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P(ISSN) : 3007-0031

E(ISSN) : 3007-004X

<https://rc-archive.com/index.php/Journal/about>



Professional Development Needs of Newly Recruited Secondary School Teachers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

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Publisher : EDUCATION GENIUS SOLUTIONS

Review Type: Double Blind Peer Review

ABSTRACT

In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan new teachers at secondary level are inducted without pre-service training. This study investigated the professional development needs among newly recruited secondary school teachers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan. Objectives of the study were to; find out the professional development needs of newly recruited teachers and recommend strategies for the professional development of teachers. Study's design was quantitative. Its population was 678 newly appointed teachers in district Swat of KP. A sample of 246 was selected using simple random sampling. A questionnaire was developed, validated and piloted for collecting data. Data were gathered through self-administration of questionnaires and analyzed by using mean scores, standard deviation and chi-square test. The study found professional development needs of new teachers for understanding learners, managing classrooms, planning lessons, interactive pedagogies, using learning resources and managing misbehaviors. Further, differentiated instructions, observing inclusivity, effective feedback practices, assessment strategies, socio-emotional learning, managing stress and mentoring of senior teachers. The study recommended to develop and implement a professional development training program focused on the professional development needs of newly appointed teachers and collaboration of senior teachers to overcome the professional development challenges of new teachers.

Key words: Professional development, Needs, Newly recruited, Secondary school teachers, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan

Introduction

Professional development of teachers at secondary level is a significant process of equipping teachers with the competencies of classroom management, understanding learners, learn assessment practices and adjusting them according to the demands of the teaching profession at secondary level (Desimone, 2011). Studies have identified the positive influence of teachers' professional development for the educational success of students as teachers are able to provide differentiated instruction and effective feedback to learners (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Professional development ensures the collaboration, mentorship and knowledge of inclusivity that positively affect the teaching learning process of the school and make teachers effective (Guskey, 2014). There is the need to identify the professions development needs of secondary school teachers for devising effective professional development interventions for teachers of secondary schools (Opfer & Pedder, 2011).

There is a growing concern for the identification of the professional development needs for the secondary school teachers as teachers at the level of secondary schools are recruited without pre-service teachers' training or professional education in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. The recruitment of such teachers adversely

affect the quality of instruction in secondary schools due to the fact that newly recruited teachers are not fully prepared to play their teaching role effectively at secondary level (Khan & Iqbal, 2021). This lack of professional competencies among secondary school teachers speak for the need of professional development among teachers of secondary level (Ullah & Ali, 2022). Studies have demonstrated that professional development of teachers in the early years of their service or initial recruitment develops their teaching effectiveness and lead to the job satisfaction among teachers (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011), Therefore, there is the need for conduction research studies to identify the professional development needs of secondary school teachers who are newly recruited to the field of teaching at secondary level (Ali & Hassan, 2023).

In the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan, newly recruited teachers are faced with the issues of training for the teaching profession, lack of resources, non-cooperation of senior teachers and diverse demands of the teaching profession (Khan & Iqbal, 2021). The teachers at secondary level need the provision of teaching skills, classroom management strategies, integration of technology and inclusive educational practices (Hill et al., 2020). Moreover, there is the need to focus on the skills of collaborative learning and collegiality among the teachers at secondary level (Tomlinson, 2017). There is also the need for digital learning tools and the provision of hybrid classrooms for this purpose (Trust et al., 2022). Teachers at secondary level also need to develop their socio-emotional skill to overcome the challenges of the teaching profession in secondary schools (Jennings & Greenberg, 2019).

Studies on the professional development needs in the context of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan are significant as teachers at this level are recruited without professional training or pre-service teacher education due to which they are faced with the challenges of effective teaching at secondary level. Teachers at secondary level fail to fulfill their responsibilities due to inadequate preparation for the teaching tasks as they are deficient in the skills of students' engagement and differentiated instruction (Trust et al., 2022). Understanding newly appointed secondary level teachers' professional needs will enhance the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers and lead to their job satisfaction (Guskey, 2014).

Literature Review

In secondary education sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the newly recruited teachers enter into the teaching profession without the skills of classroom management, teaching pedagogies, assessment practices and socio-emotional skills for the teaching profession, therefore; they are in need of professional development to equip them with skills to fulfill the demands of the teaching profession (Khan & Iqbal, 2021). Professional development of newly recruited teachers enable them to have successful transition into the world

of teaching profession and develop effective teaching interventions for the students at secondary level (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Studies have identified that if teachers at secondary level are not full prepared to meet the demands of the teaching profession then they are unable to retain in the profession of teaching and finally leave the profession due to the growing stress and burnout. To fill this gap newly recruited teachers at secondary level needs to have professional development in planning lessons, pedagogies, management of classrooms, use of instructional and communications technologies and socio-emotional training (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

The professional development needs of newly inducted secondary school teachers may be fulfilled with mentorship of the experience teachers, collaboration of school staff and classroom's teaching exposures (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). In the country of Pakistan, teachers' professional development of lack the practical aspects of teaching and are unable to fully prepare teachers for effective teaching at secondary level (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Due to the lack of profession competencies in newly recruited teachers of the secondary education sector, there is a growing need for the professional development interventions for these teachers to make the instructions at secondary level effective and according to the demands of the twenty first century (Khan et al., 2022). New teachers are often unable to convert the knowledge of the content into understandable concepts for students in secondary schools (Khan & Iqbal, 2021). Therefore, research focuses on the development of teachers in the area of inclusive classroom pedagogies, students' interaction patterns and making use of effective assessment practices at secondary level (Tomlinson, 2017).

