



Institutions of Teacher Professional Development in Sri Lanka

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අධ්‍යාපන ක්‍රියාවලියේ දී ප්‍රධාන සාධකයක් වන්නේ ගුරුවරයා ය. ශිෂ්‍යයන්ගේ අපේක්ෂිත සාධන මට්ටම කෙරෙහි ගුරුවරයාගේ වෘත්තීය සංවර්ධනය ඉතාම වැදගත් ය. මෙම විමර්ශනාත්මක ලිපියෙන් අවධානය යොමු කරන්නේ ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ගුරු වෘත්තීය සංවර්ධනය පිළිබඳවයි. විමර්ශනය සඳහා අවශ්‍ය දත්ත රැස් කරනු ලැබුවේ පොත්, විවිධ පර්යේෂණ පත්‍රිකා, වක්‍ර ලේඛ හා අත් පොත්, අන්තර්ජාල හා වෙබ් අඩවි මඟින්ය. ලිපිය ප්‍රධාන වශයෙන් අවධානය යොමු කරන්නේ වෘත්තීය සංවර්ධනයේ වැදගත්කම, ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ගුරු වෘත්තීය සංවර්ධනය සිදුකරන ආකාරය සහ ආයතන පිළිබඳවයි. විශේෂයෙන් පාසල් පාදක ගුරු සංවර්ධනය පිළිබඳ අවධානය යොමු කරන ලදී. ශ්‍රී ලංකාවේ ගුරු වෘත්තීය සංවර්ධනය පිළිබඳ විමර්ශනයේදී අඩුපාඩු සහ සංවර්ධනය සඳහා යෝජනා ද විස්තර කරන ලදී.

ප්‍රමුඛ පද: ගුරු වෘත්තීය සංවර්ධනය, පූර්ව සේවා ගුරු අධ්‍යාපනය, සේවාස්ථ ගුරු අධ්‍යාපනය, පාසල් පාදක ගුරු සංවර්ධනය, ශිෂ්‍ය සාධනය.

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Introduction

Teacher development directly affects to enhance of students' learning outcomes (Bandara, 2018), considering this situation the paper reviews and articulates Sri Lankan context about Teacher professional development (TPD) and responsible institutions of the Teacher professional development (TPD). The Ministry of Education (MOE) of Sri Lanka has recognised, that "good teachers are keys to enhance the quality of education and therefore need to be providing avenues of professional advancement" (MOE, 2005a, p. 22). Furthermore, the MOE (2005a) report shows that Sri Lanka has already realised teacher professional development as an essential part of the education system in the country.

Teacher professional development in Sri Lanka

This section briefly discusses the current situation of the teacher professional development in Sri Lanka. Education and trainings are very important parts for intending and continuing professionals (Watson, 1992). They also help to develop one's professionalism. Churukian (1993) explains that effective teachers are being trained by effective teacher education.

According to the Ministry of Education Report (2016), Sri Lanka has 232,555 teachers who are working in 10,162 schools in the country. Among them, 2,426 teachers are untrained, the problem of lack of trained teachers does not only exist in Sri Lanka, but in the Maldives Islands too (Adam, 2006). Therefore, it is necessary to provide good teacher development or staff development programs for untrained teachers. In addition, teaching is a professional job and it should be done by professionals themselves in the classroom. However, some of the trained teachers have not followed any refresher course after completing their initial training and some of the graduate teachers have not done their postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) yet. Recently, a special course was conducted in Sri Lanka for teachers over fifty years of age, who had not yet completed their postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE). That means there are several teachers who have been teaching for a decade or two or more without any additional training in education.

Pre-service teacher professional development

This section gives a brief description about pre-service teacher education in Sri Lanka, because the study is not focused to investigate pre-service

teacher education in Sri Lanka. The pre-service teacher training concept was introduced to Sri Lanka in 1984. Subsequently, National Colleges of Education (NCOE) were built in different areas of the country. Before starting these NCOEs, Sri Lanka had Teachers' Colleges for providing teacher training certificates for untrained teachers who were teaching in the school system. In other words before 1984 new recruited teachers were directly deployed to schools without any professional training programs (sometimes organised two- or three-week induction programs). However, after establishment of the NCOEs, Teachers' Colleges were closed or some were converted to NCOEs.

