

- Understanding how the process of second language development occurs
- Understanding how our roles change according to the kind of learners we are teaching
- Understanding the kinds of decision making that occur during lessons
- Reviewing our own theories and principles of language teaching
- Developing an understanding of different styles of teaching
- Determining learners’ perceptions of classroom activities.

Zeichner (1983) was the first to identify and describe four representative paradigms in teacher education and professional development. According to him (1983:3), paradigm can be

defined as a “matrix of beliefs and assumptions about the nature and purpose of schooling, teaching, teachers, and their education that gives shape to specific forms of practice in teacher education.” The first paradigm identified is the traditional craft paradigm. It is an apprenticeship model which focuses on the accumulation of wisdom based on the teacher’s field experiences of teaching. Most important of all, it involves a process of trial and error of practitioners. The second paradigm is referred to as the expanding the repertoire paradigm (Sprinthall, Reiman, & Thies-Sprinthall, 1996). The focus of the paradigm is placed less on the highly explicit and discrete instructional strategies and teachers’ teaching skills, but focus is placed more on the acquisition of comprehensive instructional models of teaching. Such instructional models encompass models of direct instruction (knowledge transmitter model), inductive inquiry and interpersonal approaches to learning. The third paradigm, and which is claimed to be the predominant one in teacher education, is the so-called competency-based paradigm. The main focus of this paradigm is on the teachers’ mastery of knowledge and teaching skills which are identified by expert academics and university researchers. According to Guskey, competency-based professional development refers to an educational movement that advocates defining educational goals in terms of precise measurable description of the knowledge, skills and behaviours teachers should possess at the end of a course of study. The fourth and last paradigm is an opposing paradigm to the competency based paradigm and is referred to as the inquiry oriented paradigm. It is also called the holistic or the reflective paradigm and its main focus is on the development of the teachers’ capacity for reflective action through an examination of the moral and political implications of their teaching. There are other existing frameworks like the one identified by Zeichner, but with their particular underlying principles.

2. Types of Professional Development

Different types of professional development can be identified and professional development programs can be available at the disposal of teachers. In terms of professional development types, Richards and Farrell (2005) differentiate, for instance, between two types of professional development: the individual professional development and the institutional professional development. Another example comes from Pelochino (2014), who identifies five major types of teachers’ professional development. These well-spread types can be used by teachers in order to improve their teaching and have a continuous professional development in their teaching career.

a. In-House Professional Development

It is a type of professional development that is offered for teachers at the site of schools. This type of professional development takes time weekly and a member of the staff in a given school is in charge of that. Different staff members can have different sessions in the whole year.

b. District-wide or Organizational-wide Professional Development

This type of teachers’ professional development requires collaboration in multiple sites whereby it can be scheduled in advance and can take long periods. It can have the form of half-day, full-day or even multiple day professional development. In this way, teachers will have the opportunity to receive a kind of professional development, collaborate together, learn something in common since they are from the same district and can meet in such occasions. Such educational events usually involve the presence of a guest speaker, usually a professional in the field, to present something or to lead.

c. Institution-Based Professional Development

The institution-based professional development is a long term one and it usually centres around a common theme or content, say assessment or teaching methods. Such a type of professional developments intended for teachers is often related to a university, non-profit organization or research institution. Such events are funded and teachers may receive a stipend both for time and for participation.

d. Professional Inquiry Group

Groups of teachers can come together to such type of professional development so as to learn something of great interest to the whole group. This type of teachers' professional development can be site-based as it cannot be so. The groups of teachers meet on a regular basis for an extended period of time and they work in a collaborative manner in order to learn new things and share new teaching experiences.

e. Coaching

In this type of professional development, the sites will have on-site coaches and district coaches for their teachers. The role of these coaches is to help and support teachers in different ways. Novice teachers will also have a new teacher coach and this latter has an assigned job aimed at helping the new teacher to acquire the necessary credentials.

3. Current Teacher Training and Professional Development Situation in Algeria

In today's Algerian educational context, there seems to be an urgent need for a system of education which encourages and promotes active engagement and reflective teaching and learning. It is widely recognized that the teacher is the most important school or university-based factor in determining the learning outcomes. However, claims about persistent surfacing deficit in teachers' capacities and in the teaching quality are usually raised given the fact that they can have a direct, and even a detrimental, impact on the process of learning as a whole. In Switzerland, for instance, it has been claimed that despite the fact that there is confidence in the teacher quality and the teaching of subject areas, i. e., with regard to the efficiency of the educational system, but there is also a general consensus about the need for change in schooling and in in-service development (OECD, 1998). In the in-service teacher training that used to be in Switzerland, courses were taught by experienced teachers who proved to be possessing skills in specific subject areas and on the basis of that they became trainers. This policy has been questioned and then changed.

