

Professional Development in Education in India: A View

Selvaraj N*, Alagukanna AS and Suganya M

Commerce Department, Saraswathi Narayanan College, Madurai, Tamilnadu, India

Abstract

Education means reconstruction (or) reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experiences. The goal of education is to shape people so that they develop integral multi-facet personalities and is able to carry out fully their social role by developing their intellectual, physical and spiritual capacities and encouraging remove elevated level of human feeling and aesthetic taste, thus turning the ideological principle into personal connections and habits of behavior. Professors are groups of people with common goals who have attempted to institutionalise or systematize their patterns of behaviour. All professions attempt to establish a standard of behaviour which clearly evident to member and non member alike. As much as there are many professions, there is likely to be a wide variety of standards. Professional development training courses are not only applicable to people in business or management, but are also important for professionals such as teachers, technicians, nurses and engineers. Some of these professional courses are officially recognized and certify the candidates, on completion. This recognition is an added advantage of being trained at professional development institutes. The knowledge and skills that teachers gain during their pre-service education days may not serve them for all time to come in a rapidly changing world. Professional development programs or in-service education is meant for updating and broadening the knowledge and skills of teachers. Survey of literature suggests various models of in-service education or professional development prevalent in different countries. There are three dimensions of classroom environment - the physical dimension (the material order of things), the human dimension (the human actors i.e. the teacher/s, children), and the social dimension (the interaction amongst the actors). Classroom management involves managing this environment in all its dimensions for the goal of learning. The other important aspect of classroom processes is appropriate learning strategies to teach each of the constituents of literacy at the primary level reading, writing and mathematics/ numeracy.

Keywords: Learning; Education; Teachers and profession

Introduction

Education is a dynamic force in the life of every individual, influencing his physical, mental, emotional, social and ethical developments. "The process of education is a continuous process of adjustment, having as its aim at every stage of development and added capacity of growth". "Education means reconstruction (or) reorganization of experience which adds to the meaning of experience and which increases ability to direct the course of subsequent experiences". In India the third five year plan underlines the educational role in the following words. "Education is the most important single factor in achieving rapid economic development and technological progress and it is creating a social order founded in the values of freedom, social justice and equal opportunity". The goal of education is to shape people so that they develop integral multi-facet personalities and is able to carry out fully their social role by developing their intellectual, physical and spiritual capacities and encouraging remove elevated level of human feeling and aesthetic taste, thus turning the ideological principle into personal connections and habits of behavior. Education is the deliberate and systematic influence exerted by the nature upon the immature, through instructions, disciplines and harmonious development of physical, intellectual, aesthetic, social and spiritual powers of the human being, according to the individual and social needs and directed towards the union of the educated with his creator, as the final end [1].

According to the Report of Indian Commission (1964-66) "Education ought to be related to the life, needs and aspirations of the people and thereby make powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation". Father of our nation Mahatma Gandhi rightly pointed out the champion of Basic Education, considers education as a means for development. He says, "By education I mean an all round drawing out of the best on human body, mind and spirit". Education is a process of successful learning of knowledge, skills and attitudes,

where it is learned worth to the learner and usually it is learned in such a way that the learner can express his own individuality through what he learns and can subsequently apply it, and adapt it flexibly, to situations and problems other than those considered in learning it, also "education" which is used to refer to the product of the above process, and to the academic discipline studying the nature of the process and its outcomes. Education should be developed through proper training of teachers.

Professional

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary of Current English. Professional has been described as "----- of a profession -----". The special conventions, with form of politeness, etc. associated certain profession." All professions attempt to establish a standard of behaviour which clearly evident to member and non-member alike. As much as there are many professions, there is likely to be a wide variety of standards [2]. "If there is any profession of paramount importance, believe it is that of the school master" Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) Indian Philosopher and poet. It is education that determines the level of prosperity, welfare and security of the people of any nation. The Government of India on 4th July 1964 appointed Indian Education

*Corresponding author: Selvaraj N, Assistant Professor of Commerce, Saraswathi Narayanan College, Madurai, Tamilnadu, India, Tel:09843727975; E-mail: selvaraj_narayanan@yahoo.com

Received May 25, 2015; Accepted September 25, 2015; Published October 05, 2015

Citation: Selvaraj N, Alagukanna AS, Suganya M (2015) Professional Development in Education in India: A View. J Pol Sci Pub Aff 3: 173. doi:10.4172/2332-0761.1000173

Copyright: © 2015 Selvaraj N, et al. This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution License, which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited.