After that, pre-service teacher professional development opportunities were developed in Sri Lanka over the last two decades. The government has provided more facilities to develop NCOEs, because they are the responsible government-funded institutes that provide pre-service teacher education in Sri Lanka, and there are 19 NCOEs currently established in Sri Lanka (by 2018). In addition, the Faculty of Education in the University of Colombo and University of Peradeniya (this program was started in 2017) offers a pre-service teacher education graduate course, which is a four-year Education degree program including one year of field work; although opportunities are limited to only around 100 selected students a year.

In-service teacher professional development

In-service teacher professional development programs are organised for teachers who are currently working in a school after successfully completing a pre-service course (Long & Riegle, 2002). The in-service teacher professional development has a significant history in the Sri Lankan teacher education context, because before starting pre-service teacher education in 1984 teachers had only in-service teacher professional development. Brand and Whitbread (1975) described the growth of in-service education programs in last century have been developed all over the world. The in-service teacher professional development programs in Sri Lanka are conducted by the government. In comparing teacher education in developed and developing countries, it is found that teacher in-service support in developing countries has been a neglected area in the education context (Leu, 2004). There are several reasons for this situation existing in developing countries; the main reason is that they do not have sufficient funds for teacher in-service professional development programs.

Further, the in-service education is changing, and it varies from country to country. The programs are also different at the level of teacher

preparation. Mostly, this in-service teacher professional development programs are held wholly away from the school, and it may be held in a specifically designed training environment. There are four main goals included in the in-service teacher development programs. These are focused on unqualified teachers (mainly certification courses), to upgrade teachers; to prepare teachers for new roles, as an example, principals or teacher educators; and curriculum related, especially when there is a curriculum change in the education system, teachers need to be trained and in this case these programs are organised to introduce the curriculum change (Wickramasinghe, 2002; Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Furthermore different types of in-service teacher professional development programs are provided to teachers, such as: one day, two days, short term, long term and continuing seminars, workshops, field trips and group discussion; primary and secondary education levels; subjects oriented (professional development programs for Science Mathematics, etc); school-based, non-school-based; individual, collective, small groups, open address (from small group of teachers to thousands of teachers); as well as others organised by government or non-government organisations.

There are many criticisms of the in-service teacher professional development programs. Some of them are summarised as: the content of some in-service teacher education programs do not cater to teachers' needs; and teachers do not have a systematic way to communicate to administrators to say what teachers need. The programs are also poorly prepared, difficult to get access to the locations of the programs, and lack sufficient reading materials. In addition, the majority of in-service teacher professional development programs are too short, unrelated to the teachers' needs, and ineffective in upgrading teachers' knowledge. Despite the criticisms mentioned, there are many countries around the world that have organised and implemented good quality in-service teacher education opportunities for teachers. This is one of the reasons why there is an increased interest in improving teacher professional development in all over the World (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). Moreover, research was conducted in Ethiopia in 1996 and the finding of that research shows that teachers on average had participated in one or two days of in-service workshops or seminars for every ten years. Further, in the ten-year period most teachers had never attended any in-service workshop or seminar. Further, the quality of teacher professional programs of Pakistan is low. Even in India pre-service teacher education programs are not supported to prepare teachers sufficiently for classroom responsibilities (Villegas-Reimers, 2003).

Sri Lankan teachers also have less opportunity to participate in-service professional development activities in a year (Lalitha, 2005). Furthermore, the opportunities for teachers to participate in professional development programs depend on their teaching subject; for example, teachers who teach core subjects have more opportunities than teachers teaching other subjects (the core subjects in secondary schools are Mathematics, Science, Languages (Sinhalese, Tamil and English), and Social-Studies).

Institutions of in-service teacher professional development

There are six Sri Lankan government institutions which have the authority to organise and implement staff development programs for teachers who are working in government schools, although all professional development programs are based on in-service mode.

- The Ministry of Education (MOE),
- Provincial Ministry of Education (PMOE),
- National Institute of Education (NIE),
- Zonal Education Offices (ZEO),
- Some Universities of Sri Lanka,
- Teacher's Centres (TC)

Are the responsible institutions for providing in-service teacher professional development opportunities.

