

MODULE ON: INTRODUCTION TO IN-SERVICE EDUCATION AND TRAINING

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UNIT 4: TEACHER DEVELOPMENT

Teacher development is an all-embracing term to cover activities that seek to facilitate the growth of teachers' understanding of the teaching profession and of themselves as teachers. This Unit explores how the concept of teacher development has been explained by different scholars, and the stages that teachers go through in their career lives as part of their development. The Unit also discusses Continuous Professional Development (CPD), which is a key component of teacher development.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the Unit, the student will be able to:

- ❖ Analyse the various explanations of teacher development.
- ❖ Explain any three models of teachers' career stages.
- ❖ Describe the relationship between teacher development, career stages, and continuous professional development.
- ❖ Discuss the importance of continuous professional development.

The Concept of Teacher Development

The concept of teacher development has been explained differently by scholars in the field. A few of such explanations are presented here.

1. For Grossman (1994), teacher development is simply the process of helping teachers to grow. However, she did not provide further explanation about the nature of such growth.
2. Day (1999) provides an elaborate definition of teacher development. He considers it as a process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew, and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching. Also, by that process, teachers acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills, and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning, and practice with children, young people, and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives. Day's definition reflects the complexity of the process of teacher development and also takes into account research in teacher development.
3. Evans (2002) links teacher development to two elements; attitudinal development and functional development. She refers to attitudinal development as the process whereby teachers' attitudes to their work are modified, while functional development refers to the process whereby teachers' professional performance may be improved.

4. Bell and Gilbert (1996) relate teacher development to a form of human development, involving three elements: social, professional, and personal development.
 - i. The social development involves the reconstruction of what it means to be a teacher as well as ways of working with others that will enable the reconstruction of what it means to be a teacher.
 - ii. The personal development involves each individual teacher constructing, evaluating, and accepting or rejecting for herself or himself the new socially constructed knowledge about what it means to be a teacher.
 - iii. The professional development dimension involves the development of the beliefs and conceptions underlying a teacher's teaching activities.

Teacher development activities must consciously address and support all these three elements for improvement to be realised.

Teachers' Career Stages

Traditionally, teachers' careers have been classified into two parts: 1) Preservice; which refers to the initial education delivered at teacher education institutions, and 2) In-service; which is the period between a teacher's entry into the profession and their retirement or other manner of exit from the profession. However, further research has led to the broadening of this categorization into several phases, referred to as stages, collectively representing a career cycle. One theory that has been linked to teachers' progress through the stages is the stage or trait theory. This theory assumes that teachers' stages are distinct phases that they experience, and these phases are influenced by personal and professional factors. It is important to understand these stages in order to provide adequate support to teachers as they strive to improve in their teaching.

Models of Teachers' Career Stages

There are several models describing how teachers navigate through their career. This section considers a few of such models.

Fuller and Bown's (1975) Model

Fuller and Bown (1975) identified three stages.

1. ***Pre-teaching stage***: This is where pre-service teachers identify with the students in their observed classes rather than themselves as teachers.
2. ***Early teaching stage***: This is where teachers have lost their enthusiasm of teaching and are simply concerned about their own survival as teachers.
3. ***Late teaching stage***: This is where teachers regain renewed fantasy for teaching and they now tend to be more concerned about pupils' learning needs.

Katz's (1972) Model

Katz (1972) identified four stages: Survival, Consolidation, Renewal, and Maturity.

1. ***At the Survival stage***, teachers' main concern is how to cope with the daily demands of their job. Such teachers focus more on themselves and their own needs and have little understanding of their pupils' learning needs.

2. **The Consolidation stage** often comes in the second year of teaching when teachers begin to shift their focus from themselves to designing instructions that meet the needs of their students in the class.
3. **The Renewal stage** often occurs in the third or fourth year of teaching. At this stage, teachers have become competent in their practice. As a result, activities and patterns previously established become routine, and so teachers are looking for new ways that provide variety in their teaching.
4. **At the Maturity stage**, teachers are still interested in new ideas and resources; however, they begin to ask deeper and more abstract questions about their philosophy of teaching and the impact they may be making in the lives of their pupils and in and out of the school setting.

Fessler and Christensen's (1992) Model

Fessler and Christiansen (1992) identified eight stages, moving from pre-service and induction to career wind-down and exit (Figure 2). However, these stages do not progress in a linear fashion, but rather, in a dynamic manner.

