The Needfulness of Continuing Professional Development for Education Administrators: A Systematic Literature Review

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Abstract: The purpose of this paper is to systematically review the literature on the needfulness of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of education administrators in the world with empirical and theoretical evidence related interpretative analysis on literature. Continuing professional development, advantages of CPD programmes in-service training also covered. Training and professional development date back to several countries and it was found that the influence of imperialists mainly by the British is dominant in Sri Lankan education and professional development programmes.

Provision of training and development is perceived by authorities as a practice and not as a key driver of improving school performance and effective management. The outcome of the study can be used to further enhance and implement professional development and training programmes for educational leaders with an outcome-oriented approach. Therefore, the findings will help lay a foundation for policy-making and their implementation can be broadened to enhance the quality of education in Sri Lanka.

Key words: Professional development, Professionalism, Continuing professional development, leadership role, in-service training.

I.   INTRODUCTION

Education administrator is the one who actively engages in realizing the national education aims and goals in a country by integrating upper level and lower levels of the hierarchical order of the educational field. At the same time "Educational Administrator" is not merely an administrator whereas he needs to be an educationist, instructional leader, psychologist, counsellor, manager, education specialist, etc. In such a context the educational administrator needs to be equipped with and updated knowledge, attitudes, and skills particular to the profession enabling functioning at ease. Consequently, training and development of educational administrators need to be up-to-date in order cater to the needs of the new trends in the ever-changing environment. In the modern context of decentralization of powers, schools tend to be given more independence to be operated as individual organizations. Therefore, the contemporary educational administrator's role is undergoing rapid changes. In such a context, the definition of 'power' has taken a different form from the traditional view. So, in the modern context 'power' is "the ability to influence thinking and actions of others rather than the ability to control and/or suppress others' potential and manage them" (Gamage, 2008). Hence, it is necessary to redefine the role of the educational administrator.

1.1   Advantages of CPD programmes

For education officers, educational administrators and principals to survive with the demands and challenges of the 21st century, advanced leadership development programmes help prepare them to apply creative approaches that address the wide-ranging roles and tasks of leaders, and to use fundamental technologies to achieve projected outcomes (Piggot-Irvine, 2010, p. 8).

As indicated by Piggot-Irvine (2010) participating in well-designed CPD programmes will permit principals to make independent decisions, familiarize teaching programmes to local needs, encouraging collaboration among teachers, and engaging in teacher monitoring, assessment, and professional development. CPD programmes empower principals and education officers to set strategic direction and develop school plans and goals, and to monitor progress by using data to improve preparation. (Piggot-Irvine, 2010, p. 8).

Piggot-Irvine, (2010, p. 8) found that the importance and requirement of principals and aspiring principals to be well-equipped to take up leadership and management positions. Secondly, to support principals and aspiring school managers to become effective leaders and managers in South Africa.

Further Piggot-Irvine, (2010) discovered that the expected outcome of the ADE course is to provide participants with relevant knowledge, attitudes, competencies, and skills to develop and implement school plans; create suitable policies in line with national legislation and regulations to guide their practices, as well as set up mechanisms to deal with issues across all aspects of school management and leadership.

As stated by Naidu and Conley (2005) school principals, officers, leaders, and managers should be made aware of what is expected of them through the norms and standards of educators, competencies and the expectations of the Department of Education (Naidu and Conley, 2005 p. 8).

Moreover, Naidu and Conley (2005, p. 8) stated that the importance of promoting professional development for principals by education district offices. And the role of the School Governing Board in providing funds to accommodate the professional development of principals and staff. They emphasize the formation of a specific committee to identify the professional development needs of principals and recommend as well as instrument individual and group professional development programmes. They further indicated that the importance of professional learning communities within schools and engage with those who need to change their practice.

As stated by Madhakomala (2018) the implementation of professional development and training programmes need to be met with the evaluation criteria. According to the time availability the organizers tend to consider the duration of the professional development programme, and it can be seen that the training and development programmes may be adjusted as the needs of training participants, and the outcomes of the professional development programme will be decided according to the training needs of the candidates, school principals, education officers, school leaders in order to improve knowledge, attitude, and skills of the participants.

Further, Madhakomala (2018, p. 89) found that the education development, professional development and training programmes of the prospective principals can run effectively, and the training program is very effective to be done continuously because this programme prepares candidates who have personality, managerial, entrepreneurial, supervision and social competence so that it will have an impact on the quality of school education.