At all levels in the teaching profession, there is always a need for teachers, and this need goes hand in hand with the need for quality in teaching and learning. Both experienced and novice teachers might be in need of continuous teaching and professional development trainings provided by the school/university, or any independent or collaborating agency, to help them form and improve themselves in their respective fields of specialization (subject-matters), and this will, in turn, help influence their classroom teaching practices. Hence, teachers' training and professional development programs are claimed to be central aspects in the teachers' career improvement and development.

In the Algerian educational context, universities do not usually provide students with, and involve them in, any teaching training and professional development programs. This is mainly due to the fact that we do not even have such educational programs in order to talk about training at all. Future student-teachers and beginning teachers take the whole burden to form themselves as teachers, but, most of the time, they find themselves confronted with troubles when they are engaged in the teaching profession. This is not only because they lack the necessary readiness, experience and skills in teaching; what they really lack goes far beyond such things. In many cases, lack of competence in the subject-matter and the teaching/assessment skills can drive so many novice teachers to lose confidence in themselves and even hate and complain about the profession, but they just keep struggling because they have no other solution for remedy. Some might even see teaching as a valuable source for financial support in the first place and they cannot abandon it whatever conditions and circumstances they might be in.

In certain contexts, some teachers may find themselves confronted with highly difficult tasks and teaching responsibilities because they may lack the sufficient subject knowledge as well as the appropriate teaching skills that are highly needed and required in the teaching profession nowadays. Teachers of this kind can be a direct source of poor teaching quality, and a possible direct reason for that is that because they have not received any kind of training to make them ready for the challenging task of teaching.

Unlike the Algerian universities, the Algerian Teachers' Training Schools/Colleges provide future student-teachers with some kind of teaching training. This teaching training starts first in classroom with students (would-be-teachers) learning different subject matters related to teaching. It takes the form of the necessary knowledge transmission, skills and competence improvement, and so on. In such educational institutions, students of English, for instance, are taught subjects that will help train them in mastering the language as a whole, designing courses, establishing goals and learning outcomes in lessons, raising their awareness about the importance of effective warm-ups in lessons, developing competence and mastery of knowledge in subject matter areas, learning the different methods and strategies used to teaching and so on. There is also the kind of real life training that takes place in the graduation year and in the context of middle/high schools, whereby students are engaged in teaching young learners as if they were their teachers. This training takes place in a given school and students are placed in authentic contexts of teaching and their teaching is followed by a mentor to guide them. Such kind of educational institutions, which are directed to forming young Algerian teachers, contribute a good deal in forming competent student-teachers who will find themselves ready for the profession, to some or a great extent.

Some teacher training and professional development programs can also be prepared and organized by some independent agencies. In the teaching of English as a foreign language in Algerian, the British Council in Algeria, for instance, organizes annually some interesting events intended at gathering Algerian teachers and informing them about new methods, strategies/techniques in the teaching of different subject-matters. They also provide them with practical and up-to-date insights that might help them in their teaching practices. But despite the fact that such modest attempts help Algerian teachers to get more informed and improve the quality of their teaching, they still remain limited, not to say non-effective. Great efforts on the part of the Algerian educational institutions should be made and initiatives to have teaching training and professional development programs should be introduced. Not only that, but the Algerian ministry of education and the ministry of higher education can help establish national and/or regional council(s) made up of experts in respective fields and levels of education to prepare training programs and collaborate with schools and universities to reach a shared goal, which is that of refreshing and improving the level of the Algerian education through quality teaching and learning.

