Practices of Teachers' Professional Development Training in the School Level of Dang District

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Abstract

This study investigates the application of Teachers' Professional Development (TPD) training in community school classrooms within Rajpur Rural Municipality, Dang District. Using a qualitative research design within an interpretivist framework, the study observed classrooms in two community secondary schools and conducted in-depth interviews with four teachers to gather data. The results show that although teachers have gained useful knowledge and skills from TPD training, these are not always implemented in classroom procedures. Many teachers do not adhere to structured lesson planning, despite some including brief lesson plans in their logbooks. The efficient use of instructional strategies, assessment tools, and teaching materials continues to present difficulties. Teachers who participated in interviews reported that TPD training had improved their self-assurance and practical teaching skills, such as choosing pedagogies and using inexpensive.

Keywords: Practices, TPD training, in-depth interview, observation, skills, knowledge

Introduction

Teacher Professional Development (TPD) training is a more popular training in the school level in Nepal. This training refers to structured programs whose aim is to enhance the skills of teachers, knowledge of teachers, and instructional practices in class room of school level. TPD training was also designed to improve effective teaching in classroom, learning outcome of the students, and increase the quality level of present education (Acharya, 2019). This TPD training in Nepal was designed as various forms like as face to face interaction including workshops, mentoring, online courses, peer collaborations and action research. TPD training is more useful for the promotion of permanent teachers in school level. TPD training is useful for enhance pedagogical skills, support lifelong learning, improve student outcomes, encourage reflective practice and promote collaboration in teaching learning process (Mahara, 2024).

In Nepal, the School Sector Reform Plan (SSRP) educational project was implemented to improve the whole education system of Nepal in 2009. This project has restructured the school education system in two parts: a) basic level (classes one to eight) and b) secondary level (classes nine to twelve). This program started a new model of teacher training for the teachers who are engaged in the community schools of Nepal. The National Centre for Educational Development (NCED) was given responsibility for implementing the policy of Teachers Professional Development (TPD), described as Demand-Based Training. The content of TPD training is prepared on the basis of the demand collected from the teachers of community schools of Nepal (Kshetree, 2021).

TPD training provides modern teaching strategies, assessment techniques, and classroom management skills in the school level (Guskey, 2002). In Nepal, TPD training is a short-term in-service training. Altogether it is one month's training. At the beginning of TPD it is started in three phases one of ten days but nowadays TPD training was merged in to two phase (first phase and second phase). Each phase consists of seminars and workshops, coaching and monitoring, action research, professional learning communities. TPD training was started in both physical and online modalities. TPD training ensures teachers to continuously updated with teacher guide and curriculum changes and innovations (Desimone, 2009).

Teachers' Professional Development (TPD) training is a very useful training for the improvement of the teachers' profession in Nepal. Most of the teachers of community schools are completed TPD training, but the students' educational achievement in community schools in Nepal is very low, so researchers are interested in knowing the practices of TPD training in community schools of Nepal. Researchers want to find the conditions for implementing the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of TPD training in the real classroom of a community school. What are the best practices implemented by teachers in the classroom and to improve the academic achievement of students in the community school of Nepal?

This study was intended to fulfill the purpose of exploring the practice of TPD in Rajpur Rural Municipality of Dang district. The research questions for this study are as follows:

    i.   How is the TPD training implemented in the classroom?

    ii.   In what ways was the teaching learning process improved by using TPD training?

    iii.   Describe the strengths of TPD training.

Literature Review

This topic aims to discuss existing literature on Teachers' Professional Development (TDP) and the subject of this research. The literature review gives information, competencies, and perceptions on the field of study, which enables the researcher to clarify and define the study. A profession is an occupation that requires specialized training, adhering to prescribed standards, and is a means of earning a living. Since teaching encompasses these significant characteristics, it is considered a profession. Teacher education in Nepal has been investigated by numerous researchers.