Professional development in pedagogies and classroom management practices is a significant area of improvement for the teachers at secondary school level (Marzano et al., 2003). Teachers with without professional training feels huge difficulties to overcome the challenges of overcrowded classrooms and the diverse demands of all the learners (Ali & Hassan, 2023). Professional development at secondary level mostly needs to be focused on the managing of behaviors, empathy and the provision of conducive environment for the learning of students (Jennings & Greenberg, 2019). Teachers at secondary level, also need to integrate educational technologies into their teaching but due to low competencies of newly recruited teachers in this area they are unable to do so in their classroom (Khattak et al., 2022). About the professional development of secondary school teachers there is the need to incorporate the training on the use of digital educational technologies, computer based assessment, and blended models of learning for teaching to the students of secondary level (UNESCO, 2021).

At secondary level, where teachers are recruited without prerequisite professional training, there is the need for implementation of professional development models base on the collaboration of teachers in the schools. (Voelkel & Chrispeels, 2017). Newly recruited teachers without getting proper training in the profession of teaching find it very difficult to adjust with the challenges of the teaching profession and often feel stressed therefore, they need professional development to overcome their professional stress and meet the demands of the teaching profession (Jennings & Greenberg, 2019). In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, mostly professional development interventions are not based on meeting the demands of the teaching profession at secondary level and hence there is the need to improve these programs. There is also scarcity of research studies on the identifications of professional development needs of secondary school teachers thus there is the need for identifying them and then the need of focused professional development interventions to fulfill these needs of newly recruited teachers (Khan & Iqbal, 2021).

The secondary education sector of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa is faced with the challenge of fulfilling the professional development needs of newly inducted teachers (Ali & Hassan, 2023). The exploration of professional development needs of secondary school teachers and satisfying these with professional development interventions will certainly improve the quality of education at this level. (Khan & Iqbal, 2021). The teachers who are new to the profession of teaching at secondary level without proper preparation for it often find it very much difficult to fulfill their responsibilities of the teaching. This lack of professional competency and deficient resource allocation at the level of secondary school make it very difficult for the newly recruited teachers to fulfill their responsibilities in an effective manner (Ahmed & Malik, 2022). In the context of Khyber Pakhtunkwa, Pakistan, there are disparities in different regions and teachers who are newly recruited have challenges in meeting the diverse demands of the teaching profession therefore, identification and fulfilling the professional development of newly recruited teachers become imperative (Khattak et al., 2023).

The professional development interventions and trainings for the teachers who are newly recruited are unable to satisfy the professional development needs of such teachers at secondary level (Government of Pakistan, 2018). Therefore, this research will contribute in identifying newly appointed teachers' needs of professional development in secondary education sector of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and help improve the professional development interventions for secondary school teachers. The sustainable development goal 4 lays emphasis on the provision of quality education to students at secondary level and therefore, focuses on the professional development of teachers for quality education (UNESCO, 2020).

Investigating newly inducted teachers' needs of professional development in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa will fill the gap of highlighting the professional needs of such teachers in secondary schools and will help in the development of procedures for the effective professional development interventions for teachers at secondary level. This will ultimately, improve the quality of teaching learning process in secondary schools of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan.

Methodology

The study used a survey design that was quantitative in nature to find out the professional development needs among newly appointed teachers at secondary level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. Newly inducted 678 teachers constituted the population of the study and these teachers were inducted into the teaching sector of secondary schools without the pre-requisite training of preservice teachers before entry into the teaching profession due to change in the recruitment policy for teacher at this level (District Educational Management Information System (DEMIS) District Swat, 2024). Through Raosoft calculator a sample of 246 newly appointed secondary level teachers was selected using simple random process to gather data.

A tool of data collection questionnaire was developed on the basis of professional development needs for newly appointed secondary teachers with the help of literature review. Experts were asked to review the tool for validity and the tool was pilot tested for establishing the reliability. The reliability was found as 0.802. The data were gathered from teachers through self-administration and analyzed using mean scores, standard deviation and the chi-square test of significance for analyses. Research ethics were observed in data collection and writing of the research report.

Results

The data were prepared for analyses through SPSS. Data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics.

