



Influence of Continuous Professional Development on the Improvement of Ordinary-Level English Language Teachers' Competencies

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ABSTRACT The purpose of the study was to find out the influence of professional development on the improvement of Ordinary-Level English language teachers. The study was descriptive in nature. The objectives of the study were to measure the influence of professional development practices on the improvement of Ordinary-Level language teachers, and to find out which teachers develop more pedagogical skills after their professional development. By using purposive convenient sampling technique, a sample of 394 teachers from 108 schools was taken. A questionnaire comprising (40) forty items in three parts and an observation checklist was used to collect data. Data analysis was done quantitatively. All of the information was analyzed by using independent t-test, ANOVA and percentage. It was concluded that teachers significantly improved certain competencies after their professional development and male teachers showed more improvement. It was suggested that teachers should be provided professional development opportunities to improve their teaching practices.

INTRODUCTION

Professional development (PD) of teachers is indispensable for providing quality education. As compared to Pakistani public education system, private education system offers lucrative infrastructure along with committed faculty members. These teachers are provided pre-service and in-service professional development programmes to enable them to produce competitive results. Professional development practices help teachers to improve their content based pedagogical knowledge. It also pays attentions to enhance skills, practice and self-motivated changes in education (Blandford 2012).

The quality of education is considered as one of the prime factors in determining quality in schools as is evident from successful education systems around the world (Barber and Mourshed 2007). With reference to school, quality education comprises of a friendly learning environment, curriculum outcome, student achievement and availability of professionally trained teachers (UNICEF 2000). Professionally competent teachers engage and equip themselves in a process of on-going professional learning be-

cause such practices improve subject knowledge and pedagogical competence of teachers. Same view has been shared by Holmes (2005) saying that there is no stagnation in the information as it undergoes changes after every second and must remain side by side with the world. A teacher is expected to practice the best professional skills to meet the demands of his profession (Cruickshank et al. 2006). Professional development, in the view of many researchers as well as theorists (see Garet et al. 2001; Richardson and Placier 2001; Supovitz 2001; Bhargava 2005; Ali 2007; Memon 2007; Singh 2007; Ono and Ferreira, 2010; Harris et al. 2011; Siddiqui et al. 2011; Wati 2011; Blandford 2012; Mukeredzi 2013; Rahman et al. 2015; Al Asmari 2016; Farooq 2016) enables the teacher to meet the expected demands of the teachers by their profession. Realizing the significance of professional development from the mentioned researchers and theorists, this study aims to check the influence of continuous professional development on the improvement of Ordinary-Level English language teachers' competencies.

Literature Review

Literature review shows that teacher training helps teachers to clarify and update their

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queries regarding different classroom practices. The aims and objectives of professional development are reiterated through the year by coordinators and section heads who conduct regular sessions to check the effectiveness of CPD by Cambridge International Examiners (CIE). When these programmes are attended by a teacher for five years, he develops many competencies and practically demonstrates different practices confidently in the classroom which makes his teaching effective. Goodall et al. (2005: 26) is of the opinion that professional development should comprise of an extensive diversity of teaching and learning activities. The recent literature shows that professional development (PD) is more extensively employed for training (Earley and Bubb 2004). It is a common observation that PD brings significant improvements in teachers' subject knowledge and their teaching practice (Moor et al. 2005). Ono and Ferreira (2010), say that continuous professional development (CPD) gives an opportunity to the teachers to be knowledge transmitters. They say that teachers develop their own knowledge when involved in these activities. In other words, knowledge is improved while living in society (Ono and Ferreira 2010). It is also commented by some educational experts if teachers spend time in PD, then their teaching practices are improved (Porter et al. 2003; Quick et al. 2009).