One of the great points that is usually ignored, deliberately or not, in the Algerian schools and universities is that teachers are accepted to enter the teaching profession on the basis of their degrees in the first place. To get the job, teachers might be involved in a kind of competition and can take an interview. But, would this be enough? No importance is being really given to 'teaching qualifications' in order not only to be able to enter the teaching profession, but also to be ready and suitable for that profession. It is this 'lack of qualification,' the 'lack of subject-matter knowledge and mastery' and 'teaching/assessment skills' which puts teachers in a difficult situation to adapt themselves and to be able to teach effectively. Poor vision and poor knowledge with regard to curriculum content, division, lesson planning, teaching methods, classroom management, assessment methods and so on, will lead nowhere but impede teachers from teaching effectively and students from learning successfully. This is so because students will, sooner or later, notice some kind of 'lack of

professionalism' in teaching the subject-matter and this may lead them to lose confidence in the teacher, and motivation in the subject-matter and learning as a whole. The teacher is not, of course, the first and the only person to be blamed for that because all this is a direct reflection of the educational policy, politics and ideologies which control education at all levels. For that, teacher training and professional development are considered as being of crucial importance and they call for lot of serious efforts on the part of teachers, schools, universities, stakeholders to collaborate together and to consider teachers' training and their professional development more carefully as an educational priority in Algeria.

4. The Challenges for Improving the quality of Teaching Through TT and PD

Teacher training and professional development are gaining more attention and interest due to the educational reforms that happen, and will continue to happen, in many places around the world and which set ambitious and challenging goals in education (Borko, 2004). It is widely recognized, however, that teacher training and professional development are highly demanding processes. They are demanding because of the expectations that they will have great impact on the teachers' classroom practices. At all levels of education, teachers have concerns about their personal professional development. For this reason, they try to attend and participate in teacher training and professional development programs (Rodrigues, 2005). Despite the great importance and need for teacher training and professional development programs in order to boost quality teaching and learning, it is usually claimed that the available programs, which is not the case of Algeria, seem to be fragmented, poorly aligned with curriculum and inadequate to meet the needs of teachers (Cohen & Hill, 2001). The goals of in-service training programs, for instance, is usually not defined or poorly defined and there is no follow up to courses (OECD, 1998). Besides that, in many USA schools and educational systems, many programs of teacher training and professional development, which are given considerable amount of money, efforts and resources to be spent on in-service seminars, workshops, and other types of professional development and teacher training, seem to be intellectually superficial and lack established knowledge about what we know about effective teaching and the better teaching practices that teachers can implement in their classrooms (Ball & Cohen, 1999).

Another interesting point about professional development is that despite the fact that teachers have a general tendency to support and meet high teaching and learning standards, many of them are not willing to change their attitudes and beliefs about teaching. They reflect the fact that they are not really willing or prepared to implement other teaching practices that are based on such standards (Cohen, 1990). There is a general tendency on the part of many teachers to show resistance towards change, and this reflects resistance towards professional development programs (Fullan, 1991). Richards (2002) argues that there are some reasons for teachers' resistance to professional development. Some of these reasons are skepticism, increased burden on the teacher, lack of ownership, fear of loss of control, lack of support, and lack of perceived benefits. According to Dufour and Eaker (1998), teachers' isolation is one of great roadblocks standing against or hinder change and professional development. For professional development to be effective, it has to come from the school and to be implemented by the teachers of that school (Richard, 2002). For this reason, there is a serious need to support and guide such type of teachers to respond effectively to the growing demands of teaching and the need to raise student learning standards by developing effective professional development programs that can promote change in classroom practices (Fullan & Miles, 1992).

Besides that, although a need and a continuous call to provide well-developed and well-established programs of teacher training and professional development is usually outspoken, since they are claimed to have significant impacts on the quality of teaching and learning, but few studies are claimed to have been made to study and compare the effects of

different approaches to professional development (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001). On the basis of that, persisting calls for further research to be done on the currently available professional development programs and their effectiveness are usually made.

Teachers' training and professional development go beyond workshops because teaching and professional growth require continuous education. Advancement in career implies that teachers should seek beneficial professional development programs that are continuous and which are aligned with educational standards assessments. Teachers should have a deep understanding of the central importance that teacher training and professional development have. These two aspects are an essential thing in teachers' career and reflect the person's development in his/her professional role. When teachers gain experience in their teaching role and professional growth, they will gain experience also in the examination, reflection and evaluation of their teaching, teaching ability and teaching needs (Glattenhorn, 1987).