Figure 2: Model of teacher career cycle Fessler and Christensen, 1992)



1. **Preservice:** The preservice stage is also known as initial stage. This stage is the beginning period of preparation for a specific professional role. This includes initial study in teacher education institution or retraining for a new role.
2. **Induction:** The induction stage usually evolves during the first few years of teaching, when the teacher tries to adapt to his or her new role and to be accepted in the social fabric of the school and community. Although induction is usually viewed as the time when teachers go from pre-service preparation to full-time classroom instruction, teachers may also experience induction when shifting to another role, grade level, subject, or school.
3. **Competency Building:** During this stage, the teacher is highly motivated to attain new knowledge and teaching competency by seeking out new strategies and opportunities.

They are receptive to new ideas, and participate in professional development, usually, through their own initiative. They are eager to improve their repertoire of skills. Fessler and Christensen (1992) consider this a critical crossroad in the career cycle because those teachers who are successful in building confidence in and skill with their teaching competencies are likely to move into an enthusiastic and growing stage, whereas those who fail to do so may experience a level of frustration that can lead to early career exit.

4. ***Enthusiasm and Growth:*** This is the stage where teachers have reached a high level of competence in their profession but continue to seek ways to progress as professionals. At this stage, teachers develop a love for their profession and constantly seek ways to enrich their teaching. They have a positive affective attitude towards school activities and class work.
5. ***Career Frustration:*** The career frustration stage, unlike the growth and enthusiasm stage, is characterized by a lack of satisfaction in the profession, disillusionment, burnout, and frustration. The teacher may even question his or her choice of entering the profession.
6. ***Career Stability:*** This stage marks the point when teachers may move into patterns of maintenance, stagnation, or renewed growth. For some teachers, it is a period when they have lost their enthusiasm for teaching and are simply going through the motions. For others, stability may reflect a period of maintaining a competent and steady commitment to their job.
7. ***Career Wind-Down:*** Teachers preparing to leave the profession enter the career wind-down stage. For some, it may be a pleasant period during which they reflect on the many positive experiences they have had and look forward to a career change or retirement. For others, it may be a moment of sadness, particularly, if they feel they have not accomplished their goals.
8. ***Career Exit:*** This stage refers to the period after the teacher leaves the job, either through retirement, involuntary dismissal, career change, or temporary career exit for some other reasons.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Teachers, by their profession, have life-long professional needs and these needs will be met throughout their career only if handled in terms of continuity. Moreover, it is understood that, because the world that teachers are preparing children to enter is advancing quickly, and because the skills, knowledge, and ideas required to prepare them are evolving, teachers need to continuously learn. CPD, therefore, builds upon initial preparation and offers the opportunity to teachers to continuously reflect upon their competencies and develop the required skills and knowledge for the task of teaching (Craft, 2002).

Thus, the philosophy underpinning CPD is that learning is an ongoing process of reflection and review, leading to personal growth as well as the development of skills and knowledge to facilitate performance. Continuous Professional Development therefore covers a wide range of activities designed to contribute to the development of teachers in their careers.

Why is CPD Necessary?

The main reason why teachers engage in continuous professional development is to be able to do a better job. That is, to be better teachers and to improve the learning of their students. Beyond this, however, CPD also serves the following purposes:

- ❖ To improve teachers' knowledge of a subject in light of global and technological advancement.
- ❖ To update teachers' skills, attitudes and approaches in light of the development of new teaching techniques.
- ❖ To enable teachers to exchange information and expertise among themselves.
- ❖ To serve as a means for professional associations to verify whether the standards of their professionals are being upheld.
- ❖ To promote teachers' satisfaction in the job.
- ❖ To enable teachers to anticipate and prepare for changes in the future.

Key ideas

- The concept of teacher development has different meanings for different scholars in the field.
- In spite of the different explanations of the concept of teacher development by scholars, in summary, teacher development is a process by which teachers learn and grow in their profession, be it alone or with others.
- The areas of growth include knowledge, skills, emotional intelligence, social, professional, and personal development, among others.
- Teachers develop in their career through different stages, which can be influenced both by personal and professional conditions.
- Different scholars including Kartz (1972), Fessler and Christensen (1992), and Fuller and Bown (1975) have propounded models that help to explain teachers' career stages.
- CPD is a key aspect of teacher development.
- CPD builds upon initial teacher preparation and offers opportunities for teachers to continuously reflect upon their competencies and develop the required skills and knowledge for the task of teaching.

Reflection

- What is your own understanding of teacher development?
- What are the key differences in the explanations of teacher development presented in this Unit?
- What personal factors are likely to influence the stage in which you are in your career?

- How will your knowledge about teacher career stages help you prepare for the demands of the profession?
- Why do you think it is important for teachers to understand the stages of their career?

Discussion

- Identify any three models of teachers' career stages.
- Discuss Fessler and Christensen's (1992) model of teachers' career stages.
- Outline three why reasons why CPD is important to teachers.
- Explain any three benefits of CPD.