In the past, some researches were conducted on this topic around the world. Among such researches include the research by Li (2011) who explored the issues regarding the appropriateness as well as sustainability and of professional development for secondary level teachers of English in China offered by overseas providers from the perspective of teachers who completed courses at the University of Reading between 2003 and 2010. He started by offering an impression of English teaching in China and after that they described the analysis of interviews, classroom observation and focus groups discussions involving former participants, their teaching colleagues and senior management. The study presented evidences that the professional development courses improved teacher competencies (cultural, linguistic, and pedagogical) in the classroom; and for the ways in which returnees are undertaking new roles and responsibilities which exploit their new understandings. On the basis of these results, the study concluded that the acknowledgment of English as an important as-

pect in Chinese modernization has opened up new doors for dialogue about pedagogy as well as professional practice. Moreover, new language teaching approaches are presented in such a way as helps the teachers decide which factors they should incorporate into their teaching and in what way.

Wati (2011) investigated the effectiveness of elementary school English language teachers' training program in Indonesia. The subjects of this study were 55 English language teachers. A questionnaire, comprising of five sections, was used to collect data from the subjects and their responses were analyzed through SPSS 11.5. Results revealed that English language training program proved highly effective in terms of in improving teachers' confidence and motivation as the teachers of English as a foreign language. On the basis of these results, the study concluded that that the teachers' training programs prove very effective for English language teachers and provide them with a useful forum to make the effective teachers. Similarly, Rahman et al. (2015) reported the assessment of a professional development program focusing on the improvement of content knowledge. For this purpose, they selected 147 Indonesian teachers and divided them into three experimental groups, and each group was treated to one of the three professional development models frequently used in developing countries. The results revealed that all of the three models helped improve the teachers' content knowledge; however, the teacher-based scaffolding model proved to be the most effective.

Farooq (2016) evaluated the effectiveness of Professional Development Program (PDP) of Taif University. For this purpose, he collected data with the help of a questionnaire from the 50 male and 50 female teachers. The results revealed that the respondents acknowledged the significance as well as usefulness of the continuous professional development. The respondents also acknowledged that professional development programs provide the teachers with learning opportunities. A similar study was conducted by Al Asmari (2016) to discover about the practices as well as perceptions of teachers about professional development in Saudi Arabia. In this regard, he collected the responses of 121 English language teachers, from different countries of the world with diverse academic and educational experiences, utilising a questionnaire.

The survey comprised of different items relevant to the concept of professional development, learning approaches and perceptions and feedback on CPD. The respondents supported experiential as well as lifelong learning leading towards learner centered approach. In addition, CPD was observed to be a challenge to their existing knowledge as well as classroom practices. Moreover, the respondents expressed their concerns about the indigenization of activities in CPDs and institutional support in conducting classroom activities supplemented by follow up activities.

Aims of the Study

- This study aims to:
- ♦ Find out which gender (male or female teachers) develops more pedagogical skills after their professional development.
 - ♦ See the influence of professional development practices on the improvement of Ordinary-Level English language teachers.

Research Questions

1. Which teachers (male or female) develop more pedagogical skills after their professional development?
2. How do the professional development practices influence on the improvement of Ordinary-Level English language teachers?

METHODOLOGY

This study is descriptive in nature. Therefore, survey approach is well thought-out and is used for data collection and analysis. For this purpose, questionnaire was used to collect data from the respondents personally who were GCE Ordinary-Level English teachers. In addition, classroom observation was also used as research tool to collect data from teachers. The population of this study comprised of all secondary school teachers of GCE Ordinary-Level teaching in the subject of English (Code-1123) language in the province of Punjab, Pakistan. Description of the population is summarized as under:

- ♦ No of registered GCE Ordinary-Level schools in nine Divisional Headquarters of Punjab: 149
- ♦ No of GCE Ordinary-Level English Language teachers: 564

For this study, purposive convenient sampling technique was employed as key source of collecting the primary data. The sample of the research was GCE Ordinary-Level teachers who were teaching the subject of English language (Code-1123) in the nine divisional headquarters of Punjab, Pakistan. The sample size was 108 registered Ordinary-Level schools. The detail of sample and sampling technique is as under:

- ♦ A sample of 230 English language teachers was taken out of 564 teachers.
- ♦ Purposive convenient sampling technique was employed to collect sample for this study.
- ♦ Confidence level was ninety-five percent and margin of error was five percent.