The Ministry of Education (MOE)

Under the Constitution of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka, the National Report (MOE, 2004b) states that 'Principles of state policy' have laid down that "The State is pledged to establish in Sri Lanka a democratic Socialist Society, the objective of which includes the complete eradication of illiteracy and the assurance to all persons of the right to universal and equal access to education at all levels" (MOE, 2004b, p 1). While UK NARIC (2007, p 7) states that as "The Ministry of Education and Higher Education is responsible for the design, implementation, control and maintenance of general education, teacher education and technical education in Sri Lanka". Further, some in-service programs are organised and implemented by MOE using their premises or other locations in the country.

Provincial Ministry of Education (PMOE)

After establishing provincial system in 1980s, the delegation of power and authority is at the Provincial level. Consequently, the majority of government schools are managed by the Provinces. MOE (2018) states the total number of government schools amounts to 10, 162. Out of them, 353 are schools under the regulation of the Central Ministry, whilst 9,809 schools are being managed by nine Provinces. Using delegated power and authority in a Province, the Ministry enables the development of their schools' quality of education, teachers' professionalism, teaching-learning process, etc.

Sri Lanka has nine Provincial councils and each council has a Provincial Ministry of Education and a Provincial education department. According to the structure of the Provincial Ministry of Education, two additional Provincial Directors have the responsibilities to organise in-service teacher training programs. Several in-service programs are organised and implemented subject-wise, and conducted by the subjects' directors of each Province. The Provincial Department of Education has responsibility for curriculum development of the main subjects, and the subjects' directors are responsible for providing subjects for the professional development for teachers.

The National Institute of Education

The National Institute of Education (NIE) is the most prominent institute in Sri Lanka in designing and developing curricula for general and teacher education. It provides professional development for the educational community and spearheads change through research and innovation. The National Institute of Education was established in 1986 (NIE, 2007). There are several professional development and teacher education programs that are organised and implemented by the NIE. For instance, training certificate courses for non-trained teachers, graduate courses (Bachelor of Education/BE), Postgraduate Diploma in Education (PGDE), Master of Science in Education Management (MSc) and few other courses that are organised for overseas students e.g. Diploma of School Management (DSM) for Maldivian principals.

Zonal Education Office

According to the hierarchical Education system, Zonal Education Office is the last unit that has the responsibilities to carry out the administrative work of schools and teachers in the Zone, as well as to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. ZEO has a

Zonal Director of Education and an additional Director of Education. Further, a Deputy Director of Education has the responsibility for teachers' in-service and supervision. The in-service training and supervision programs are organised and implemented by the abovementioned Deputy Director of Education in the Zone (MOE, 2007).

Universities of Sri Lanka

Five Universities also provide pre-service and in-service teacher education programs. These universities are the Open University of Sri Lanka (OUSL), University of Colombo, University of Jaffna, University of Peradeniya and Rajarata University of Sri Lanka.

The Open University of Sri Lanka

This University is one of the most recognised and prominent university in Sri Lanka. The Faculty of Education of Open University provides in-service teacher education. It mainly provides the Post Graduate Diploma in Education (PGDE) program. In addition, some graduate and diploma programs are implemented for teachers by the Open University (Lalitha, 2005; MOE, 2004b).

Teacher centres

"The main objectives of Teacher Centres are to provide opportunities for all teachers who have completed their initial teacher training to be involved in training activities for continuing development of their profession" (Lalitha, 2005, p. 28). Teacher Centres were established in the 1990s and 84 Teacher Centres have been established in different areas of the country. The responsibilities of Teacher Centres are listed out in World Bank (1996, p 23) as: "centres for continuing education courses (half day to three weeks); resource bases for teachers; learning and administrative outlets for distance teacher education activities run by universities and NIE; bases for advisors working with teachers in local schools, where appropriate; and centres for English language teaching for teachers, if required".

This section provided a brief description about teacher professional development in Sri Lanka. It included institutions which have the authority to organise pre-service and in-service programs for teacher. In-service teacher professional development includes SBTD opportunities and NSBTD opportunities. The next section articulates the SBTD programs.

