



Promoting and Enhancing Effective Teacher Professional Development in Tanzania: Lessons from Chinese Teacher Professional Development

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Author's contribution

The sole author designed, analysed, interpreted and prepared the manuscript.

Article Information

DOI: 10.9734/AJESS/2021/v21i1130497

Editor(s):

(1) Dr. Ana Sofia Pedrosa Gomes dos Santos, Universidade de Lisboa, Portugal.

Reviewers:

(1) Mustafa Shazali Mustafa Ahmed, Sudan.

(2) Fjodor Ruzic, Institute for Informatics, Croatia.

(3) Maarika Veigel, Tallinn Health Care College, Estonia.

Complete Peer review History: <https://www.sdiarticle4.com/review-history/69865>

Review Article

Received 18 April 2021
Accepted 22 June 2021
Published 08 September 2021

ABSTRACT

This paper reports on promoting and enhancing effective teacher professional development in Tanzania: Lessons from Chinese teacher professional development. Teacher professional development is an important aspect in any country for educational achievement. In several years Tanzania has been facing ineffective teacher training and professional development. As a result, most of the teachers fail to plan their professional development as it expected to be. The analysis of findings indicated that Chinese teacher professional development has obtained significant achievement due to the presence of a strong policy, heavy investment in the teacher education sector, and other related factors. In this regard, these lessons are worth to Tanzania which still struggling to have effective teacher professional development through teacher practice. Therefore this study recommended that the Tanzanian government should encourage professional training programs for teachers through financial and material support.

Keywords: Tanzania, China, promoting, effective, teacher professional development.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Concept of Teacher Professional Development

Teacher professional development refers to a series of processes that occur when teachers are working in schools after they graduate from a teacher's college or university [1]. In Different studies, most of the scholars cemented that professional development should start much earlier while teachers are still in pre-service teacher education to earn more knowledge and skills. Besides, Teacher Professional Development can be defined as a process of embracing all activities that perpetuate professional growth for teachers [2]. In line with this, teacher professional development stands as a significant way of increasing interest as a critical way to support the increasingly complex skills and knowledge to students need to learn to succeed in this universe [3]. Similarly to that, teacher professional development is described as the formal academic and professional advancement courses aiming at equipping teachers with relevant and up-to-date knowledge and competencies [4]. Also, teacher professional development involves a variety of changes in teaching approaches whereby teachers can acquire knowledge and skills in the teaching profession [5]. Therefore, Education is a learning cycle that has no end, this means after teachers graduate from universities, they should continue to receive professional training, because that education helps career-minded individuals to continually improve their skills and become more professional in their career. However, it is important for school administrators in the field of education management to enable professional development for teachers, not only to give their students the best learning results but also to be more effective and fulfilled throughout various other aspects of their job career.

1.2 Importance of Teacher Professional Development

- Helps to determine the gradual and difficult process for teachers
- Helps teachers to receive regular feedback on teaching and learning progress
- Ensuring activities that perpetuate professional growth for both pre-service and in-service teachers.

- Teacher professional development keeps teachers up-to-date on new research on how children learn, emerging technology tools for the classroom, and new curriculum resources.

1.3 A Brief Historical Overview of Teacher Professional Development in Tanzania

Tracing back the history of teacher professional development in Tanzania started after the attainment of independence in 1961. Its grass-root traced since the slave trade period. Soon after the abolition of the East African Slave Trade in the 1860s marked a new beginning in the teacher education sector in the Western Education sense, in Tanzania. Despite that, the earliest African nations to adopt and use a teacher training system was Kenya at Mombasa in 1848 and subsequently Tanzania in Zanzibar in 1866 [6]. During this time the preparation and production of teachers started. Missionaries were the first people to play a great role in the history of the development of teacher professional education. Certainly, this is the case with several different African countries on the continent, especially in the sub-Saharan region. After Tanzanian independence in 1962, countrywide there were twenty-two colleges of teacher education scattered all over the country. Due to that crisis, Tanganyika decided to initiate strategic plans to boost manpower development programs that would help to reduce and completely eradicate the teaching crisis. Recently, according to the Basic Education Statistics (BSE) in Tanzania, teacher colleges have increased from 34 (public colleges) in 1995 to 126 in 2013 [4].

1.4 Research Questions

- i. How does Chinese teacher professional development practiced?
- ii. What is the current situation of teacher professional development in Tanzania?
- iii. What lessons can Tanzania adopt from Chinese teacher professional development?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The promotion and enhancing of effective teachers' professional development in the 21st century is inevitable, this is because globalization has geared several changes in the education

sector. On the other side, the more level of globalization expand and grow the more education affects the degree of teachers' professional development [7]. Promoting effective teachers' professional development whether in developed or developing countries should be the priority in the education sector. Quality education to be achieved and sustained in any country, teachers need to be exposed to effective professional development activities by the educational leaders, scholars, policymakers, and other educational players [5]. Teachers' mastery of the subjects gets improved due to skills acquired in professional development.