A questionnaire was developed as a research tool on five-point Likert scale to obtain the opinion of the relevant respondents. Keeping in view the different practices mentioned in the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Framework of British Council, teaching competencies of the teachers were measured to note the influence of professional development practices. An observation (checklist) was also used to observe those practices which were developed after teachers' professional development. The observation team comprised of coordinators and section heads of different Ordinary-Level schools who were briefed and trained by the researchers. In certain cases, due to security reasons and institutional policy, the researchers were not granted permission to conduct teachers' observation himself. However to facilitate this requirement, they had to train coordinators and section heads to conduct observation on researchers' behalf. All of the coordinators and section heads actively participated in this activity and performed their work diligently, professionally and honestly.

Pilot Testing

Pilot testing was conducted before the conduction of the research in an area which was a part of the population but not included in the sample. The tools were further simplified and reorganized. Reliability of the questionnaire items

was checked by means of computer software SPSS.

Validity and Reliability

A group of seven experts was requested to improve the items of the tools for the rationale of validation. The valued suggestions and recommendations of the experts helped modify and improve all of the tools. Cronbach Alpha was used to check the reliability of the tools (see Table 1).

Table 1: Reliability coefficient of the questionnaire

Category	Items	Cronbach Alpha Reliability
Professional development practices and teachers' competencies	25	.816

Note: Cronbach alpha of statements from 1-25: (0.816)

Presentation and Analysis of Data

The data in this research was collected through a questionnaire and an observation checklist. Inferential and descriptive statistics were applied in this study. Data collected through these tools from the target respondents were analyzed by applying descriptive statistics of survey method (mean, percentages, frequencies, ANOVA and Independent t-test). The observation team comprised of coordinators and section heads of different Ordinar-Level schools that was briefed and trained by the researchers. The observation team helped a lot to collect reliable data which was further verified from some senior teachers by the researchers personally.

RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics of English Teachers for Professional Development Practices

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics, weighted score (WS) and rank for professional devel-

Table 2: Descriptive statistics, weighted score (WS) and rank for professional development practices

Professional development practices develop teachers' competencies and enable them to...	Min	Max	Mean	SD	WS	Rank
01. Plan lessons according to the mental level of the learners.	3	5	4.71	0.465	966	1
02. Understand learners' linguistic background.	3	5	4.32	0.628	885	13
03. Use teaching materials according to the need of learners.	4	5	4.57	0.496	937	5
04. Maintain classroom discipline effectively.	4	5	4.59	0.494	940	3
05. Develop their awareness of language system.	3	5	4.48	0.591	918	6
06. Select appropriate grammar skills of the target language.	3	5	4.37	0.540	895	9
07. Select a wide range of media (digital, audiovisual, and print) which fit with learners' needs.	2	5	4.16	0.957	852	20
08. Maintain a system of storing and retrieving materials.	2	5	4.02	0.731	825	22
09. Stay update with developments in education.	4	5	4.59	0.494	940	3
10. Understand professional needs of teaching learning process.	2	5	2.88	0.582	591	25
11. Apply assessment criteria consistently.	3	5	4.25	0.516	871	15
12. Keep proper records of learners' assessments.	3	5	4.45	0.580	912	7
13. Treat all learners with respect.	3	5	4.44	0.508	911	8
14. Develop positive attitude among learners.	3	5	4.32	0.742	885	14
15. Use (ICT) technology in the production of teaching and learning material.	3	5	4.16	0.573	852	19
16. Promote collaborative learning by exploiting online communities.	2	5	3.67	0.684	752	24
17. Select appropriate methodology for learners' evaluation.	3	5	4.20	0.619	860	17
18. Develop an awareness of digital literacy.	3	5	4.19	0.531	859	18
19. Locate up-to-date information about national and international policies.	2	5	3.71	0.914	760	23
20. Find out relevant material about educational practices.	3	5	4.23	0.525	867	16
21. Plan the grouping of learners having different ability levels.	2	5	4.11	0.793	843	21
22. Use appropriate language to learners' level.	1	5	4.35	0.689	892	10
23. Develop teaching material for learners.	3	5	4.35	0.546	892	11
24. Conduct formal assessment in the classroom.	3	5	4.35	0.680	891	12
25. Develop their communication skills.	3	5	4.61	0.554	946	2