Commission (1964-65) popularly known as Kothari Commission, in order to study the various aspects of educational development of the country. The Commission realized the importance of the education's true spirit, when it is said, "the destiny of India is now this, we believe no more rhetoric is being shaped in her classrooms and that in a world based on science and technology it is education for the welfare and security of the people. It determines the level of prosperity adjustment in society also demand suitable our needs in a changing while our education system". Dr. Kothari about the importance education of says, "the single most observing important thing that is needed now is to get out of the rigidity of the present system. In the rapidly changing world today, one thing is certain, yesterday's education system will not meet today's, educational needs even less so, the needs of tomorrow".

The opening words of the Report of the Kothari Commission says "To clearly envisage transform education, relate it to the life needs to and aspirations of the people and thereby to make it a powerful instrument of social, economic and cultural transformation necessary for the realization of the national goals". The goals determined in the Commission is to increase productivity, achieve social and national integration, strengthen accelerated democracy, In the process of modernization and cultivate social, moral and spiritual values. Education is the back bone of social development and Education satisfies the needs of the society by the essence of civilization. Developing human potential and drafting this potential for national patterns of service. Primitive in communities social and cultural were of the simple nature and the factors influencing shape of education were few and clearly defined [3].

Higher education system in India

Education in ancient India was highly advanced as evident from the centres of learning that existed in the Buddhist monasteries of the 7th century BC up to the 3rd century AD Nalanda. In these centers, gathering of scholars gurukula used to be engaged in intellectual debates-- parishads-- in residential campuses. A few of these centres were large and had several faculties. Historians speculate that these centres had a remarkable resemblance to the European medieval universities that came up much later. The ancient education system in India slowly got extinguished following invasions and disorder in the country. Till the eighteenth century, India had three distinct traditions of advanced scholarship in the Hindu gurukulas, the Buddhist viharas, and the Quranic madarasas, before the British set up a network of schools to impart western education in English medium. The first such college to impart western education was founded in 1818 at Serampore near Calcutta. Over the next forty years, many such colleges were established in different parts of the country at Agra, Bombay, Madras, Nagpur, Patna, Calcutta, and Nagapattinam. In 1857, three federal examining universities on the pattern of London University were set up at Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. The existing 27 colleges were affiliated to these three universities [4]. Later, more universities were established. At the time of independence in 1947, there were 19 universities and several hundred affiliated colleges. The higher education system in India grew rapidly after independence. By 1980, there were 132 universities and 4738 colleges in the country enrolling around five per cent of the eligible age group in higher education. Today, while in terms of enrolment, India is the third largest higher education system in the world (after China and the USA); with 17973 institutions (348 universities and 17625 colleges) is the largest higher education system in the world in terms of number of institutions. The number of institutions in India more than four times the number of institutions both in the United States and entire Europe [4].

Level and type of higher education institutions

There are different types of universities and colleges in the higher education system in the country. They vary in terms of their academic, administrative and financial arrangements. Universities can either be established by an Act of Parliament or by the state legislatures. Those established by the Act of Parliament are the central universities and the ones set up by the state legislatures are state universities. Some higher education institutions are granted the 'deemed to be university' status by the central government through gazette notifications. A few institutions are established by the Parliament/state legislatures as institutions of national importance. Universities, deemed to be universities and institutions of national importance are degree-granting institutions. The universities could be of unitary type with single or even multiple campuses or of affiliating type. The concept of an affiliating university is unique to South Asia where a university affiliates colleges. These colleges conduct teaching learning under the academic supervision of the university to which they are affiliated. The colleges do not award their own degrees, but award the degree of the university to which they are affiliated. Though there is no clear demarcation, the colleges mainly focus on undergraduate education while the universities impart post graduate education and conduct research. In addition, there are many institutions like the Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) that only award diplomas. These diplomas are however equated to degrees granted by the universities. Most universities and colleges offer multidisciplinary programmes, however, there are also some that are confined to a particular discipline only – such as agriculture, law, technology, language, medical etc. There are also open universities that offer distance education programmes only.

