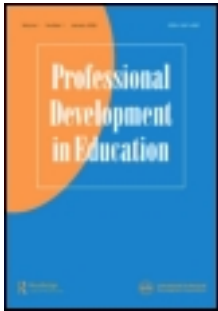


This article was downloaded by: [INASP - Pakistan (PERI)]

On: 21 June 2013, At: 01:26

Publisher: Routledge

Informa Ltd Registered in England and Wales Registered Number: 1072954 Registered office: Mortimer House, 37-41 Mortimer Street, London W1T 3JH, UK



Professional Development in Education

Publication details, including instructions for authors and subscription information:

<http://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rjie20>

Principals' views on teachers' professional development

Mona Nabhani^a, Maureen O'Day Nicolas^b & Rima Bahous^a

^a Education, Lebanese American University, Beirut, 1102 2801, Lebanon

^b Department of English Language and Literature, Balamand University, Beirut, Lebanon

Published online: 20 Jun 2013.

To cite this article: Mona Nabhani, Maureen O'Day Nicolas & Rima Bahous (2013): Principals' views on teachers' professional development, Professional Development in Education, DOI:10.1080/19415257.2013.803999

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/19415257.2013.803999>

PLEASE SCROLL DOWN FOR ARTICLE

Full terms and conditions of use: <http://www.tandfonline.com/page/terms-and-conditions>

This article may be used for research, teaching, and private study purposes. Any substantial or systematic reproduction, redistribution, reselling, loan, sub-licensing, systematic supply, or distribution in any form to anyone is expressly forbidden.

The publisher does not give any warranty express or implied or make any representation that the contents will be complete or accurate or up to date. The accuracy of any instructions, formulae, and drug doses should be independently verified with primary sources. The publisher shall not be liable for any loss, actions, claims, proceedings, demand, or costs or damages whatsoever or howsoever caused arising directly or indirectly in connection with or arising out of the use of this material.

Principals' views on teachers' professional development

Mona Nabhani^a, Maureen O'Day Nicolas^b and Rima Bahous^{a*}

^aEducation, Lebanese American University, Beirut, 1102 2801, Lebanon; ^bDepartment of English Language and Literature, Balamand University, Beirut, Lebanon

(Received 27 October 2012; final version received 7 May 2013)

This article is an account of a study that aimed to elicit the perceptions of school principals and middle managers in Lebanon on teachers' professional development (PD) and to promote an understanding of PD that extends beyond workshops. The study was qualitative and exploratory and used online interviewing to collect data. Questions were emailed to 30 school principals in Beirut and North Lebanon. The overall intention was to extract understanding of how this professional qualification and administrative responsibility is understood and how the administration attends to it. Data were reduced through a coding strategy and emergent themes such as limited awareness of the benefits of embedded PD strategies, PD features of relevance, practicality and follow-up were identified. Other themes were the focus on the concept of workshop training as PD, the administrators' lack of awareness of cognitive learning strategies and the importance of teacher PD to school renewal. Obstacles to PD were identified and included lack of time and funding for the workshops and teachers' attitude toward growth and renewal. The study revealed that reflection is required to alter engrained conceptual structures. Critically, the study highlighted the issue that the school system in Lebanon is not designed to promote teachers' continual learning initiatives.

Keywords: professional development; teachers' views; Lebanon

Introduction and purpose

Private schools in Lebanon operate with a site-based management structure, with the government's Ministry of Education having only a nominal authority over the schools. Consequently, the training of teachers in private schools is the responsibility of the individual school. Although private schools have quite a bit of autonomy concerning the administrative structure they employ as well as how school administrations address teacher development, these schools are nonetheless influenced by the environment they function within. The predominant organizational model in schools across the nation is one characterized by hierarchical and bureaucratic structures.

The traditional pyramid structure based on the business world's pyramid theory is the prevailing organizational structure in Lebanese schools. Such a structure has one person, the one at the top of the pyramid who is the principal, taking responsibility for all management concerns including teacher development. Research

*Corresponding author. Email: rbahous@lau.edu.lb

has shown that this type of hierarchical system can have a negative impact on teachers' individual professional development (PD) (Bezzina and Camilleri 2001). The structure does not lend itself to collaborative work or the establishment of collegial environments. Furthermore, principals in Lebanese private schools are not required to attain any particular kind of certification. By and large, principals are selected or hired as a result of family or some other kind of connection. Such a practice is completely alien to western practices that require principals to have management certification of some kind as well as continued updates of that certification. Without meaningful training Lebanese school principals cannot be expected to know how to handle human resources in the most beneficial way.

Meaningful teacher learning is influenced by many aspects and qualities of the school environment. In a hierarchical setting obviously the principal will have a strong influence on every aspect of the school environment. Consequently, the principals' knowledge of and views concerning teachers' PD are critical for teacher growth to happen.