N: 205

opment practices which develop teachers' competencies and enabled them to perform better in the class. The mean score of teachers' planning lesson according to the mental level of the learners is ranked as No.1, the ability to develop teachers' communication skills is ranked as No.2 and maintaining classroom discipline effectively is ranked as No. 3 respectively.

Observing the mean score and ranking, it is found that most of the teachers were able to improve their different types of competencies as indicated in the ranking column. Table 2 shows the descriptive statistics and weighted score of each response given by the teachers in the questionnaire. In the light of these results, it is concluded that teachers can improve their different competencies through a professional development program. The PD program should be designed keeping in view the requirements of the teachers and the taught.

Statistical Comparison between Male and Female English Language Teachers

Table 3 shows descriptive statistics, mean, t-value and P-value for professional development practices which develop teachers' competencies and enable them to perform better in the class. The mean score (4.71) of male and female English teachers' competency regarding teachers 'planning lessons according to the mental level of the learners' is highest as compared to all other twenty-five competencies. The t-value of teachers' competency regarding teachers 'planning lessons according to the mental level of the learners' is 0.007. Another competency which has higher mean score is, 'teachers' use of teaching material according to the needs of the learners.' The calculated t-value of this competency is 0.964.

The data shows that majority of the male teachers developed competencies after their professional development programme. There are certain competencies which were not developed by them after professional development of teachers as indicated in the mean score table. The mean score of 'understanding professional needs of teaching learning' is 2.96 and 2.83 respectively. The t-value of this competency is 1.571. Another competency is 'promoting collaborative learning by exploiting online communities' which

has low mean score of 3.71 and 3.60 respectively. The calculated t-value is -1.144.

Observing the mean score and t-value, it was found that the majority of the male teachers improved their different types of competencies as indicated in the mean score column in Table 3. In the light of these results, it is concluded that teacher can improve their different competencies through a professional development program. Professional development program should be designed keeping in view the requirements of the teachers and the taught.

Descriptive Analysis of English Teachers' Classroom Observation

Table 4 shows the classroom observation results of Ordinary-Level English teachers regarding different types of pedagogical and other practices displayed by teachers after their professional development program. A close observation of the data output reveals that 96.3 percent teachers were able to divide lesson into coherent stages with realistic estimates of timing, keep proper record of learners' assessments and use print material which fit Learners' English language needs. 95.4 percent were able to assess learners at different points of lesson to monitor their understanding. 94.9 percent teachers were able to display positive attitude in the classroom. 94.4 percent teachers were able to use teaching material according to the learners' needs and develop awareness about language learning system among learners. 94 percent teachers were able to select appropriate methodology for learners' evaluation and 93.1 percent were able to use print material which fit learners' needs. Along with these, some other practices were also observed during teaching by the observer in the classroom, but these were comparatively displayed by fewer teachers. These are: develops awareness about digital literacy in his learners, maintains discipline in class during teaching learning process, shares information about online system of information, shares knowledge about international teaching practices and promotes collaborative learning among learners respectively. An overview of the data output shown in Table 4 shows that majority of the teachers were displaying certain practices in the classroom which were improved af-

Table 3: Comparison between male and female English teachers (Male N: 80; Female N: 125)