In addition to that, in their teaching career, teachers' needs change at different times and so do the needs of schools and educational institutions. Pressure is usually exerted on teachers to update their knowledge in areas related to curriculum trends, second language learning and acquisition, teaching methods and strategies, the use of technology and assessment, and so forth. According to Richards and Farrell (2005: 2-3), teacher education is usually based on the following assumptions:

- In any school or educational institution, there are teachers with different levels of experience, knowledge, skills, and expertise. Mutual sharing of knowledge and experience is a valuable source of professional growth.
- Teachers are generally motivated to continue their professional development once they begin their careers.
- Knowledge about language teaching and learning is in a tentative and incomplete state, and teachers need regular opportunities to update their professional knowledge.
- Classrooms are not only places where students learn—they are also places where teachers can learn.
- Teachers can play an active role in their own professional development.
- It is the responsibility of schools and administrators to provide opportunities for [teacher training and] continued professional education and encourage teachers to participate in them.
- In order for such opportunities to take place, they need to be planned, supported, [evaluated] and rewarded.

It should be always highlighted and emphasized that teacher education is a process that takes place over time; it is not an event that starts and ends with formal training or graduate education and getting certain degrees. Since it is an ongoing process that brings continuous change, teachers' education can be supported both by the educational institutions and the teachers' individual efforts.

Teachers may participate in some or all the teacher training and professional development programs which are often programmed at the beginning of the year. But given the fact that training programs take place at the beginning of the year, this makes them appear non-responsive to the immediate and changing needs of the students and the teaching staff. For that reason, the time for planning such educational programs should be well-studied and planned to help teachers benefit from them.

Another great issue that teachers faced, and still face, in today's teacher training and professional development programs is that such programs usually take the style of a 'lecture'. Teachers will be sitting and a person will be presenting something through a computer or sits in front of them and talks. Some have even went far to call such sessions: "Tyranny of the Lecture" since the program takes the format of lecture(s). Good quality teacher training and professional development programs should call the teachers' attention and engage them by

being active agents. The educational programs should also be interactive, more practical and purposeful.

Many other challenges and problems may face teachers and those in charge of teacher training and professional development programs. Pelochino (2014), points out that the following are the some of the main issues that face teachers' professional development:

- There is an over-saturation of information;
- We are not teaching teachers in ways that we want them to teach learners;
- Learning is not differentiated in any way;

In order to bring beneficial change to the Algerian education, several decisions have to be made and steps to be followed. To improve teaching, there should be an appropriate selection of teachers. Standards of teaching and standards of selections have to be raised. Teaching must be seen as a profession with qualifications and not simply a job sought for the sake of having a job. Teachers should also be prepared and should be empowered with the right and appropriate skills in order to be ready and suitable for the teaching profession. They should be equipped with the required up-to-date knowledge, the necessary teaching skills and competences in order to provide effective teaching and successful learning.

Since the teacher is the first decision maker in his/her classroom, absence of training, or poor training, will make him/her face the challenge of having poor subject-knowledge and poor professional and pedagogical skills to teach a given subject, deliver the lesson, assess learning, and provide the learner with the appropriate knowledge and learning experience. During the few last years and in the Algerian educational system (Primary, middle and high school), attempts have been made in terms of preparing some training programs to train teachers and help them improve in terms of knowledge and teaching skills. These training programs take place each year and are intended for people who graduate from university and become teachers. They take place on a regular basis during summer (a given period only), winter and spring holidays. The total amount of time spent is approximately 30 days or so. At the end of the training, trainees receive a certificate attesting that they have been studying certain subjects. It has been previously claimed through this paper that teachers' training is a necessary requirement for today's teachers in schools and universities, but some central issues do usually come to surface. A central and primary issue is related to the time, relevance, seriousness and the quality of any kind of training program. Questions are always raised! Is a period of one month enough for novice teachers to be trained in a variety of subjects needed for future teaching? Is timing appropriate? Is the training program a continuous process or is it something fragmented and independent? Is the training program really rich, beneficial and provided by professionals in the field? Are there other opportunities for continuous professional development for teachers to take? Are the teachers' training and professional development programs evaluated on a regular basis for purposes of improvement and gap-filling? Is the content of such programs related directly to the subject-matters taught, the curriculum, teachers' needs etc.? All these questions, inter alia, have to be considered because it is not at all taken for granted that once taking part in a training program for a very short period of time and/or taking a given certification, a teacher will be termed 'qualified' for the teaching profession.