Twenty-first-century educational reform in the West and in Lebanon has highlighted the importance of improving schools to meet and address changes in how students learn concerning active learning, technology or other aspects of the teaching/learning process. Teacher preparation and in-service PD programs have to follow suit so that teachers can be trained in project-based, technology-supported learning in order to keep abreast of changes in student readiness and to understand the ways students learn and acquire knowledge and skill. It is becoming increasingly apparent that technology is having an irreversible impact on young children's ways of working. It is imperative that teachers keep abreast of how best to manage the teaching-learning process.

Studies in Lebanon (Nicolas 2006, Nabhani and Bahous 2010, Sabra 2011) show that PD programs have not been modified to meet the growing number of challenges. Jammal (2012), for example, found that teachers lag behind in their knowledge of and skills in technology as a tool to communicate with and promote students' academic knowledge; a tool that has become principal in how young people learn. Sabra (2011) found that providing support for teachers through instructional supervision and modeling of good practice did not lead to desired improvement due to rushed post-conferences after class observations. Nicolas (2006) found that traditional ways of providing training for Lebanese teachers during the two-week in-service time before the start of the school year did not yield sustainable effects throughout the school year.

The literature on teachers' PD tends to focus on how and why PD is conducted and on teachers' perceptions of PD benefits and constraints. Principals' input on this issue is rarely elicited or explored. Informal conversations with school principals and middle managers in Beirut and North Lebanon led the researchers to believe that principals in Lebanese schools tend to understand teachers' PD as mainly training workshops or university courses that help remedy gaps in teachers' performance to better prepare them for new educational initiatives in their schools.

This study aimed to elicit the perceptions of school principals and middle managers in Lebanon, as the decision-makers in schools, of teachers' PD and to compare findings against those from international studies on teachers' PD. The purpose was to create awareness in school management of the importance of embedded, constructivist PD in order to achieve teachers' sustainable growth throughout their professional lives. The study also aimed to promote an understanding of PD

that extends beyond mere workshops. No similar studies were found in Lebanon or the region, which makes this study valuable to practitioners from other institutions.

Literature review

The international literature on teachers' learning and PD was reviewed to create a theoretical and a conceptual framework that guided the study. Adult learning theory promotes 'the model of the adult as a self-directed or autonomous learner' (Tusting and Barton 2006, p. 4). Such a model distinguishes adult learners from their younger counterparts. They are self-directed and come to PD sessions with prior expectations. Hargreaves (2001) argues that only then do professional adults learn from other adults. School principals need to become aware of findings from studies in the field of adult learning and PD in order to enhance teacher learning and make suitable choices of PD models for their schools.

The literature presents several PD models that address the concept of non-linear teacher growth. Zwart *et al.* (2007) explain how the 'Interconnected Model of Teacher Professional Growth' assumes that change and growth occur in teachers' knowledge, beliefs and practice through in-service workshops and dialogue with colleagues. On a similar note, Guskey's (2002) 'Model of Teacher Change' suggests that, with PD, teachers' classroom practices will change and this impacts student learning outcomes, and consequently teachers' beliefs and attitudes change when they find that student outcomes have improved (Clarke and Hollingsworth 2002, Guskey 2002). The above models propose that professional learning and growth are complex, 'non-linear', follow 'multiple patterns of learning', have 'multiple entry points' and cause more change in cognition (knowledge and thinking) than in behavior (Zwart *et al.* 2007, p. 168).

Professional development and improved practice and motivation

Often, teachers' PD programs at schools are not monitored by principals or middle managers, and their impact is not evaluated. Nabhani *et al.* (2012) examined a well-established school-based PD program in a private school in Beirut, and found it impacted teachers' quality of instruction and motivation but teachers' overall attitude to PD is negative concerning the extra time and effort needed. Novice teachers had more positive views than veteran teachers on the need for extensive PD programs and all commented that PD could be improved in structure and follow-up on implementation. The study conducted by Nicolas (2006) corroborates the findings of Nabhani *et al.* (2012) regarding the novice teachers' views by specifically asserting that, 'professional learning opportunities must be designed to include the needs of all faculty members, not just one segment of the faculty' (p. 154). That study also reveals that teachers' learning must be supported through efficient structures including scheduling, time allocation and resources.

PD cannot be expected to yield desired results without follow-up. Lack of follow-up might make the impact of PD on classroom practices inconsistent and inconclusive. Principals cannot assume that desired practices are transferring to the classroom; teachers need to know they are doing the right thing, and that kind of assurance comes from feedback and constructive criticism (Nicolas 2006). The value or worthiness of something, be it a new methodology or a new teaching tool, usually is embraced after it is proven to be of value (Cochran-Smith 2003). Nabhani

and Bahous (2010) found that PD for Lebanese teachers often does not address their needs for academic and pedagogical knowledge. Sabra (2011) and Nabhani *et al.* (2012) found that PD in a few private (non-governmental) schools attempts to address recent trends in pedagogy but schools do not have systems to follow-up and hold teachers accountable for implementing what was learned.