Literature indicates that raising the academic performance of Nepalese students to a desired level is a long-standing issue (Khaniya, 2003). Classroom and school effectiveness in students' achievement depend on experienced and well-trained teachers with good subject matter and pedagogical knowledge, which can be obtained through intensive teacher training

programs (Khaniya, 2003). However, most of the teachers in Nepal are poorly trained or not trained at all, and therefore, they are not well prepared to deliver knowledge and skills effectively (Khaniya, 2003).

Researchers have shown that teachers trained in community schools do not show positive change in classroom teaching practices. Teacher training courses, as perceived by head teachers, have been ineffective in enhancing the skills of teachers in teaching-learning activities (Wagley et al., 2003). Monitoring showed that a vast majority of teachers cannot apply the knowledge and skills gained through training in actual classroom contexts. Between training content and classroom realities in Nepalese community schools, there exists a broad gap since training does not address issues such as large classes, heterogeneity of students (e.g., economic status, social structure, caste, ethnicity, disabilities), and the use of local, low-cost teaching materials (Wagley et al., 2003).

Similarly, an ELT research in Nepal concentrated on curriculum, textbook, and ELT market changes (Bhattari & Gautam, 2005). The research was centered on the need for community school teachers to update themselves in order to keep up with advancements in science and technology. The research also highlighted that English teachers need to obtain information and communication technology (ICT) skills through special training programs to improve teaching in community schools (Bhattari & Gautam, 2005).

Nepal Millennium Development Goals Progress Report (2010) released by Ministry of Education and UNICEF appreciated the teachers' training processes in Nepal and reported that the teachers' training in Nepal has to be more intensified in an attempt to develop the quality of education as well as student-centered approach, child-friendly, gender-friendly, focused on inclusive education system in caste, ethnic group, economic status, disabilities, and, cultural sensitization. It was indicated from this report that more than eighty-seven percent of the primary teachers were partially or fully trained. The School Sector Reform Program (SSRP) 2009-2015 has conducted an additional study in an attempt to enhance the accessibility of students to school and the equity and equality in the education system of Nepal. The program also seeks to improve and expand all the factors to Education for All (EFA) and MDGs. It has devised the free education that includes all the direct costs like admission fee, monthly fee, textbook expense, tuition fee, and examination fee, which makes it easier for the marginalized community students to access the education system in Nepal. Teachers' Professional Development is elaborated in a number of ways.

The university degree acquisition is only the way to Teachers' Professional Development but to be an effective and successful teacher in a real class, teacher training is mandatorily necessary for all. Teacher training also provides a teacher with the competencies to provide peer support, develop equity and equality among the students, and inclusive education skills in various areas in the actual classroom. But recently, the researcher found that training programs in Nepal are not translating into the actual classroom. The researchers suggest the training environment must be supportive according to the situation of the community school classroom in Nepal (Ghimire, 2023).

A study of primary teachers' perceptions and practices of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) found that while CPD was considered important, the necessary culture of learning was not observed among the teachers. The mixed-methods research, conducted in

Parsa, Bhaktapur, and Sindhupalchok districts, identified this discrepancy between the perceived importance of CPD and teacher participation (Shrestha, 2011).

Similarly, an investigation of the professional growth of secondary school teachers in Nepal discovered that while stakeholders and teachers recognized its importance, they were not taking proactive steps to enhance it (Rana, 2011). The research, conducted in Siddharthanagar Municipality of Rupandehi District, also found that parents, SMCs, and PTAs were not taking proactive steps towards enhancing the teaching-learning process or academic achievements in community schools (Rana, 2011).

Methodology

This research paper was based on practices implemented in Teachers Professional Development (TPD) in the classroom of a community school in Rajpur Rural Municipality in Dang district. This research study is a qualitative research design. In this study researcher explored and analyzed the activities that can be applied after the TPD training in the classroom. To collect data, four teachers were selected from two community schools of Rajpur Rural Municipality. Among them, three teachers are fully trained, and one teacher is partially trained. Out of four teachers, two are secondary level, one is lower secondary level, and one is primary level. To collect data, questionnaire guidelines were prepared for in-depth interviews with selected teachers of two community schools of Rajpur Rural Municipality of Dang district, and the classes of these teachers were observed.