Moreover, in developed countries like Japan, teacher professional development emphasizes more on teachers to form communities of learners rather than operate in professional isolation. When it comes to the new teachers are usually assigned to experience teachers at the same grade level to provide them with adequate guidance and share experience, skills, and knowledge [8]. Similarly to that, Kweku Esia-Donkoh & Ofosu-Dwamena [9] contended that modern educational guidance and technical process helps to improve teaching and learning through the care, guidance, and simulation of continued development for not only teachers but also any other person having an impact on the educational context.

Across the globe, teacher professional development is increasingly from the viewpoint of teacher education. Teacher Professional Development is more effective when based on teachers' needs and it is a continuous process that includes formal, systematic, and suitably planned development through supportive observation and feedback [10]. In line with that pre-service time create a strong base on which in-service training can be built. In this study, teachers' development reflects from both a pre- and in-service viewpoint. On another side, the development of an inquiry and reflective approach during initial teacher education should be part of a continuing process [1]. Thus, teachers should be evaluated for their learning and plan their ongoing professional learning needs throughout their careers.

In case of Norway, teacher professional development base on formal competence development among teachers in lower and higher secondary schools has changed through professional development over the past years. Compared with the rest of the national workforce

– including other professional groups with higher education. Teachers in Norway participate to a high degree in training and education [11]. Teachers have more collaborative non-classroom time outside their teaching, which enables more co-operation between colleagues. This implies that the practical experiences of teachers also have a positive impact on the pupil's learning outcome. Teacher professional development helps to increase teacher content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge [12]. Thus, there is considerable consensus that teacher professional development programs should consider Collaborative learning as an important method of supporting professional development. This method helps teachers to understand more problems from their students.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative methodology, whereby various secondary sources used to collect data. A review of related literature about the study was done through various sources including books, published journals, national, reports, and other related materials to collect data and information.

3.1 The practice of Teacher Professional Development in China

Most of the intellectuals still believe that teachers' professional development is the key factor to the continuous exchange of opinions, feeling sharing, communication, and discussion among teachers [13]. This means the good use of local college resources in china has created more awareness, skills, and knowledge for continuous learning and teaching research [14]. Most of the teachers who participate in the guidance of college teachers and professional development activities have succeeded to learn the characters of subjects, curriculum standards, characters, and purpose of education quality.

Moreover, Teacher professional development in china is strongly associated in form of workshops that encourage teachers to attend after being released from their school obligations. These kinds of workshops are more beneficial to those teachers found in urban areas [15]. On other hand, teachers from rural areas such workshops organized by national, regional, or local authorities remain their sole source of professional development. However, a study carried out by Wang & Cheng [16] stressed that 6.7% and 8.9% of teachers attended summer

courses, conferences, and workshops respectively. Furthermore, 67.4% supported that working with other teachers in their schools had contributed to their professional development. In line with this, teachers in urban regions are exposed to diverse opportunities for professional development. Therefore, due to this aspect teachers in developing countries like Tanzania face historical and systematic inequity in access to professional development.

A few years ago Chinese government initiated various policies to improve the quality of teachers' professional development in both primary and secondary schools notably training. The new training policy directs that each teacher in public primary and secondary schools must take not less than 360 class hours of training every five years. The training was designed according to teachers' professional needs [17].

3.2 Current Situation of Teacher Professional Development in Tanzania

Teacher professional development is an important aspect when comes to the development of the education sector in Tanzania. Teachers are required to attend regularly to new teaching methodologies to update their knowledge, skills, and experience for better teaching [18]. The teaching efficiency of serving teachers needs to be designed and developed through planned and known schedules of in-service training programs. Furthermore, a study conducted by Zulu, E & Nyerere, [19] revealed that Tanzania has been facing ineffective teacher training and professional development. As a result, some teachers fail to plan their professional development.

In Tanzania professional development courses generally occur separately from the realities of school or classroom challenges. Additionally, trainers do not follow up to see how well the in-service teachers' implementing the acquired skills or competencies [20]. Tracing back the Tanzania Education and Training Policy of 1995 cemented that *teacher professional development shall be compulsory to all teachers*". Despite that objective, there are poorly strategic programs that hinder the achievement and enhancement of effective teacher professional development within the country. Most of the teachers in Tanzania spend more than five years of teaching career without attending any professional development [20].

In 2012 Data from Basic Education Statistics (BES) in Tanzania indicates that there is currently 6153 grade B/C teachers in primary schools who need to be developed at least to the level of grade 'A'. Although by the end of 2012, only 2,052 out of 6153 primary school teachers from 141 schools across the 7 district councils had been trained through the pilot program [21]. The idea was to improve their teaching professionalism in terms of teaching skills, knowledge, and sharing teaching experience [22]. Despite seminars have been the most popular professional development programs in Tanzania, those programs are not adequately provided to teachers that usually training programs are offered to a small section of teachers [20]. The quality of teachers in Tanzania and learners' educational outcomes has been compromised at the expense of quantity, at the end Learners end to lack basic literacy skills to proceed to higher classes of education.