Another issue that may have a direct effect on the teacher's level and professional development can be related to income. Low income can exclude the opportunity for individual teachers to search for some national or international teacher training and professional development programs to participate in. The idea to go abroad and be trained is a far-reaching goal due to income limitations and the only available source is to take online training programs. But this is also difficult for teachers given the fact that such online programs require paying a given fee: a good deal or amount of money has to be paid and if it is

going to be paid, this will be so on the part of the individual teacher, not with the support of the school, educational institution, the ministry of education or any influential agent. To improve and raise the quality of education, great investments should also be made in introducing programs for teacher training and professional development by educational institutions.

Teachers' motivation in the teaching profession has a very important role and can have different forms. The school's support and encouragement for teachers for their individual efforts in teaching, in researching, diversifying methods of teaching and techniques, adopting effective methods of assessment and so on, is a point of central importance for any teacher. The presence of this kind of support will show that efforts are being encouraged and appreciated and this will, in turn, push the teacher to move on and make more efforts for the benefit of learners and the school as a whole. This will also push him/her to have more commitment to his/her profession. The school which supplies its teachers with learning/teaching materials, and even advanced technological tools, will increase the will of teachers and encourage them to teach well, students to learn better and satisfaction will be a shared reward. It is in such a working environment that learning can take place, but in the absence of such factors, problems will always surface and quality of education might be negatively influenced.

5. Possible Solutions for Teaching Quality Improvement

Some indicators and central agents need to be implemented if our Algerian educational institutions aspire to progress in achieving the goal of a quality education for all students and avoid any additional crisis in the overall educational system. Importance should be given to:

- Following the percentage of teachers and teacher educators who have received ongoing teacher training of professional development opportunities over periods of time;
- The percentage of aid and support provided to the education sector to increase the number of well-trained teachers and ongoing professional development of teachers. (<https://www.educationincrisis.net/blog/item/1024-why-well-trained-and-effective-teachers-are-central-to-tackling-the-global-learning-and-skills-crisis>)
- There should be serious initiatives to embark on the route of the training and professionalization of teachers and teacher education along competence lines.
- Teacher training and professional development programs should be introduced by educational institutions.
- Teacher training and professional development programs should focus on core content knowledge, teaching skills, teaching strategies, and assessment strategies, etc.
- There should be an alignment of educational programs content with what teachers teach, need and experience in their classrooms.
- There should be some national or general teaching council (organization responsible for accrediting teacher qualifications and teacher education programs within universities) to be set in the major regions of Algeria.
- Effective professional development should transform and restructure the quality of teaching and educational institutions.

Research on the effectiveness of teacher training and professional development shows that it leads to better instruction and improved learning. This can be so only when teacher training and professional development are linked to the curriculum, the academic standards that they have and the assessment and evaluation of their success.

Some of the studies which support the idea that connection between education policy and instruction will have positive effects involve the study of Cohen and Hill (2001). They found that teachers who followed programs of professional development which focused on the curriculum were the ones who adopted the practices which have been taught in the professional development. These teachers were supported by training and attending workshops. This study showed that students of those teachers who participated in such training programs, where focus has been on curriculum-focused professional development, did well on assessments. Most teachers did not, however, receive much effective forms of training.

Another study involved a survey carried out by Garet et al. (2001). It involved a representative sample of teachers who took part in the Eisenhower Professional Development Program in 1990. The study centered around the subject of mathematics and science. The results showed that teachers who participated in this professional development training program had a strong tendency towards changing their classroom instructional practices. They also gained greater subject knowledge and teaching skills when there was a direct connection and alignment between their daily experiences in teaching the curriculum and teaching standards and assessments.

Questions about the amount of professional development needed and about the efficiency of such training programs are usually raised. It is claimed that the more time teachers spend on professional development, the more significantly their teaching practices will be positively influenced and changed. In the previously mentioned study, it has been considered as a striking fact that when conducting an interview with 10 teachers who were asked about how much time they have spent on professional development and the answer was that 9 out of 10 say that they have spent one day or less in their previous year. There is no claim, here, that if more time is spent on professional development this will guarantee success and positive change. If sessions are not focused on subject matter content which is based on research in the area which proved to be effective, then the whole thing will have nothing to do with the amount of time spent and the tendency of teachers' to change their teaching practices and to improve the learning of students.