Workshops that lack follow-up procedures cannot be considered as valid PD initiatives (Nicolas 2006). Therefore, the implementation of such practices becomes a management responsibility (Nicolas 2006); and the responsibility for the unity of the vision that guides the PD strategy is linked to the quality of school leadership (Earley 1997).

Embedded professional development models to improve teacher practice

There are several embedded models of PD that lend themselves to a typical Lebanese school concerning the teachers' schedules and the organization of the daily business. This section will discuss action research/inquiry, networking, coaching strategies and self-mentoring/self-reflection as viable models for the Lebanese context specifically.

Action research/inquiry as professional development

Inquiry-based PD is also known as action research, defined by Cohen *et al.* (2007) as teachers identifying a classroom issue, collecting data, designing and then implementing an intervention and evaluating its effects in class. Through this kind of intentional inquiry, teachers can examine complex classroom processes and reach data-driven conclusions and solutions. Action research is an embedded practice and allows teachers to examine their own teaching practices, thereby enhancing their pedagogy and ultimately student progress.

Action research is beginning to be seen as a viable PD tactic in Lebanese schools through research conducted by Orr (2011) and Bahou (2012). Orr (2011) asserts that specifically language teachers should be trained in reflective practices in order to develop their professional skill set. Reflective practices are an integral part of the action research cycle (Cohen *et al.* 2007). Bahou (2012) reports similar findings which indicate that engaging students and their teachers in action research, 'made an impact on teachers' views of themselves, their practices and their students' (p. 244), and consequently their professional growth. As teachers view themselves as learners their practice is transformed and student achievement is enhanced (Elliot 2007).

Networking as professional development

Networking with other professionals is what the literature recommends as PD at its highest level (Hopkins and Reynolds 2001, Bubb 2005) leading to a 'knowledge-based society' (Hargreaves 1999, Craft 2000, Fullan 2001). Networks provide a kind of helpful and productive community within which teachers can educate themselves concerning various issues and consequently enhance their transactions with students (Holmes and Johns-Shepherd 2006). Schools that aspire to being a learning organization will seek best practices and try to discover alternative approaches and ways of working. Hopkins and Reynolds (2001) promote networking as a means of

generating capacity and facilitating innovation. Networks are a viable strategy for professional gain and are effective opportunities for adult learning (Holmes and Johns-Shepherd 2006).

Coaching strategies as professional development

Teachers who coach and are coached develop skills in collaboration, which can lead to the successful implementation of new content as well as to the cultivation of a collegial community (Showers and Joyce 1996). In a longitudinal study, Biancarosa *et al.* (2010) examined the impact of coaching teachers on student literacy learning. Teachers were coached individually in the school, a practice that has become popular recently in schools in the USA. Teachers' practice was analyzed by a coach who had been trained for one year before beginning one-to-one training of the teacher in certain literacy procedures. Findings showed significant gains in children's literacy between Grade K and second grade.

Studies also showed how experienced teachers learn as they engage in peer coaching as a form of PD activity. Peer coaching involves modeling techniques and strategies that can be an effective means for teachers to stay abreast of the constant demands of the profession (Crowther 1998) and enable teachers to expand their pedagogic repertoire (Hopkins and Reynolds 2001). Peer coaching can lend in-class support for teachers as well, and as a PD model can break down the isolation of teaching and offer benefits for both the observed and the observer (Showers and Joyce 1996, Hopkins and Reynolds 2001).

Trautwein and Ammrman (2010) studied how peer coaching and mentoring were used in a pre-service education program to prepare graduate students for teaching deaf children. Findings show that the success of this PD approach depends on the establishment of collegiality and critical evaluation of teaching methods to improve teaching competencies. In fact, research has strongly suggested that the quality of the mentee and mentor relationship is of paramount importance for the success of the model (Bolam and McMahon 1995, Bush *et al.* 1996, Mathews 2003). Coaching in a mentoring model as a PD strategy is widely thought to benefit both parties provided that the mentor role is determined by expertise and not position of authority (Bolam and McMahon 1995, Bush *et al.* 1996, Awaya *et al.* 2003, Marable and Raimondi 2007).

When supervisors are part of the line management as a result of the expertise they have acquired over their careers, they are in a position to mentor novice teachers. Kutsyuruba (2009) presents a comparison between perceptions of selected Canadian and Ukrainian teachers of supervision as a tool of PD for novice teachers and whether collaboration between supervisors and teachers and self-reflection helped them grow. Findings from that study show that supervision helped teachers develop professionally and that they wanted more supervision opportunities to receive feedback on their teaching, and school policies on supervision leading to PD. However, in a similar study in Lebanon, Sabra (2011) found that supervisors needed better training in providing feedback after observations, focusing less on evaluating and more on helping teachers develop professionally to eliminate the authority aspect of the relationship.