Hasan (2017) revealed that the education and professional development and training programmes have a positive effect on prospective principals, "training and development are positively related to organizational values of collaboration, creativity, quality, delegation, and human treatment".

Furthermore, Hasan (2017) found that p. "the training and development programmes have a positive correlation and claimed statistically significant relationship with employee performance and effectiveness". Most of the professional development and training programmes for prospective principals are expected to improve the quality of education in schools.

The implementation of the many professional development and training programmes for school leaders have been in line with the standards and criteria for training of prospective school principals.

1.2 Continuing professional development (CPD)

Craft (2000) explains that the professional development (PD), continuing professional development (CPD) and in-service training (INSET) are used interchangeably to refer to all types of professional education undertaken by involved or aspiring principals beyond the point of initial training (Craft, 2000, p. 2).

The researchers and scholars consider CPD as training, as a means of keeping up-to-date, or as a way of building a career. And professional development associations have a view that CPD is part of lifelong learning; a means of gaining career security; a means of personal development; a means of assuring the public that individual professionals who hole the responsible positions in a country are up-to-date; a method whereby professional development associations can verify competence; and a way of providing employers with a competent, knowledgeable, skillful and adjustable workforce (Friedman and Phillips, 2004, p. 2).

As indicated by researchers and scholars CPD can be interpreted as a structured approach to learning that will facilitate knowledge, competence to practice by intensifying knowledge, skills, attitudes and practical experience. The CPD in school education involves any educational activity which helps to plan, maintain, develop, enhance or increase knowledge, attitudes, problem-solving skills, soft skills, hard skills, technical skills or professional performance standards, all to provide quality education. CPD can involve any relevant learning activity, whether formal or structured, non-formal or informal and self-directed.

Day and Sachs (2004) and Hirsch (2009) remark that CPD as all those activities in which educators engage during a career, which are planned to enhance the quality standards of their work. They contend that CPD may be a very simple or hugely complex intellectual and emotional endeavor, which is at the heart of raising quality standards of teaching-learning process and achievement of students and staff in a range of schools, each of which poses its own set of different challenges. Education leadership and management should be seen as a process where the development of educational managers, officers, principals and leaders and the accomplishment of their organizational aims, targets and set goals (Mestry and Grobler, 2004, p. 2).

The process of professional development is mainly concerned with strengthening, empowering, equipping principals, educational managers to acquire and improve the necessary competencies, skills, attitudes, and knowledge to lead and manage their schools and offices effectively (McLay and Brown, 2003, p. 2).

As indicated by Guskey (2002, p. 3). high-quality professional development is a key, main, important central element in nearly every modern proposal for enlightening education in any system.

1.3   In-service training for serving principals and school leaders

School leaders and principals have an understanding that changes in schools are unlimited and they try to master how to cope up with the change process effectively. In-service training, therefore, keeps them well informed of the changes in the school system (O'Neill and Bottoms, 2001). Principal leadership practices contribute significantly to school effectiveness and performance (Orr, 2010). The roles of principals, school leaders which are many, have great contributions to create more highly achieving schools (Gamage, Adams and McCormack, 2009). Some of the roles include guiding the attainment of the goals of the organization (Leithwood and Mascall, 2008, p. 532). The administrative function of principals is such activities as school laws, annual strategic planning, student administration, school-based decision making and allocation of duties for the teachers. Besides, principals must learn to manage limited resources wisely (Mbua, 2003).

It seems that mentoring and professional counseling work relatively systematically in Anglo Saxon countries and in France, where these are included as part of all training programmes. Various peer support groups (in St. Petersburg, for example) are also commonly used as informal support structures. In the Nordic countries, the use of mentoring and professional counseling is periodic and dependent on local resources and needs (Hale and Moorman, 2003; Peterson, 2002; Caldwell et. al., 2003; Finnish National Board of Education, 2012).

In-service training in Scotland is provided in a variety of subject areas. The in-service training courses are provided by local education authorities. The training includes child protection, staff selection and recruitment, the headteacher's responsibilities in terms of health and safety, shared leadership, attendance management, management of school order, drawbacks and fairness in leadership, coaching of leaders, mentoring, a learning leader, and leadership of learning and teaching. The majority of training is short-term and participation in long-term training is occasional and dependent on individual schools maintaining organizations' support and each principal's own will and opportunities (Caldwell et. al., 2003; Finnish National Board of Education, 2012).