Table 1 Professional Development Needs of Newly Recruited Teachers

Statements	Number	Mean	S. D	χ^2	P
Understanding learners	246	3.79	.76	43.33	.000
Managing classrooms	246	3.66	.43	56.43	.000
Planning lessons	246	3.59	.68	23.77	.000
Understanding interactive pedagogies	246	3.84	.82	67.62	.000
Using learning resources	246	3.77	.37	35.82	.000
Overcoming classroom misbehaviors	246	3.62	.24	42.79	.000
Using differentiated instructions	246	3.94	.96	67.61	.000
Observing inclusivity in the classroom	246	3.57	.53	28.32	.000

Effective feedback practices	246	4.03	.18	68.54	.000
Using assessment strategies	246	3.81	.79	76.21	.000
Socio-emotional learning	246	4.13	.52	81.73	.000
Stress management	246	3.70	.36	54.58	.000
Mentoring of senior teachers	246	3.69	.39	48.37	.000

Table number 1 presents the professional development needs of new teachers appointed in secondary schools. The mean scores 3.79 and 3.66 shows that newly recruited secondary school teachers agreed that they need professional development in the areas of understanding learners and managing their classrooms. The mean scores 3.59 and 3.84 demonstrates that teachers agreed that they need professional development in planning lessons and understanding interactive pedagogies for teaching. The mean scores 3.77 and 3.62 establishes that teachers agreed that they need professional development in using learning resources for teaching and overcoming misbehaviors in classrooms. The mean scores 3.94 and 3.57 demonstrates that teachers agreed that they need professional development in using differentiated instructions to classes and observing inclusivity in the classrooms. The mean scores 4.03 and 3.81 forwards that teachers agreed that they need professional development for learning effective feedback practices and using assessment strategies in the classrooms. The mean scores of 4.13, 3.70 and 3.69 brings out that teachers agreed that they need professional development in areas of socio-emotional learning for teaching, managing stress and mentoring of senior teachers.

Discussions

The study found the professional development needs of newly inducted secondary school teachers as professional development for understanding learners, managing their classrooms planning lessons, understanding interactive pedagogies for teaching, using learning resources for teaching, overcoming misbehaviors in classrooms, using differentiated instructions to classes, observing inclusivity in the classrooms, learning effective feedback practices, using assessment strategies in the classrooms, socio-emotional learning for teaching, managing stress and mentoring of senior teachers. The findings are similar to the study of Ali and Hassan (2023) who identified that teachers at secondary level needs professions development to overcome the challenges of overcrowded classrooms and the diverse demands of all the learners. In the similar vein, Jennings and Greenberg (2019) reported that at secondary level teachers level mostly needs to be focused on the managing of behaviors, empathy and the provision of conducive environment for the learning of students. Unlike the findings of the study Khattak et al. (2022) demonstrated that teachers at secondary level, also need to integrate educational technologies into their teaching but due to low competencies of newly recruited teachers in this area they are unable to do so in their classroom. Similarly, Jennings and Greenberg (2019)

identified that newly recruited teachers without getting proper training in the profession of teaching find it very difficult to adjust with the challenges of the teaching profession and often feel stressed therefore, they need professional development to overcome their professional stress and meet the demands of the teaching profession. Similarly, keeping in view the challenges of newly recruited teacher in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Khan and Iqbal (2021) reported that the exploration of professional development needs of secondary school teachers and satisfying these with professional development interventions will certainly improve the quality of education at this level. Similarly, Ahmad and Malik (2022) found that teachers who are new to the profession of teaching at secondary level without proper preparation for it often find it very much difficult to fulfill their responsibilities of the teaching. This lack of professional competency and deficient resource allocation at the level of secondary school make it very difficult for the newly recruited teachers to fulfill their responsibilities in an effective manner. The findings of the study have significant theoretical and practical implications and demand for the effective professional development interventions for fulfilling the needs of professional development among newly appointed secondary level teachers in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan through induction training programs.

Conclusion

The conclusion was developed on the objectives and findings of this research study:

In connection to these objectives, the study found the needs of professional development among newly appointed secondary level teachers as professional development for understanding learners, managing their classrooms planning lessons, understanding interactive pedagogies for teaching, using learning resources for teaching, overcoming misbehaviors in classrooms, using differentiated instructions to classes, observing inclusivity in the classrooms, learning effective feedback practices, using assessment strategies in the classrooms, socio-emotional learning for teaching, managing stress and mentoring of senior teachers. The findings of the study have significant theoretical and practical implications and demand for the effective professional development interventions for fulfilling new appointees secondary schools' teachers professional development needs in pedagogies, instruction, managing classes and use of differentiated at secondary school level in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan through induction training programs.

Recommendations

On the basis of the purpose of the study, the following recommendations were forwarded:

1. The elementary and secondary education department need to develop and implement a professional development training program focused on the professional development needs of

- newly appointed secondary level teachers.
2. The senior teachers and schools' administration need to encourage new teachers in professional learning at secondary schools.
 3. The schools may develop the plan of collaboration to overcome the professional development challenges of the new teachers.
 4. The policy makers need to provide material and financial resources for the use of new teachers in effective teaching to their classes.
 5. Similar studies may be made on the professional development needs of elementary level teachers or teachers in the higher education sector.

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