Gordon (2006) takes a wider approach to instructional supervision with focus on assisting teachers to improve instructional practices and establishing 'dialogic reflective inquiry' (p. 4) manifested in constant reflection on one's classroom

practice, student learning and improvement of instruction. Findings indicate that a collegial culture as well as improved teaching and learning developed at that school. Hopkins and Reynolds (2001) posit that teachers can expand their repertoire of teaching skills with the provision of classroom support. However, some studies stress that PD is compromised when there is an emphasis on a hierarchical relationship such as a supervisor/teacher relationship (Bush *et al.* 1996).

Self-mentoring/self-reflection as professional development

Finally, a recent PD trend in schools in the USA is replacing the popular practice of mentoring teachers with self-mentoring (Carr 2011). Through self-mentoring or self-management and reflection on learning, the outlook or belief system of a teacher can be altered. Blandford (2000) argues that any reflection or contemplation on teaching/learning theory can constitute PD because such activity transforms the outlook of the practitioner. Furthermore, Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995) assert that everything that goes on in a school is an opportunity for PD.

Time and cost restraints make it hard for mentors to work closely and systematically with mentees, so teachers can be trained to learn from personal experiences, collecting data from class and critically reflecting on their practice and that of colleagues, resulting in a more sustainable model of PD. Self-mentoring is to 'accept responsibility for self-development by devoting time to navigate within the culture of the environment in order to make the most of opportunity to strengthen competencies needed to enhance job performance and career progression' (Carr 2011, p. 7).

In conclusion, it is advisable that principals examine the above models and provide the needed support for teachers to take charge of their PD in order for sustainable growth to result.

Methods

As heads of academic departments and institutes in private universities, we are in frequent contact with schools that demand consultation on various aspects, whether teacher improvement or assessment of learning outcomes, and so forth. Through our experience and research we came to believe that the principals in decentralized schools are key players in school improvement and that 'quick fixes' through the highly demanded workshops are not the answer.

This study is qualitative and exploratory in nature. In order to explore principals' views on teachers' PD, we chose one main instrument to collect data: online interviewing (James and Buser 2009). We prepared 10 questions and emailed them to 30 school principals in Lebanon. It was a purposive convenience sample selected from our network of school principals in Beirut and North Lebanon.

Emailing interviews to the participants saved us the cost of travel to conduct face-to-face interviews and the time needed for telephone calls. Participants had ample time to think of their responses and we had the advantage of emailing more probing questions based on these responses and saving all the relevant questions and answers on a one-page document per respondent for reviewing later.

Items for the email-administered questionnaire were derived from our main research question and the reviewed literature. For example, we asked the principals

questions that probed their views regarding teachers' continuing PD. The overall intention was to extract understanding of how this professional qualification and administrative responsibility is understood and how the senior administration attends to it.

Additionally, the questions were designed to extract principals' knowledge of PD in general; that is, are they aware of embedded practices and the value of such a PD agenda? As can be seen from the questions below, they are open ended and do not lead the principals to what we want them to say. We tried to artfully design probing questions that would reveal principals' understanding of this important part of their responsibility. Ultimately, through the responses to the questions, the principals' understanding of what PD is and how it is valued at their school will be elucidated. The 10 questions that were asked are the following:

- (1) What are your views on schoolteachers' continuing professional development [CPD]?
- (2) How do you decide which schoolteachers should attend CPD and which shouldn't?
- (3) Would you rather have in-house training or send the teachers to different workshops? Why?
 - 3(a) How do you choose the workshop?
 - 3(b) How do you choose the presenters?
- (4) What type of CPD do you think is more beneficial to your teachers? Why?
- (5) What CPD do you require of your teachers?
- (6) How necessary do you think CPD is for your teachers?
- (7) What are the problems that you face when thinking of CPD?
- (8) What are the solutions to CPD according to you?
- (9) How do you monitor and follow up on the implementation of what teachers learn from Professional Development Activities?
- (10) Comments

The research questions provided a 'start list' (Miles and Huberman 1994, p. 58) as a method of coding the data in table form. After the table was completed an iterative process of data review was employed. With each round of analysis, patterns, constructs and commonalities in respondents' answers emerged. Once the data were reduced through a coding strategy, the emergent themes were generated. The emergent themes reported here were common to all respondents:

- Limited awareness of the benefits of embedded PD strategies.
- PD features of relevance, practicality and follow-up are all considered important.
- Focus on the concept of training in the form of a workshop as PD.
- Administrators lack awareness of cognitive learning strategies and the importance of teacher PD to school renewal.

Results and discussion

This section will begin with a discussion of each emergent theme and then will offer some other insights gleaned from the research.