It should be also mentioned that for teaching training and professional development programs to succeed, financial support should also be continuous and not only people's efforts and time. In addition to that, money and efforts should not be spent without ongoing and systematic evaluation of the training programs. There should always be a kind of follow up to see what benefits teachers are getting from trainings and which will be of great benefit to them in their teaching practices in class. Effective evaluation should be directed towards the examination of actual teaching practices, examination of the training's impact on teachers' behaviour, and the effect of this impact on students' learning. Most important of all, evaluation should be a continuous process; it should take place right from early stages of program planning and till the end of the program.

6. Effective Teacher Training and Professional Development

Today's teaching calls for shift from traditional rote style and lecture style of teaching to the type of teaching that fosters critical and reflective thinking and developing problem-solving skills in students. Teaching for critical thinking is claimed not to be widespread in classrooms (Nystrand and Gamoran, 1991). To meet the needs of students and the great demands in the profession of teaching, teachers have to be trained in the use of the different, old and new, approaches to teaching and assessment. That is to say, for educational reforms to take place and be of great benefit, effective professional development should also take place. On the basis of that, nowadays educational reforms urge teachers to foster collaboration,

debate and make students learn with reflection to help them develop the necessary cognitive skills and processes to meet the standards of learning and education.

There are some strategies for teacher development and they often involve the following points: documenting different kinds of teaching practices; reflective analysis of teaching practices; examining beliefs, values, and principles; conversation with peers on one core issue; and collaborating with peers on classroom projects. When discussing this point, some things may seem alright with regard to self-observation and critical reflection. The issue lies, in fact, in matters related to subject-matter knowledge, pedagogical expertise, and understanding of curriculum and materials. Personal reflection is necessary, but professional development should go beyond this. For example, Richards and Farrell (2005:04) maintains that professional development should “For example, [...] include exploration of new trends and theories in language teaching; familiarization with developments in subject-matter knowledge such as pedagogical grammar, composition theory, or genre theory; and critical examination of the way schools and language programs are organized and managed.”

Teacher training and professional development programs are no longer concerned with teachers being exposed to one concept in a one-time workshop or even providing teachers with general basic knowledge about a given teaching methodology. Teacher training and professional development should result in a fundamental change in teachers’ teaching practices, and which, in turn, will lead to the increase of students’ learning.

A great deal of teachers have received, and may still receive, traditional, workshop-based professional development despite the fact that research shows it as being ineffective. According to Darling-Hammond et al., (2009), about 90 percent of teachers are claimed to have participated in a workshop-like style in training sessions during the whole school year. Despite being relevant, to some or great extent, the workshop presentations will not much help changing teachers’ teaching attitudes, beliefs and practices in classrooms and boosting the student achievement (Bush, 1984).

According to Dufour and Eaker (1998: 105), “schools have demonstrated time and again that it is much easier to initiate change than to sustain it to fruition.” A continuous improvement plan is to sustain change to fruition (Zmunda, Kuklis, & Kline, 2004). Teaching training and professional development have to be rigorous and contain relevant content, strategies as well as organizational supports to ensure the good preparation and the career-long development of teachers. To be effective, this requires fostering the norm of continuous evaluation and improvement.

Conclusion

Programs of teachers’ training and professional development are of central importance in any educational institution, be it in the primary, middle school, high school or even the university level. Teachers at all levels need to be trained in their related fields and subject matter on a regular basis if they are to change their teaching beliefs, attitudes and daily life practices in classrooms. Such programs will help teachers sharpen their teaching skills and deepen and improve their knowledge in the subject matter they teach, and hence improve students’ learning and schools education. For positive and beneficial change to take place, there should be an alignment between the curriculum and teachers’ actual experiences in teaching. Another important point is related to the time that teachers spend on professional development and its efficiency. Teachers will benefit better from professional development that has as its main focus activities which focus on high-quality-subject-matter content.

Professional development can be a great vehicle for teaching improvement and learning success if it is prepared and given by experts and on a regular basis to meet the needs of teachers and the demands of Algerian schools or educational institutions. There is an urgent need for teachers to be involved in programs for teachers’ training and professional development. Teachers will always be learners and learning is an ongoing process and knowledge has no reachable limits. Besides that, teachers’ learning is no longer seen as being

straightforward whereby teachers just meet and be presented with information about effective teaching strategies. Teachers' learning process is more complex than is perceived and needs continuous reflection and evaluation if we aspire to achieve improvement and change in the Algerian education.