Academic structure

Higher education in India covers all post-secondary education beyond class twelve in different subject areas including all professional streams such as engineering and technology, medical, agriculture etc. It comprises three levels of qualifications - Bachelor's or undergraduate degree programmes, Master's or post graduate degree programmes and the pre-doctoral and doctoral programmes [Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)]. Normally a bachelor's programme in India requires three years of education after twelve years of school education. In some places honours and special courses are also available. These are not necessarily longer in duration but indicate a greater depth of study. The bachelor's degree in the professional fields of study like agriculture, dentistry, engineering, pharmacy, technology and veterinary medicine generally takes four years, while for architecture and medicine, a bachelor's degree takes five and five and a half years respectively. There are other bachelor's degrees in education, journalism and librarianship that are treated as second degrees. A bachelor's degree in law can either be taken as an integrated degree programme lasting five years or a three-year programme as a second degree. The master's degree is normally of two-year duration. It could be based on work without a thesis or on research with a thesis. The M.Phil. Degree is a pre-doctoral programme taken after completion of the master's degree. This can be either completely research based or can include course work. A PhD degree is awarded two years after the M.Phil. Degree or three years after the Master's degree. The students are expected to write a substantial thesis based on original research for the award of a PhD degree.

Education and Society

The various theoretical perspectives on education especially the philosophical and sociological perspectives. Psychological perspectives

on education are more concerned with learning than with education in a broader sense. The aim of the chapter is to arrive at an understanding of education. The philosophical perspectives are concerned with the aims of education and the processes of education. The sociological perspectives are basically concerned with the place of education in the society and the mutual influence between them. The two major issues which emerge from the philosophical perspectives are whether education should be for livelihood or education should pursue for its own sake. This is translated in the issue of liberal versus the technical/vocational education. Plato's concept of 'goodness' falls more into former category while Gandhi emphasized more on vocational education. Dewey sees the issue in an entirely different way. He holds that divisions like practical-intellectual, culture-vocation are not immanent, but reflects the division in the society. What is needed is a basic liberal and technical education for all. In the liberal tradition humanism and certain values as the goal of education have been emphasized by philosophers like Roussau, Comenius, Herbart, Vivekananda, Tagore and Zakir Hussain. Apart from these, the Indian thinkers like Gandhi and Zakir Hussain wanted education in India to have an indigenous orientation. The philosophers have focused not just on aims but also on the process of education [5]. They have emphasized the importance of environment in education. While Montessori emphasized more on the importance of home environment for the child's education, Roussau and Tagore emphasized more on the broader physical and social environment. Dewey defines environment in a different sense. For him environment is that with which the individual varies. Thus the environment for a child may contain certain elements from past and may not contain certain elements of the present. In this sense the subjects like history and geography provide the imaginary environment for the child. The other processes that philosophers have emphasized are that the learning should happen in, that learning should happen in an environment of and experience helps in learning. Among the sociological perspectives there are two strands conservative and radical. The functional perspective can be considered as conservative. It only sees the positive contributions that education does towards society. Among the radical perspectives Ivan Illich's 'Deschooling Society' can be considered as the most radical. It considers the existing school system as stupefying the creativity of the children [6]. He advocates total abolition of the existing school system. The concept of ideological state apparatus by Althusser points out how the school is an instrument of domination in the hands of the state. Margaret Archer points out that domination varies between a centralized and a decentralized school system. More freedom is possible in a decentralized school system. The concepts of cultural capital by Bourdieu, invisible pedagogy by Bernstein and hidden curriculum by Michel Apple point out how society influences the classroom in various ways. Thus the classrooms are not insulated from their social surrounding. The concepts of critical consciousness by Paulo Friere and 'critical pedagogy' by Henry Giroux point out two possible ways in which classrooms can be instruments of freedom from a mind colonized by society.