Limited awareness of the benefits of embedded professional development strategies

These education professionals are unaware of the concept of embedded strategies. Some revealed an intuitive idea about embedded practices. One articulated a position that learning is an ongoing process, and another spoke of mentoring strategies providing benefits to her school; this respondent recognized that mentoring was responsible for solving problems at the school. Mentoring is one of the most common embedded PD strategies of a constructivist nature (Mathews 2003, Marable and Raimondi 2007). Another respondent intuitively realized that reading articles and studying cases from other schools could develop a teacher's practice. Such activities indeed could constitute a self-management or self-mentoring model of PD (Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin 1995, Blandford 2000, Tusting and Barton 2006, Carr 2011). These participants seemed to intrinsically understand the importance of such strategies. Their recognition of the value of embedded practices corroborates findings by Biancarosa *et al.* (2010) of the value of mentoring and coaching and by Kose and Lim (2010) and Tallerico (2005) that sustained embedded learning is a must.

Two respondents importantly referred to the concept of networking as a means of PD and an approach that would provide solutions to inherent and potential obstacles. Networking is recognized as a constructivist and collaborative model of PD (Bolam and McMahon 1995, Hargreaves 1999, Craft 2000, Fullan 2001, Hopkins and Reynolds 2001, Bubb 2005, Holmes and Johns-Shepherd 2006). An embedded collegial culture is conducive to teachers' development (Gordon 2006). Yet most respondents consistently referred to PD in terms of workshops, either on or off site.

However, all participants articulated an opinion that PD is critical for teachers at all points in their careers for the benefit of keeping pedagogy current and for self-empowerment. One claimed that workshops are a, 'waste of time, money and effort if what is learned is not promptly applied in the classroom or school'. This finding is in line with findings by Nicolas (2006), Nabhani and Bahous (2010), and Nabhani *et al.* (2012) which assert that one-shot workshops cannot contribute to teachers' PD.

Professional development features of relevance, practicality and follow-up are all considered important

The findings from this study support the literature that stresses the importance of relevance, practicality and follow-up for the success of any PD agenda (Cochran-Smith 2003, Nicolas 2006, Nabhani and Bahous 2010, Sabra 2011). Some participants raised the issue of practicality, saying that workshops must have a practical as opposed to theoretical approach in order for teachers to appreciate the workshop. One participant gave specific criteria as to what he thinks PD is, citing relevance and practicality as key characteristics.

Significantly, most participants spoke of the importance of following up on PD strategies and cited fixed routines as the means. Only one said their school did not have any systems for follow-up. Specifically, the respondents interpreted regularly planned observations by administration as a way of following up on new ideas and strategies, which corroborates findings by Nabhani *et al.* (2012). However, the

literature is quite conclusive that hierarchical observations cannot be seen as follow-up to PD. For example, Showers and Joyce (1996) say there is a distinction between types of coaching that are used for teacher evaluation and coaching that is a PD strategy.

Participants also saw the practice of producing goals and an agenda as a way of following up on PD along with reports from staff meetings and individual teacher reports submitted to senior administrators. Such artifacts that would produce a flow of information could arguably create a transparent environment that would in turn increase accountability. Both attributes would produce a climate complete with follow-up practices.

Focus on the concept of training in the form of a workshop as professional development

The participants mentioned above who revealed awareness of some embedded practices still expressed that, to them, PD means workshops. These findings are similar to findings by Nabhani and Bahous (2010), which showed that participants in that study also understand training to be in the form of external workshops, whether conducted on-site by school staff, on-site by guest presenters or as external workshops. All of the participants in this study identified both internally and externally organized workshops as desirable. One even declared that there should be a formal relationship between schools and universities to plan a PD agenda, strongly reinforcing the workshop concept.

All of these views convincingly reinforce the perception that to these educational professionals workshops equal teacher PD. One principal even stated that she looks for the opportunity to engage outside 'expertise'. In fact, expertise on the part of the workshop presenters either known through personal experience or by reputation was stressed by all participants as a very desirable attribute if they were going to engage the workshop presenter. Such an attitude reinforces hierarchical outlooks; the 'someone knows better than me' mentality. This limited view of PD regards teachers as technicians in need of occasional upgrading rather than as professionals who are capable of and knowledgeable about their own professional growth. In the absence of any embedded practices, it is clear that the Lebanese schools in this study regard guest presenters as the experts rather than facilitators brought in to assist in the development or acquisition of a particular skill. This way of thinking is compatible with the typical view in Lebanese schools, and Lebanese communities at large, that people either higher up on the ladder or from the outside are better or more knowledgeable.

Lack of awareness of the importance of teacher professional development to school renewal

Administrators seemed unaware of the importance of teacher PD to school renewal. Most respondents did not link the idea of PD to the school's needs or mission; rather, these administrators look to the workshop model and determine whether there is some perceived value that they could take advantage of. A prevalent view among the respondents was the attitude of outside expertise knowing better, of a hierarchical way of conceiving the workshop presenter in relation to the teachers.