The population of this study is taken as the total population of teachers in Rajpur Rural Municipality of Dang district. For this study, the researcher selected two communities' secondary schools. From these schools, four teachers were selected as a sample of the study.

Results

This study is related to the practices of teachers' professional training in Rajpur Rural Municipality of Dang district. The researcher observed the class of these teachers, and an in-depth interview was conducted with these teachers to find how the knowledge and skills gained from teachers' professional training are used in the classroom. The researcher also wants to find how the classroom activities are changed after TPD training.

From the in-depth interview with teachers who have taken TPD training is argued that before taking TPD training, they had not implemented a teaching plan, but they got skills to prepare a short teaching plan, and they are using a teaching plan in three classrooms per day. They are facing choosing teaching methods in teaching, but after TPD training, they gained some specific knowledge which helped them to select suitable pedagogy according to the content or subject matter. TPD training helps in preparing no-cost and low-cost teaching materials and use in the classroom. This training also assists in understanding about curriculum and ways to implement it helps to evaluate students after teaching learning activities and give feedback to the students, helps in project work effectively, helps in extra-curricular activities, it helps to upgrade the confidence level of teachers in teaching. After taking TPD training, the teacher got an idea to teach a chapter by breaking it down into different parts. TPD training knowledge and skills are used in role play method, using gamification in teaching, using ICT in the classroom, and in the management of classroom.

From the observation of class and in-depth interview with TPD-trained teachers, the researcher found that the teacher should be more active, interested, habit of continuous study, motivate students to participate in project work, use ICT in the classroom, methods of

evaluation and giving feedback. To use the knowledge and skills from TPD training teacher must be active, and the observation and supervision from the related organizations and from the head teacher, and feedback should be provided to the teacher.

Discussion

In Rajpur Rural Municipality, probably all old teachers are trained, but newly appointed teachers are untrained or partially trained. The researcher studied the practices of TPD training in the real classroom of the community school of Rajpur Rural Municipality. From the class observation of four teachers, it was found that the knowledge and skills gained from TPD training are not used properly in the classroom activity. They are not used to lesson plans, but some teachers use a short plan in the logbook. There are some problems in using proper teaching materials, the evaluation process, and teaching methods.

Though some researchers have not seen a positive change in classroom teaching practices after TPD, it is found that TPD training helps teachers in the practical field of classroom activities. After taking TPD training, they felt confident in teaching. It helps in skills of teaching skills, choosing suitable pedagogy, use of no-cost and low-cost teaching materials, skills of doing project work. The trained teachers are using the knowledge and skills from teachers' professional development training in real classrooms, but due to a lack of funds and sufficient time, they are not able to use them fully in the classroom.

In fact, this study is primarily useful for teachers who are teaching at the school level. It is also giving direction or an idea for the educational trainer, educational planners. This study is helpful for head teachers of schools, educational leaders, and educational officers at the federal, provincial, and local levels. This study also helps educational researchers who want to study Teachers' Professional Development training.

Conclusion

From this educational research, the researcher found that the practices of Teachers' Professional Development training in the real classroom are not very good. Some teachers are using the knowledge and skills gained from TPD training in the classroom room but most of the trained teachers are not using the skills and knowledge received from TPD training in the classroom of the community school of Rajpur Rural Municipality of Dang district. After taking TPD training, they felt confident in teaching. It helps in skills of teaching skills, choosing suitable pedagogy, use of no-cost and low-cost teaching materials, skills of doing project work. The trained teachers are using the knowledge and skills from teachers' professional development training in real classrooms, but due to a lack of funds and sufficient time, they are not able to use them fully in the classroom. To encourage the application of skills and knowledge learned through TPD, head teachers, educational leaders, and concerned officers should regularly observe classroom activities and provide constructive feedback to teachers.

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