Teaching professionalism

The understanding of three concepts is necessary- profession, professionalization and professionalism.

- It has an abstract theoretical knowledge base;
- It is responsible for the decision that are made in the name of the profession;
- It has autonomy;

- It has a code of ethics;
- It has an organization and association;
- It has a sense of social service and altruism.

Professionalization is a process in which a vocation tries to become a profession. This is basically a process of institutionalization of knowledge, skills and ethics. Larson points out the following stages in the process of professionalization:

- Establishing a cognitive base in a paradigm style
- Making visible the service
- Production of producers
- Power relationship with the elite
- Establishment of an association
- Change of name code of ethics
- Prolonged political agitation for recognition
- Institutionalization

Professionalism is an ideology which emphasizes more on the knowledge, skills and ethics than the material benefits which accrue to a profession. While professionalization is concerned with standardization, professionalism is concerned with standards. There is a difference between standard and standardization. There can be three aspects of standard intellectual, practical and ethical. According to Caldwell the following knowledge and skills can be considered as essential to teacher professionalism in the present age [7].

- Literacy (having an array of diagnostic and assessment instruments),
- Mathematics,
- Information and communication technologies,
- Reflective intelligence.

A profession operates within a state and is susceptible to state regulations. In the present age state is the biggest employer of primary teachers. The teachers usually negotiate or struggle with the state through teacher unions which are variously known as 'association', 'union' or 'organization'. The state and teacher unions negotiate or struggle about two principal arena which influences teacher professionalism - teacher education and the working environment in which teachers work. Teacher education consists of pre-service and in-service education. Pre-service education can be either concurrent to the general education or consecutive or after the general education. Literature review suggests that while concurrent model is prevalent in the OECD countries which are mostly developed countries, the consecutive model is prevalent in India and China. While the concurrent model spans between 3-5 years, the consecutive model spans between 1-2 years. Both the models have their unique advantages and disadvantages [6].

The knowledge and skills that teachers gain during their pre-service education days may not serve them for all time to come in a rapidly changing world. Professional development programs or in-service education is meant for updating and broadening the knowledge and skills of teachers. Survey of literature suggests various models of in-service education or professional development prevalent in different countries. But there can be five models of teacher professional development. Recent developments in teacher education in various countries of the world and India are discussed. Class size and teacher-

pupil ratio constitute important aspects of the working environment of teachers. The number of hours of work constitutes the amount of work teachers are supposed to do. Salary constitutes principally the material compensation of teachers. An account of the state and teacher professionalism remains incomplete without an account of the state and teacher organizations/unions. The first organization in India was by women, rather than men. Survey of literature suggest that teacher unions are dominant in Italy, Mexico, France; placed relatively on an equal footing in Sweden, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland and Germany. On the other hand there does not seem to be a smooth relation between teacher unions and the state in Greece, Israel, Chile and the Republic of Korea. A commonality of all the teacher unions is that they always oppose any state measure that affects the material condition of teachers adversely.

Teacher professionalism and classroom processes

Eventually what matters is that teacher professionalism increases learning in the classroom. Classroom processes mean all the processes which happen in the classroom. The basic process which happen and which should happen in the classroom is teaching-learning. This involves delivery of the intended curriculum through lessons in an appropriate way. Despite the criticism of the Herbartian framework of the lesson delivery, experts have not suggested something that is really an alternative. Managing classroom environment is the next important process which can aid or hinder learning. Therefore classroom processes are basically teaching-learning and creating conducive conditions for teaching-learning. The latter precedes the former. The first involves classroom environment management and the second involves pedagogical strategies. There are three dimensions of classroom environment - the physical dimension (the material order of things), the human dimension (the human actors i.e. the teacher/s, children), and the social dimension (the interaction amongst the actors). Classroom management involves managing this environment in all its dimensions for the goal of learning. The other important aspect of classroom processes is appropriate learning strategies to teach each of the constituents of literacy at the primary level reading, writing and mathematics/numeracy.