Yet this study revealed that some lone voices are beginning to recognize that teacher development and school development go hand in hand; there appeared to be a strong intuitive awareness that teacher growth is tantamount to school development. For example, one respondent said '[teachers'] professional development is essential for the development of effective schools ...' Another respondent expressed the idea that 'one size doesn't fit all', which suggests that some inherent awareness of cognitive learning is present but needs to be brought to the surface with a supporting organizational structure and culture. Essentially, all participants articulated a view that could be interpreted as linking teacher PD to school development in a way that corroborates the literature (Little 1993, Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin 1995, Butler 2001, Cochran-Smith 2003).

Most participants agreed that PD keeps teachers aware of new developments in their fields and enhances their skills, and consequently is critical not only for individual growth but importantly for school progress. Two principals referred to the impact of teacher growth on student learning as also found by Zwart *et al.* (2007) and Guskey (2002). All participants articulated an opinion that PD is critical for teachers at all points in their careers. This is in line with findings by Papastamatis *et al.* (2009), Marshall *et al.* (2011) and Sabra (2011).

Additional revelations

Adult learning theory

The issue of practicality discussed above is an issue that also speaks to adult learning theories. Adult learning theories suggest that learning should be practical, relevant and offer immediate pay-off (Glathorn 1990 in Sandholtz 2002). One respondent declared that observable change should be a result of the workshops. He said that what is learned in the workshop must be translated into recognizable change in the behavior of the teacher in class. This behavioral outcome should be spelled out and agreed to prior to the training. However, such an outcome is contrary to adult learning theory.

Research into adult learning theories suggests some optimum conditions for adult learning to take place:

- Adult learners desire to have input into what, why and how they learn; want input into the selection of content, activities, and assessment of in-service programmes;
- content and processes have a meaningful relationship to past experience;
- content is related to the individual's development changes and life's tasks;
- the amount of autonomy exercised by the learner is congruent with the method utilised;
- the learning climate minimizes anxiety and encourages experimentation;
- learning styles are taken into account. (Smith 1982, pp. 47–49 in Butler 2001)

Adult learning theories support the importance of individual PD initiatives being embedded into the working life of teachers. While training workshops have a place in the overall PD agenda, teachers must participate in interactive, practical and

relevant activities for an optimal learning experience. Reflection should be an entrenched procedure in teachers' professional life as well.

Obstacles

The obvious obstacles of time and funding for the workshops were cited by most of the participants. Many also targeted teachers' attitude as a possible obstacle. Teachers must be receptive to growth and renewal. It is often teachers' deeply-rooted conceptions and attitudes toward teaching and the learning process that can obstruct the acquisition of the necessary capacity to teach to the individual (Gagliardi 1995). Reflection is required to alter engrained conceptual structures. Moreover, reflection and inquiry are commonly found to be central to school improvement (Stoll 1999).

In the above discussion a ubiquitous thread is the idea of 'expertise' coming in from the outside. Such a mentality establishes a very rigid obstacle. Management needs to realize that any attempt at teaching expertise is flawed because novice-type behavior is an essential part of the process of acquiring expertise (Tusting and Barton 2006). Moreover, principals should recognize the expertise that exists in their schools. By empowering teachers, change and reform are more likely to result.

Lessons learned

The Lebanese educational context once enjoyed an international reputation for excellence. Yet Lebanon enjoys a culture of tradition where change is not always welcomed. Given these two parameters it is easier to understand the entrenched systems found in Lebanese schools. In addition, as mentioned above, administrators in Lebanese schools do not have any special certification that would equip them with the knowledge and skills to lead a PD agenda for their schools. This study revealed that that deficiency can have dramatic ramifications. Without a higher power, in the form of the Ministry of Education, requiring certain qualifications, teachers' continued PD is in the hands of the vision and capacity of a given principal.

Another lesson that the analysis of the data has revealed is that engrained mentalities should be dissipated through activities that empower and lead to collegial environments. Principals seem to want to perpetuate old ways of thinking rather than encourage or promote from within. This attitude could be related to their own sense of inferiority concerning their qualifications or fear for their position.

Finally, the typical schedule for a teacher is an issue that needs immediate attention; the Ministry of Education should get involved in instituting legal limits to teaching contact hours for teachers. Many of the respondents talked about the problem of attending workshops after school hours or on weekends but acknowledging that with anywhere from 23–27 teaching hours a week it was impossible to schedule a workshop any other way. Embedded strategies for PD require time, not only in the implementation but time to plan and time to reflect. Teachers simply do not have the time, and thus a cycle of non-renewal is propagated.

Recommendations

Leadership for ongoing teachers' PD ensures shared PD (Papastamatis *et al.* 2009), and senior management need to ensure relevant PD and implementation of what is

learned (Nabhani *et al.* 2012). Moreover, school principals and middle managers need to provide ample opportunity for teachers to develop self-esteem and a professional self-concept as well as independence in self-improvement endeavors, be it through inquiry, self-mentoring and management or other models.

Rather than one-shot workshops in pedagogy and classroom management, external experts can train teachers in action research and guide them in identifying an issue to investigate and in collecting and analyzing data from their classes and then implementing improvement. Experts can also coach teachers in envisioning and planning for self-growth and guide them through self-mentoring.