Bibliography

- Ball, D., and D. Cohen. (1999). "Developing Practice, Developing Practitioners: Toward a Practice-based Theory of Professional Education." In *The Heart of the Matter: Teaching as the Learning Profession*, edited by L. Darling-Hammond and L. Sykes. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Borko, H. (2004). "Professional development and teacher learning: Mapping the terrain." *Educational Researcher*, 33(8), 3-15.
- Bush, R. N. (1984). *Effective staff development in making schools more effective. Proceedings of three state conferences*. San Francisco, CA: Far West Laboratory.
- Cambridge Professional Development Qualifications. 2014
<http://www.cie.org.uk/cambridge-professional-development/professional-development-qualifications/>
- Clark, R. W. (1990). *What school leaders can do to help change teacher education*. Washington, DC: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education.
- Cohen, D. (1990). "A revolution in one classroom: The case of Mrs Oublier." *Education Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 12 (3),311–329.
- Cohen, D. K., and Hill, H. C. (2001). *Learning Policy: When State Education Reform Works*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Craft, A. (2000). *Continuing Professional Development: A Practical Guide for Teachers and Schools*. London: Routledge.
- Darling-Hammond, L., and M. W. McLaughlin. (1995). "Policies That Support Professional Development in an Era of Reform." *Phi Delta Kappan* 76, 8: 597-604.
- Darling-Hammond, L. Chung Wei, R., Andree, A., & Richardson, N. (2009). *Professional learning in the learning profession: A status report on teacher development in the United States and abroad*. Oxford, OH: National Staff Development Council.
- Dufour, R., & Eaker, R. (1998). *Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing student achievement*. Bloomington, IN: Solution Tree.
- Fullan, M. G. (1991). *The New Meaning of Educational Change*. New York: Teachers College.
- Fullan, M. G., & Miles, M. B. (1992). "Getting Reform Right: What works and what doesn't." *Phi Delta Kappan*, 73, 745-752.
- Garet, M., Porter, A., Desimone, L., Birman, B., and Yoon, K. S. (2001). "What Makes Professional Development Effective? Results From a National Sample of Teachers." *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(4): 915–945.
- Glattenhorn, A. (1987). "Cooperative professional development: Peer centered options for teacher growth." *Educational Leadership*, (3)45, 31-35.
- Guskey, T. R. (2000). *Evaluating professional development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- McMillan, J. H. (2007). *Classroom Assessment : Principles and Practices for Effective Standards-Based Instruction*. USA: Pearson Education.
- Nystrand, M. & Gamoran, A. (1991). "Instructional discourse, student engagement, and literature achievement." *Research in the Teaching of English*, 25, 261-290.
- OECD. (1998). *Staying Ahead In-service Training and Teacher Professional Development: In-service Training and Teacher Professional Development*. France: OECD Publishing.
- Pelochino, Melissa. (2014). "Designing what's next in teachers' professional development." <https://dschool.stanford.edu/fellowships/2014/03/27/designing-whats-next-in-teachers-professional-development/>
- Richards, J. (2002). "30 Years of TEFL/TESL: A Personal Reflection." *RELC Journal*. 33 (2): 1-35.
- Richards, J. C. And Farrel, T. S. C. (2005). *Professional Development for Language Teachers: Strategies for Teacher Learning*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Rodriguez, S. (2005). *A Model of Teacher Professional Development: The Partnership in the Primary Science Project*. New York: Nova Publisher.
- Schoenfeld, A. H. (2000). "Examining the complexity of teaching." Special issue of the *Journal of Mathematical Behavior*, 18(3).
- Sowder, J. T. (2007). *The mathematical education and development of teachers*. In F. K. Lester (Ed.) *Second Handbook of Research on Mathematics Teaching and Learning*. Charlotte, NC: National Council of Teachers of Mathematics; Information Age Pub, (pp. 157224).
- Sprinthall, N. A., Reiman, A. J., & Thies-Sprinthal, L. (1996). *Teacher professional development*. In J. Sikula (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teacher Education*. New York: Macmillan.
- Zeichner, K. (1983). "Alternative paradigms of teacher education." *Journal of Teacher Education*, 34 (3), 3-9
- Zmunda, A., Kuklis, R., & Kline, E. (2004) *Transforming Schools: Creating a Culture of Continuous Improvement*. Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Online Websites :

- <https://dschool.stanford.edu/fellowships/2014/03/27/designing-whats-next-in-teachers-professional-development/>