Meaning and Definitions of Professional Development

According to the thesaurus of the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) database, *professional development* refers to "activities to enhance professional career growth." Such activities may include individual development, continuing education, and in-service education, as well as curriculum writing, peer collaboration, study groups, and peer coaching or mentoring. Fullan expands the definition to include "the sum total of formal and informal learning experiences throughout one's career from pre-service teacher education to retirement". Considering the meaning of professional development in the technological age suggests a broader definition of professional development that includes the use of technology to foster teacher growth: "Professional development goes beyond the term 'training' with its implications of learning skills, and encompasses a definition that includes formal and informal means of helping teachers not only learn new skills but also develop new insights into pedagogy and their own practice, and explore new or advanced understandings of content and resources. This definition of professional development includes support for teachers as they encounter the challenges that come with putting into practice their evolving understandings about the use of technology to support inquiry-based learning. Current technologies offer resources to meet these challenges and provide teachers with a cluster of supports that help them continue to grow in their professional

skills, understandings, and interests". Professional development is essential for every individual, whether employed or not. It is vital for every business and professional organization to increase the knowledge and skills of their employees. They should strive to enhance the quality of performance, to ensure an improvement on the personal and professional front. Professional development is necessary to increase knowledge and skill, through certified and consistent education in the profession [8]. A professional development program boosts the individual's career, through travel, research, workshops and seminars and by working with professionals who are experienced. People take up a professional development course to build their expertise in business, teaching and nursing and contribute to organizational development. Professional development courses are either general, or skill- based. General professional development caters to general skills, through basic personal education. Skilled development on the other hand, deals with the current profession, leadership qualities, managerial skills and enhancing a person's productivity. The courses are designed with the intention of developing a person's level of competency and professionalism. The successful completion of the course opens avenues for unlimited growth. Professional development training courses are not only applicable to people in business or management, but are also important for professionals such as teachers, technicians, nurses and engineers. Some of these professional courses are officially recognized and certify the candidates, on completion. This recognition is an added advantage of being trained at professional development institutes. Professional Development provides detailed information on Professional Development, Teachers Professional Development, Engineering Professional Development, Continuing Professional Development and more. Professional Development is affiliated with Custom Embroidered Corporate Apparel.

Need of Professional Development

The need for teacher development is vital in an environment where educational goals for schools, teachers and students are high. Teachers are expected to help students become critical, constructive thinkers who have developed thorough conceptual understandings. Students are required to synthesize information, solve problems, invent new ideas, create models, and explain themselves with confidence and proficiency. Classrooms are viewed as places where rich discourse should take place as students engage in their work and explore problems with meaningful contexts [8].

The traditional approach to teaching is a long-established style and is especially prevalent in schools amongst older teachers who were taught, and have long been teaching in this manner. It consists of the mastery of concepts and procedures as the ultimate goal of instruction and places little emphasis on the processes of geography, or on the knowledge that comes out of geographical problem situations. There is therefore a strong contemporary need for teacher development. Modern curricula and new theory also indicate that a move is necessary from the over reliance of teaching practices where exposition and individual seatwork exist, towards activities that promote students' involvement in constructing, applying, and evaluating geographical ideas. This move is especially important for rural schools where there is a special need for teaching to include more geographical reasoning and problem solving, more communication, and more connections between the geographical ideas and applications. The contemporary approach is premised on constructivism, in which learning is directly focused on the construction of knowledge, and not the traditional transfer of it from the teacher to the student. However, this constructivist approach often takes teachers far beyond their traditional and familiar roles

and practices, requiring changes in epistemological perspectives and knowledge of how students learn mathematics. In addition, they also require changes in classroom practices. In order to give teachers the opportunity to develop and make changes, with support, professional development is necessary. In particular, there is a need for professional development to cater for teachers working in rural schools. The common view that each teacher must find their own style, as related by Ball, maintains this individualism and isolation of teaching. Common standards are difficult to develop, and disagreements are masked. The struggles a teacher may be having in their practice, especially in rural are often hidden because of the isolation. It is therefore hoped that by offering the teachers good opportunities for learning, they are then able to critique and challenge alternative practices, with real and helpful debate, facilitating growth.