The University of Toronto in the Canadian Province of Ontario organizes research-based principal training programmes. The Educational Leadership and Management related Program includes: building relationships and developing people; setting directions for schools; securing accountability of the officers; leading the instructional leadership and teaching programme; developing school organization (Hale and Moorman, 2003; Hall, 2008; Finnish National Board of Education, 2012).

When principals are appointed to leadership positions, they may experience great difficulty adapting to the demands and expectations of the role they are to play. The principals need specialized leadership preparation with continuous professional development. Studies carried out by Heistech (2007), Maestro & Singh (2007) and Misila (2010) revealed that ACESLM qualifies as a leadership development program for school leadership in the South African context. Bush, Duku, Glover, Kiggundu, Cola, Misila and Morosi (2009) and other studies by Bush et al. (2012) found that Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership and Management (ACESLM) qualifications as a leadership development program are highly beneficial to all members of school management teams as well as first-level postgraduate teachers. This study provides principals pursuing the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership and Management (ACESLM) course with an advantageous career path in leadership and management development and training. By acquiring the Advanced Certificate in Education: School Leadership and Management (ACESLM) course, they gained vast knowledge, qualities and skills in the fields of leadership and management.

The sentiments of the deputy principals and postgraduate first teachers were mainly positive and the leadership practices of the principals were significantly improved. This study recognizes the value of ACESLM as a leadership development program for school leaders. Moreover, in the absence of a prerequisite qualification for admission to the position of principal in South Africa, continuous leadership development is crucial for school leaders. Twenty-first century principals must develop and maintain healthy relationships with all stakeholders, ensuring that effective teaching and learning takes place as the "main business" of schools. Principals need to manage resources efficiently and, in addition, ensure that legislation and education policies are implemented quickly. "Leadership Capacity" is broad-based (Lambert, 2002), which requires the efficient participation of relevant stakeholders, and when there is a high level of leadership capacity, learning and mentoring lead to good professional leadership practices. This study emphasizes the value of school leaders who have taken the ACESLM

course, and this may be an appropriate exit for all aspiring and trainee principals. The course alone is not enough as principals face a number of challenges on a daily basis that require innovative strategies to transform and manage schools. Continuing career leadership development and practical experience will lead to successful schools using the appropriate skills, knowledge, values and attitudes. The author therefore strongly recommends that the Department of Elementary Education seriously consider introducing a prerequisite qualification that is similar in structure to the ACSLM and for all principals aspiring to become principals. In addition, this qualification must be obtained by all school management teams within the first two years of appointment to management positions (Naidoo, 2019).

It appears that in-service principals' training in California, is disorganized in practice, according to their rules and regulations the school principals are not mandatory to participate in training programmes, even though the regulations governing the validity of professional credentials would require it (Darling-Hammond and Orphanos, 2007).

It can be seen that the School-Based Intermediate Supervisors Institute (SBISI) in New York City, provides a two-year leadership seminar series to build school leadership skills and knowledge for their school principals. The programme covers four summer workshops and three workshops per year, also, they have an opportunity for personal mentoring.

Researchers have identified some of the best practices for effective professional development. Professional development should be based on a harmonious relationship between goals, content and activities (Metcalf, Bryan, 2019, p. 39). Professional development should be sustainable over time rather than presented as an isolated or short-term event. The Inquiry Cycle is a key component of Vocational Learning Communities (VLCs) (p. 43). Training, understanding and implementation of the newly adopted model of professional development by the principal are the important stages of professional development (Metcalfe, Bryan, 2019, p. 53).

1.4   Conclusion

Training and professional development date back to several centuries and it was found that the influence of imperialists mainly by the British is dominant in Sri Lankan education and professional development programs. Sri Lanka continues to implement training and development with the least changes in contents and scopes compared to the past. It was further found that authorities paid little attention to the effectiveness of the training and development but rather were concerned about the compliance requirement. At present, school leaders undergo training programs, and improvements in leaders are also seen at varying degrees. The study finds that school leaders who are good at leadership skills and competencies produce better results in terms of both students' performances and school management.

However, the use of technology in training was trivial but the need for more sophisticated, comprehensive, and sustainable training for school leaders for better performance is highlighted.

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