<i>Professional development practices develop teachers' competencies and enable them to...</i>	<i>Gender</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>P-value</i>
Q1. Plan lessons according to the mental level of the learners.	Male	4.71	0.482	0.994
	Female	4.71	0.455	
Q2. Understand learners' linguistic background.	Male	4.33	0.632	0.885
	Female	4.31	0.628	
Q3. Use teaching materials according to the need of learners.	Male	4.61	0.490	0.336
	Female	4.54	0.500	
Q4. Maintain classroom discipline effectively.	Male	4.59	0.495	0.961
	Female	4.58	0.495	
Q5. Develop their awareness of language system.	Male	4.46	0.572	0.764
	Female	4.49	0.604	
Q6. Select appropriate grammar skills of the target language.	Male	4.38	0.537	0.847
	Female	4.36	0.545	
Q7. Select a wide range of media (digital, audiovisual, and print)	Male	4.11	0.994	0.603
	Female	4.18	0.937	
Q8. Maintain a system of storing and retrieving materials.	Male	4.01	0.755	0.853
	Female	4.03	0.718	
Q9. Stay update with developments in education.	Male	4.58	0.497	0.811
	Female	4.59	0.493	
Q10. Understand professional needs of teaching learning process.	Male	2.96	0.625	0.118
	Female	2.83	0.550	
Q11. Apply assessment criteria consistently.	Male	4.25	0.540	0.978
	Female	4.25	0.503	
Q12. Keep proper records of learners' assessments.	Male	4.50	0.595	0.313
	Female	4.42	0.571	
Q13. Treat all learners with respect.	Male	4.41	0.520	0.480
	Female	4.46	0.501	
Q14. Develop positive attitude among learners.	Male	4.33	0.725	0.903
	Female	4.31	0.756	
Q15. Use (ICT) technology in the production of teaching and learning material.	Male	4.13	0.582	0.536
	Female	4.18	0.569	
Q16. Promote collaborative learning by exploiting online communities.	Male	3.60	0.686	0.254
	Female	3.71	0.682	
Q17. Select appropriate methodology for learners' evaluation.	Male	4.20	0.604	0.928
	Female	4.19	0.631	
Q18. Develop an awareness of digital literacy.	Male	4.14	0.545	0.256
	Female	4.22	0.522	
Q19. Locate up-to-date information about national and international policies.	Male	3.73	0.927	0.825
	Female	3.70	0.909	
Q20. Find out relevant material about educational practices.	Male	4.20	0.560	0.524
	Female	4.25	0.503	
Q21. Plan the grouping of learners having different ability levels.	Male	4.13	0.769	0.854
	Female	4.10	0.811	
Q22. Use appropriate language to learners' level.	Male	4.30	0.786	0.395
	Female	4.38	0.619	
Q23. Develop teaching material for learners.	Male	4.38	0.582	0.619
	Female	4.34	0.523	
Q24. Conduct formal assessment in the classroom.	Male	4.33	0.708	0.720
	Female	4.36	0.665	
Q25. Develop their communication skills.	Male	4.58	0.591	0.414
	Female	4.64	0.530	

SD = Standard Deviation; (Male N: 80; Female N: 125)

ter their professional development. This table shows analysis of those practices which were displayed by teachers in the classroom in the presence of observer. It shows those practices which were developed and less developed by the teachers during their classroom observation.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to answer the questions concerned with the effectiveness of the professional development programs supplemented by the question about which teachers (fe-

Table 4: Descriptive statistics of teachers' classroom observations regarding different practices