Types of professional development

1. Organized professional development

1. Professional development meetings.
2. Providing readable literature
3. Lectures by subject expert
4. Demonstrations.
5. IT/computer literacy.
6. Institutional subscription of research journals/Articles.

2. Self-motivated professional development

1. Individual subscription of research journals/Articles
2. computer literacy
3. Meeting subject experts.
4. Voluntary participation.

Barriers to Professional Development

Generally the researcher found so many kinds of barriers in related to teachers' professional development are at all levels. Finally the researcher classified into three major categories of barriers at high school level, which are most suitable and mentioned below.

Psychological barriers

A person who has psychologically unable to develop his potential is called psychological barrier.

- Teachers lacking positive attitudes.
- Teachers lacking motivation.
- Teachers lacking interest.
- Teacher lacking confidence.
- Teacher having stress.
- Teacher having frustration.
- Teacher lacking awareness.
- Inability to learn new technology.

Administrative barriers

A Person who has potential to acquire professional development but problems with implementing is called administrative barriers.

- Poor administration.
- Government Policy.
- Lack of physical facilities.
- Lack of financial facilities.
- Inadequate time.
- Inadequate funding.

Material barriers

A person who have problem with utilizing professional development is called materials barriers.

- Time commitments.
- Energy demands.
- Working environment.
- Family environment.

Recommendations

To the government

- The education department should encourage the staff to acquire higher degrees. It will help to enhance the profession perception of the teachers.
- Arranging periodical professional development programs, refresher courses and pooling the staff with subject wise experts for the seminar and workshops will help them to acquire the new skills and new technique to be adopted.
- Establishing University resource center to cater the school teachers for psychological and professional counseling.
- Financial assistance may be given to the teachers to undertake action research and projects related to teaching learning process.

To the institutions

- Adopting suitable screening test during the staff selection.
- Language improvement programs to be arranged.
- The private schools management to direct the teachers or to encourage the teachers to participate workshops, seminars and similar professional development programs organized by the education department.
- Teachers should undertake action researches and projects.
- Organizing institutional level and group of institutions with senior faculty sharing their experiences will help to improve their profession perception.

To the teachers

- The teachers themselves to show special interest on acquiring higher degrees.
- Attending periodical professional development programs, refresher courses, meeting the subject wise experts, seminar and workshops will help to acquire the new skills and new technique to adopt.
- Teachers should properly utilize the resources available

in Educational resource centres, BRC's other Educational Institutions.

- Teachers also should realize that teaching is not like other profession but it is a Nobel profession hence they should be committed, dedicated and willing to know the new things in order to deliver their duty properly.

References

1. Gupta A (2004) "A Study of Existing Perceptions/Understanding of Education for Sustainable Development of Indian Teachers", Prithvi Innovations, Lucknow.
2. Nida B (2009) Teachers' Perception Levels of Activities Directed towards Professional Progress Education 130: 22-29.
3. Borg S (2003) Teacher cognition in language teaching: a review of research on what language teachers think, believe, know and do. Language Teaching 36: 81-39.
4. Brown JD (2001) Using surveys in language programs. New York: Cambridge University Press.
5. Christopher D, Qing Gu (2009) Veteran Teachers: Commitment, Resilience and Quality Retention Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice 15: 441-457.
6. Ngala FBJA, Odebero SO (2010) "Teachers' perceptions of staff development programmes as it relates to teachers' effectiveness: A study of rural primary schools in Kenya" - Educational Research and Review 5: 001-009.
7. Ian H (2010) Critiquing Teacher Professional Development: Teacher Learning within the Field of Teachers' Work-Critical Studies in Education 5: 71-84.
8. McCreedy LT, Soloway GB (2010) Teachers' Perceptions of Challenging Student Behaviours in Model Inner City Schools, Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties 5: 111-123.