School Based Teacher Development (SBTD) programs

School Based Teacher Development (SBTD) programs is one kinds of teacher development programs, and these teacher development programs are planned, organized and implemented by the particular school principal and the staff, considering teachers', students' and parents' needs and available resources. In addition SBTD programs are held in the school, therefore teachers no need go too far for the seminar or workshops, and as a result teachers' money and time are saved.

SBTD programs in Sri Lanka do not have a long history and SBTD was accepted as a concept in the education system in the early 1980s as part of national education reforms (Wickramasinghe, 2002). Further, the history of SBTD programs in Sri Lanka can be traced from Wickramasinghe (2002), to a Hand Book for school principals published by the Sri Lankan government. The Hand Book comprised fourteen chapters, with chapter five of the Hand Book dealing with 'Staffing and staff development'. In addition, that Hand Book for school principals' included a subject that focused on SBTD programs and its title was 'Organisation of in-school teacher training programs'. It indicated the following four sub-activities:

1. Organise a system of appointing grade/subject co-ordinators and sectional heads.
2. Plan out a program of workshops, regular faculty and group meetings, etc.
3. Provide teachers with packages of self-learning materials.
4. Organise contact sessions to solve teaching/learning problems on a person-to-person basis.

These sub-activities are policy documents to principals and this Hand Book states how to organise SBTD programs with consideration to these activities.

As a new concept of SBTD programs for Sri Lanka, Sethunga (2007, p .3) explains that "even though the paradigm shift from centralised in-service programs moved towards SBTD initiatives, in the Sri Lankan context it would have to ascertain whether such modalities would be applicable or how it could be approached within the present teacher education system. In order to develop effective SBTD initiatives, rigorous research studies would have to be conducted".

After the beginning of the 21st century, improvements or major changes in the field of SBTD programs in Sri Lanka have not been prominent. However, in 2007, a new program was proposed, called 'Program on School Improvement' (PSI), in line with the objectives of the program on PSI and with the new directions in teacher professional development. In addition, the Sri Lankan government recognised five aims that can be achieved through school-based professional development. The first is facilitating teacher development programs. The second is promoting on-site teacher development programs (each school will conduct site-based programs). The next is facilitating teachers' participation in continuing teacher education programs, and finally, providing training for principals and Senior Management Teams (SMTs) on educational planning, IT usage, financial management, quality improvement and organising effective on-site teacher development programs. The last is conducting a network of monitoring mechanisms (Mathews, 2002).

Blackmore (1999) provides some conditions for successful SBTD to achieve fundamental and ongoing improvement in practice. These are outlined as:

1. Starting small: small groups of committed teachers display best practice.
2. Willingness: commitment of teachers to improvement.
3. Invite teachers' ownership from initiative, through process, to implementation.
4. Expectation that professional development undertaken by an individual involves dissemination back to their school.
5. Recognition that changing the culture of a school is a slow, unrolling/unravelling process, which takes a number of years.
6. Leadership acknowledges and models good professional development; for instance, mentoring and shadowing for leadership programs, use of learning technologies.
7. Real teacher change requires reflection, practice, experimentation, risk taking, making mistakes and evaluation of improvement.

8. Dedicated time to work in teams, collegially, and for individual reflection.
9. Dissemination is best achieved by showing teachers what works because of the intense demands of teachers' daily workloads, to focus upon the practical, while recognising that schools and individuals must adapt according to need and context to 'what works in this place'.
10. Necessity for a school-based Coordinator for Professional Development to invite, organise and maintain change processes and networks.
11. The focus of good professional development is teaching and learning.
12. The need for a balance between individual's and school's needs: one without the other does not lead to deep-seated change in practice, although it can be superficial.
13. Professional development negotiated, not 'off the shelf'.
14. It is integral to school culture to undertake personal development, e.g. built into timetable.
15. Ongoing external input through consultants or university-based researchers is critical to maintaining theory/practice dialogue for research, and not just on evidence-based practice.

Conclusion

This review paper focused to review Sri Lankan teacher professional development programs, and the institutions which are responsible to provide teacher professional development opportunities in the country. Begging of the paper basic introduction and importance of the teacher professional development programs were expressed after that teacher professional development in Sri Lankan context also discussed. Further different kinds of pre-service and in-service teacher professional development programs highlighted and explained, finally introduction of the SBTD programs and advantages of the SBTD programs were provided.

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