Statements		No	TSE	Yes
1. Divides lesson into coherent stages with realistic estimates of timing.	N	0	8	208
	%	0.0	3.7	96.3
2. Teaches according to the course objectives.	N	0	15	201
	%	0.0	6.9	93.1
3. Uses teaching material which suits learners' needs.	N	0	12	204
	%	0.0	5.6	94.4
4. Maintains discipline in class during teaching learning process.	N	0	195	21
	%	0.0	90.3	9.7
5. Develops awareness about language system in learners.	N	0	12	204
	%	0.0	5.6	94.4
6. Selects appropriate grammar skills of the target language.	N	0	15	201
	%	0.0	6.9	93.1
7. Uses print material which fit learners' English language needs.	N	0	8	208
	%	0.0	3.7	96.3
8. Shares information about online system of information.	N	0	194	22
	%	0.0	89.8	10.2
9. Demonstrates knowledge about updated developments in his subject.	N	8	27	181
	%	3.7	12.5	83.8
10. Assesses learners at different points of lesson to monitor their understanding.	N	1	9	206
	%	0.5	4.2	95.4
11. Applies assessment techniques in the class.	N	2	24	190
	%	0.9	11.1	88.0
12. Keeps proper record of learners' assessments.	N	0	8	208
	%	0.0	3.7	96.3
13. Treats all learners with respect.	N	0	14	202
	%	0.0	6.5	93.5
14. Displays positive attitude in classroom.	N	0	11	205
	%	0.0	5.1	94.9
15. Uses (ICT) technology in the teaching learning process.	N	3	30	183
	%	1.4	13.9	84.7
16. Promotes collaborative learning among learners.	N	30	186	0
	%	13.9	86.1	0.0
17. Selects appropriate methodology for learners' evaluation.	N	0	13	203
	%	0.0	6.0	94.0
18. Develops awareness about digital literacy in his learners.	N	13	203	0
	%	6.0	94.0	0.0
19. Shares knowledge about international teaching practices.	N	24	192	0
	%	11.1	88.9	0.0
20. Shares information about educational policies.	N	33	183	0
	%	15.3	84.7	0.0

TSE= To Some Extent

male or male) develop more pedagogical skills after participation in professional development programs. The results indicated that professional development was directly linked with the performance of teachers. Experienced and highly qualified teachers showed more improvement in their teaching practices as compared to those teachers who resided in remote areas and were not highly qualified. Classroom observation results revealed that after professional development, teachers became more confident and planned their lessons according to the mental

level of the learners. Their discipline was also observed to be improved in the classroom. This study also identified significant correlation between professional development program and teachers' performance in the classroom. The teachers who engaged themselves in professional development activities were observed to meet the diverse needs of the students. In addition, the teachers were observed to be able to divide lesson into coherent stages with realistic estimates of timing and keep proper record of learners' assessments. They were also able to assess

learners at different points of a lesson to monitor their understanding. Moreover, the teachers were able to use teaching material according to the learners' needs and to select appropriate methodology for learners' evaluation. They were also able to use print material which fit learners' needs. So far as the question regarding gender was concerned, female teachers were observed to be more interested in professional development program as compared to males. Overall, professional development proved to be very effective for the development of skills in the teachers.

The study validates the results of different studies. For example, this study validates the results of the study by Li (2011) which reports the improvement of Chinese EFL teachers' competencies in cultural, linguistic and pedagogical skills. The results of this study also conform to the results of an Indonesian study by Wati (2011) which reports the effectiveness of professional development programs in terms of in improving EFL teachers' confidence and motivation. The results also match with another Indonesian study by Rahman et al. (2015) which claims that professional development programs improve EFL teachers' content knowledge. The results also align with the results of a Saudi Arabian study by Al Asmari (2016) which affirms the usefulness of professional development for experiential and lifelong learning leading towards learner-centered approach. Similarly, the study seconds the results of another study by Farooq (2016) which acknowledges the effectiveness of professional development programs to provide the teachers with learning opportunities. It is evident that the results of this study match with the results of all of these studies in a way or the other. The reason for this compliance might be that all of these studies have been conducted in the countries where English is the second or foreign language for the teachers. As a result, the teachers are not competent enough in English and are unable to meet the requirements of the professional. Similarly, the students in these countries also learn English as a second or foreign language. Majority of the students in these countries is poor at English. This factor also poses a challenge to the teachers. For these reasons, the professional development is deemed essential in these countries.

Thus, all of these studies (that is, Li 2011; Wati 2011; Rahnan et al. 2015; Al Asmari 2016; Farooq 2016), including present study, seem to approve the significance of professional development programs for the EFL teachers in a way or the other. In fact, different researchers have taken professional development (PD) in different ways. Memon (2007) and Siddiqui et al. (2011) say that it is a continuous process that advances knowledge and pedagogical skills of teachers. Ali (2007) has propounded the same point of view. Professional development (PD) is a continuous process of gaining content-knowledge which produces more skilled teachers.