This study also highlights a need to examine pre-service training to see whether strategies for life-long learning and embedded PD strategies in particular are being taught. Teachers should enter the field with knowledge of how to tend to their own professional growth.

In addition, research is needed to discern what kind of training should be required for school administrators and what professional criteria are required for management professionals both at the time of appointment and ongoing throughout a principal's tenure.

Conclusion

Participants expressed awareness of the attributes that inform embedded, ongoing teacher PD. In addition, the participants seemed aware on an intuitive level of the necessity for embedded practices but for whatever reason they are not cognizant of various embedded models and strategies. Most, if not all, even articulated the advantages of in-house training from a cost perspective as well as relevance to the school environment and ultimately to school development. However, in most cases administrators still affirmed the concept of training in a workshop model as teacher PD. Such a position suggests that administrators view teachers as needing instruction and additional preparation to be able to perform their jobs better. PD should not be conceived as a type of curative measure with an implication that teachers are not doing their jobs (Nicolas 2006). Such a position also sustains the typical Lebanese educational administrator as embracing a hierarchical system of expertise with the teachers on the bottom. Conversely, PD should be viewed as an integral component of teachers' professional lives designed to enhance their skills and effectiveness as well as their job satisfaction through motivating, inspiring and constantly reinforcing their practice. A complete paradigm shift is required for embedded PD strategies to be enabled in the Lebanese system. This paradigm shift must craft a different work schedule to free up time in a teacher's work day and ultimately generate a new school culture and working relationship among all colleagues, whether fellow teachers or administrators.

The participants in this study demonstrated awareness that continual professional renewal is important for school renewal and critically for teachers to develop and embrace their profession. Administrators are unaware of the benefits of embedded PD strategies. Critically, the school system in Lebanon is not designed in a way to promote teachers' continual learning initiatives. Time is at a premium throughout the day; the typical school day is short by international standards; there is not a culture of teacher learning or adult learning. Historically, teachers have enjoyed a position of 'expert'; that is, they already know what they need to know.

The study shed light on aspects of teachers' PD in schools where principals/school management control time, money and resources needed for teachers' PD. Our study findings can create awareness in school principals and management in similar contexts of the theory and practices of PD and of their roles in promoting a learning community at school.

References

- Awaya, A., *et al.*, 2003. Mentoring as a journey. *Teaching and teacher education*, 19 (1), 45–56.
- Bahou, L., 2012. Cultivating student agency and teachers as learners in one Lebanese school. *Educational action research*, 20 (2), 233–250.
- Bezzina, C. and Camilleri, A., 2001. The professional development of teachers in Malta. *European journal of teacher education*, 24 (2), 157–170.
- Biancarosa, G., Bryk, A., and Dexter, E., 2010. Assessing the value-added effects of literacy collaborative professional development on student learning. *The elementary school journal*, 111 (1), 7–34.
- Blandford, S., 2000. *Organizing professional development in schools*. London: Routledge.
- Bolam, R. and McMahon, A., 1995. Mentoring for new headteachers: recent British experience. *Journal of educational administration*, 33 (5), 29–44.
- Bubb, S., 2005. After “Lunchbox” training – gourmet professional development. *Education review*, 18 (2), 82–88.
- Bush, T., *et al.*, 1996. Mentoring and continuing professional development. In: D. McIntyre and H. Haggard, eds. *Mentors in school: developing the profession of teaching*. London: David Fulton.
- Butler, E., 2001. The power of discourse work-related learning in the ‘learning age’. In: R.M. Cervero and A.L. Wilson, eds. *Power in practice: adult education and the struggle of knowledge and power in society*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, 60–82.
- Carr, M.L., 2011. *The invisible teacher: a self mentoring sustainability model*. Wilmington, NC: University of North Carolina Wilmington, Center for Teaching Excellence.
- Clarke, D.J. and Hollingsworth, H., 2002. Elaborating a model of teacher professional growth. *Teaching and teacher education*, 18 (8), 947–967.
- Cochran-Smith, M., 2003. Learning and unlearning the education of teacher educators. *Teaching and teacher education*, 43 (2), 14–115.
- Cohen, L., Manion, L., and Morrison, K., 2007. *Research methods in education*. 6th ed. London: Routledge.
- Craft, A., 2000. *Continuing professional development*. 2nd ed. London: RoutledgeFalmer.
- Crowther, S., 1998. Secrets of staff development support. *Educational leadership*, 55 (5), 75–77.
- Darling-Hammond, L. and McLaughlin, M.W., 1995. Policies that support professional development in an era of reform. *Phi delta kappan*, 76 (8), 597–614.
- Earley, P., 1997. External inspections, ‘failing schools’ and the role of governing bodies. *School leadership & management*, 17 (3), 387–400.
- Elliot, C., 2007. Action research: authentic learning transforms student and teacher success. *Journal of authentic learning*, 4 (1), 34–42.
- Fullan, L., 2001. *The new meaning of educational change*. 3rd ed. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University.
- Gagliardi, R., 1995. An integrated model for teacher training in a multicultural context. In: R. Gagliardi, ed. *Teacher training and multiculturalism*. Paris: International Bureau of Education, UNESCO, 1–13.
- Gordon, S., 2006. Dialogic reflective inquiry: integrative function of instructional supervision. *Catalyst for change*, 35 (2), 4–11.
- Guskey, T., 2002. Analysing lists of the characteristics of effective professional development to promote visionary leadership. *NASSP bulletin*, 87 (637), 4–20.
- Hargreaves, D., 1999. The knowledge-creating school. *British journal of educational studies*, 47 (2), 122–144.