In Tanzania the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology is the one which is responsible for providing policy and financial support for Teacher Professional Development. All Universities and Teacher Education colleges are responsible for providing training, conducting policy-oriented research, and providing relevant literature and materials to support teachers in schools [2]. Apart from that, once teachers attend training programs, usually receive inadequate support. For stance living allowances provided that could not suffice to settle their accommodation charges [23]. Therefore, teachers end up topping up the difference from their own pockets while school management is responsible only to provide support to the teacher on a basis through advice, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of the teaching, and learning activities.

3.3 Lessons from Chinese Teacher Professional Development to Tanzanian Teacher Professional Development

3.3.1 The government should encourage investment in teacher education

Since 2010 the government of China has invested more than one billion US dollars in teacher education. China's government has invested heavily in teacher professional development programs [24]. One of the goals is to develop the quality of teachers and the "backbone" of rural teachers that will improve the

quality of colleagues who teach in the same school. Moreover, Chao Qiu [25] points out that, in 2012 the ministry of education of China initiated a project for primary and secondary school training and the project for rural teachers' training. The central government contributed 550 million CNY. Despite that a report conducted by OECD [17] concurs that the central government of China invested CNY 6.4 billion over the next five years to support the first round of teacher training, which covers over 6.5 million teachers in rural areas in the central and western part of China for the aim of improving teacher professional development. The current Tanzanian government should increase the education budget in order to accommodate all activities deals with teacher training and professional development to all teachers.

3.3.2 Training for teacher professional development should focus on teaching ethics

The government of China is working hard to improve teacher professional development, whereby the Ministry of Education has prescribed that all programs should base on, subject-specific knowledge, and pedagogical practices in proportions of 10%, 40%, and 50%, respectively [26]. Through this mechanism policymakers have been able to obtain subjective feedback from the teachers that have been trained and those who have not received any professional development training. Similarly to that, teachers in China have been close to professional awareness, which helps them to contact the educational concepts and teaching methods in learning [7]. On top of that, [27] underscored that effective teacher professional development in China has been practiced under the consideration of professional ethics which base on ethical relationships between teachers, students, parents, colleagues, schools, and the community. This means that teachers in Tanzania should actively participate in various professional development to constantly improve the professional structure and enhance professional levels.

3.3.3 The government should encourage the use of technological support

In promoting effective teacher professional development, technology has become increasingly important to deliver professional training. For stance in China, most of the in-service teachers in China can upgrade themselves. Also through technology, various

distance learning programs have been offered by various institutions [28]. Different studies conducted in 2010 indicated that 70% of the training courses in the Teachers' Continuing Education Program were delivered by satellite TV. In in call of that, due to the advancement of mobile phones and computers products teachers in china can access more teaching and learning resources for their professional [7]. Apart from that, Wang et al. [15] contended that with the introduction of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) in china, teacher training has minimized marginal cost. As a result, MOOCs have improved efficiency in the cost of teacher training. The key message to Tanzania is that educational leaders must encourage the use of technology in schools, whereby teachers will be able to attend several seminars, workshops to improve their professional development smoothly.

3.3.4 To encourage professional attitudes

Professional attitudes are an important pushing factor when it comes to any professional development [29]. Chinese government promotes Professional attitudes to teachers because it includes mental health courses and professional ethics courses. Meanwhile, a study conducted by WU [30] indicated that teachers in colleges established learning communities and collaborated in professional development. School leaders and responsible authorities also make detailed and realistic working plans to promote teachers' progress and attitudes including sending teachers to work in sister schools inside and outside of their region.

3.3.5 To initiate a strong teacher professional development policy

A report from [17] postulated that in 2014 the ministry of education in China introduced a strong policy aims at training a group of outstanding principals, especially principals who have backgrounds as educators. Officials charged these principals withdrawing on advanced education philosophy in order to improve teachers' professional development, innovate school practices, and serving as role models for normal teachers and other principals. Furthermore, Kinyota & Kavenuke [31] asserted that Tanzania's national education and training policy of 1995 and the new policy of 2014 pointed out how the ongoing and compulsory in-service teacher education could be conducted to achieve effective teacher professional development. Unfortunately, those strategies and

plans have not documented significant changes. Thus, the Tanzanian ministry of education should employ leaders who have background in education so as to ensure the implementation of those training policies for teachers.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Finally, teacher professional development in China has made tremendous development in this 21st Century. In this regard, document analysis has revealed that teacher professional development in China has developed to the large extent compared to Tanzanian teacher professional development, this is due to the presence of strong policy on teacher professional development, strong policy, a good investment in teacher education and other related factors. All those achievements contributed through the commitment and transparency of leaders in the Chinese education sector. Eventually, the key lesson to learn for the Tanzanian government is to have a strong policy and heavy investment in teacher education to promote and enhance effective teacher professional development in Tanzania.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Author has declared that no competing interests exist.

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Peer-review history:

The peer review history for this paper can be accessed here:
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