Without professional development, teachers face many complications and never progress their pedagogical skills. Professional development (PD) improves teachers' self-confidence so that they practically become operative teachers in the classroom and improve their teaching practices (Buczynski and Hansen 2010; Harris et al. 2011; Powell et al. 2003). According to Siddiqui et al. (2011), Professional Development (PD) encompasses those practices which develop and augment pedagogical and professional skills, knowledge, and skills of a teacher. Continuous use of professional development (PD) practices significantly redefines and re-examines the existing teaching methods and develops the existing potential of teachers which is a dire need of all teachers at secondary level. Current climate of educational reforms demand that teachers should implement those teaching methodologies and practices that had never been considered before. Ntloana (2009) has stated that effective professional development improves the competency level of teachers and the quality of education. Professional development (PD) practices have become world-wide trend.

Sajjad (2007) remarks about Pakistani education system saying that this system lacks highly qualified and professionally competent teachers. This situation is not good for our education system. Therefore, it should ultimately be improved. In this regard, professional development programs can be utilized. According to Penuel et al. (2007: 929) "teachers need professional development that is interactive with their teaching practice, allowing for multiple cycles of presentation and assimilation of, and reflection on, knowledge." So, professional development pro-

grams should be designed keeping in view the requirements of the teachers and the taught. Moreover, professional development must be of high quality and it should be wisely prepared, coherent and intensive (Garet et al. 2001; Supovitz 2001; Richardson and Placier 2001).

CONCLUSION

The education landscape round the clock is rapidly changing and schools are at the forefront of this change. Teachers play pivotal role in quality education and their professional development is pertinent to quality assurance. This study focused teaching practices and pedagogical skills of Ordinary-Level English level teachers. It was found that through continuous professional development, teachers can exhibit those practices which enhance students' performance. Continuous professional development is gaining strong ground in the private sector. This study has also shown that male teachers learn more than female teachers during professional development programme and exhibit those practices in the classroom. This study identified those practices which could be developed after professional development and training programme. It was found that teachers should be kept engaged in professional development practices on regular basis. A close observation of the data output reveals that teachers become able to divide lesson into coherent stages with realistic estimates of timing and keep proper record of learners' assessments. They also develop ability to assess learners at different points of lesson to monitor their understanding. Professional development improves teachers' ability to use teaching material according to the learners' needs and select appropriate methodology for learners' evaluation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

After a retrospective overview of this research, certain classroom practices are identified which need to be practically applicable in the classroom to boost up the quality of teaching and learning. Some of the recommendations are extracted from the findings, others are general due to relevance to this study. These recommendations are useful for school manage-

ment, teachers, policy makers and stake holders in the pyramid of education.

- ♦ Drawing from the findings, the best practices are recommended to be implemented by all teachers in their classrooms.
- ♦ Regular and continuous professional development should be given priority as these programmes are more effective and result oriented. Such activities help teachers to address specific needs of school and teachers.
- ♦ Findings indicate that teachers with low qualification and experience need regular professional development. So, policy makers and educational leaders should consider such teachers for training on priority basis to raise the quality of teachers in the country.
- ♦ Given that funding is a major constraint for aspiring teachers, school administration and policy makers should fully support funding including grants and loans for professional development.
- ♦ A strong commitment to innovation is prerequisite in the Pakistani education system to ensure delivery of better policy outcomes. More focus should be on repairing the gulf between policy and implementation which is a core issue.
- ♦ Those teachers who improve their pedagogical skills and teaching practices after their professional development may be given some incentive to develop a sense of competition among teachers.
- ♦ Female teachers may be given more incentives to boost their interest in professional development programmes.
- ♦ The school management should pay enough attention to female teachers' professional skills and retain the experienced female teachers for their schools.

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