- Hargreaves, A., 2001. Teaching as a paradoxical profession: implications for professional development. In: P. Xochellis and Z. Papanou, eds. *Symposium proceedings on continuing teacher education and school development*. Thessaloniki: Department of Education, School of Philosophy, 26–38.
- Holmes, D., and Johns-Shepherd, L., 2006. *What are we learning about? ... Evaluating the work of networks* [online]. Available from <http://networkedlearning.ncsl.org.uk/collections/what-are-we-learning-about/issue-02-Establishing-a-network-of-schools/nlg-wawla-02-09-eva-luating-the-work-of-networks.pdf>.
- Hopkins, D. and Reynolds, D., 2001. The past, present and future of school improvement: towards the third age. *British educational research journal*, 27 (4), 459–475.
- James, N. and Busher, H., 2009. *Online interviewing*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Jammal, B., 2012. Academic social networking: bridging the gaps between teachers and students of the 21st century. Unpublished MA thesis. Lebanese American University, Beirut, Lebanon.
- Kose, B. and Lim, E., 2010. Transformative professional development: relationship to teachers' beliefs, expertise and teaching. *International journal of leadership in education*, 13 (4), 393–419.
- Kutsyuruba, B., 2009. Getting off on the right foot: guiding beginning teachers with supervision and professional development. *International journal of learning*, 16 (2), 257–277.
- Little, J.W., 1993. Teachers' professional development in a climate of educational reform. *Educational evaluation and policy analysis*, 15 (2), 129–151.
- Marable, M. and Raimondi, S., 2007. Teachers' perceptions of what was most (and least) supportive during their first year of teaching. *Mentoring and tutoring: partnership in learning*, 15 (1), 25–37.
- Marshall, J., Smart, J.C. and Horton, R., 2011. Tracking perceived and observed growth of inquiry practice: a formative plan to improve professional development experiences. *Science educator*, 20 (1), 12–21.
- Mathews, P., 2003. Academic mentoring: enhancing the use of scarce resources. *Educational management administration and leadership*, 31 (3), 313–334.
- Miles, M.B. and Haberman, A.M., 1994. *Qualitative data analysis: an expanded sourcebook*. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Nabhani, M. and Bahous, R., 2010. Lebanese teachers' views on 'continuing professional development'. *Teacher development*, 14 (2), 207–224.
- Nabhani, M., Bahous, R., and Hamdan, Z., 2012. School based professional development in one Lebanese school: how much is too much? *Professional development in education*, 38 (3), 435–451.
- Nicolas, M. O., 2006. An exploration of an in-service programme as a means of the professional development of teachers – a case study. Unpublished doctoral thesis. University of Leicester, Leicester, UK.
- Orr, M., 2011. Learning to teach English as a foreign language in Lebanon. *Near and middle eastern journal of research in education*, 2, 1–14.
- Papastamatis, A., et al., 2009. Facilitating teachers and educators' effective professional development. *Review of European studies*, 1 (2), 83–90.
- Sabra, H., 2011. Instructional supervision: a case study of an exemplary model and how teachers and supervisors perceive it. Unpublished MA thesis. Lebanese American University, Beirut, Lebanon.
- Sandholtz, J.H., 2002. Inservice training or professional development: contrasting opportunities in a school/university partnership. *Teaching and teacher education*, 18 (7), 815–830.
- Showers, B. and Joyce, B., 1996. The evolution of peer coaching. *Educational leadership*, 53 (6), 2–16.
- Stoll, L., 1999. Realising our potential: understanding and developing capacity for lasting improvement. *School effectiveness and school improvement*, 10 (4), 503–532.
- Tallerico, M., 2005. *Supporting and sustaining teachers' professional development: a principal's guide*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Trautwein, B. and Ammann, S., 2010. From pedagogy to practice: mentoring and reciprocal peer coaching for preservice teachers. *The volta review*, 110 (2), 191–206.

- Tusting, K. and Barton, D., 2006. *Models of adult learning: a literature review*. Cardiff: National Institute of Adult Continuing Education.
- Zwart, R.C., *et al.*, 2007. Experienced teacher learning within the context of reciprocal peer coaching. *Teachers and teaching*, 13 (2), 165–187.