

Chapter 28

In-service Teacher Empowerment in Palestine: Teacher Training or Professional Development Programmes?



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Abstract With the daunting changes in today's societies, the educational sector has been highly challenged and expected to quickly adapt while maintaining high standards of education. The educational sector can be supported by empowering teachers, raising their awareness, and equipping them with the appropriate tools, skills, and knowledge. Teachers' perception of their role as constructive participants in the process of developing professionally will impact learners' outcome. In a changing and a challenging society like in Palestine, there is a need to raise the quality of education. Despite the various attempts to enhance the quality of education by the Ministry of Education (MoE), the education system in Palestine continues to suffer, exacerbated by political, social, and economic factors. Many in-service teachers have been participating in teacher training programmes that are classified as professional development programmes without having a clear distinction between the two. Do teachers realise the importance and impact of teacher training and professional development programmes? Is the confusion due to lack of knowledge or lack of adequate assessment and evaluation tools? This chapter will elaborate on the differences between these two types of programmes and on recommendations that might empower in-service teachers so that they bolster their teaching.

Keywords Professional development · Palestine · Teacher education · In-service · Public schools

Introduction

Teachers are the most valuable asset in any education institution. There is a growing research consensus that enhancing the learners' outcome and the quality of the whole education system is dependant on improving the quality of teachers (Bayar, 2014; Briggs & Walter, 2012; Burke et al., 2020; Dajani, 2015; Nordstrum, 2016; Rice, 2003; Sahlberg, 2015; UNRWA, 2021). To ensure quality learners' outcomes,

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teachers' qualities have to be supported and upgraded. Teachers need constant renovation of knowledge and skills, adequate tools of reflection, and continuous feedback in order to thrive and promote growth in their profession (Khaldi & Nassar, 2021). To stay inspired, interested in teaching, and erudite with the recent trends in teaching, teachers ought to engage in appropriate activities. When teachers take part in the proper professional development (PD) and teacher training programmes, their knowledge about the pedagogical skills and educational instruments will increase. Thus, they will become more effective and efficient in their profession.

Sahlberg (2015) stated that there has been a universal demand to upgrade the education system. To ensure a successful reform of education, there have to be plans for the investment of teacher education in the first place (Burke et al., 2020). The responsible parties need to provide support and guidance to teachers. They need to offer properly planned PD and teacher training programmes with clear objectives to guarantee successful delivery and positive and sustained impact.

The Palestinian education system has emerged amid chaos, intense restrictions, ongoing crises, emergencies, and very limited resources. Palestinians took over their education in 1994 (Jabareen, 2003; Matar, 2017). There was an urge to reform education and shape policies in Palestine. Nonetheless, reform of education and policies needed structure, knowledge, national philosophy, vision, insight, and access to resources, all of which were limited due to political reasons (Dajani & McLaughlin, 2009). A major objective in education rectification was enhancing teachers' skills and knowledge, which has been challenging due to many factors. Teachers in Palestine deal with tremendous challenges and hurdles due to their overloaded schedules, minimal support and guidance, underpayment, lack of planning time, and other restrictions imposed by the MoE (Khaldi & Wahbeh, 2000; Wahbeh, 2011; Shraim & Cromptom, 2020). Additionally, many teachers are inadequately trained, have large class sizes, and limited resources. Teachers undergo these hardships exacerbated by having to teach under exceptional circumstances due to occupation which negatively impacts the economic, cultural, and political sectors surrounding them (Dajani, 2015). Despite the plans and attempts that were set to develop teachers in Palestine by the Ministry of Education (MoE), the education system still struggles and teacher professional development and training programmes remain a serious issue in Palestine (Dajani, 2015; World Bank, 2019).

This chapter provides description and analysis of the evolution as well as the current situation of the teacher education programmes that take place for in-service teachers at the public schools' sector in Palestine. It also pinpoints the main differences between the teacher training and professional development programmes for in-service teachers. Additionally, this chapter suggests recommendations for practical implications to policy-makers and administrators to properly develop teacher education programmes and empower in-service teachers in their profession.

Contextual Background

History of Education in Palestine

In Palestine, education and forming educational policies have been challenging due to many factors such as political, economic, social, and cultural. Palestinians assumed ownership of their own education only in 1994. Historically, Palestine had been under the foreign rule of the Ottoman Empire for around 400 years since 1517. After that, the British Mandate took over in 1917 until the Israeli occupation that started in 1948 (Abu-Saad & Champagne, 2006). Palestine is still under Israeli military occupation. In 1993, the Palestinian National Authority was established after the signing of the Oslo accords between the Palestinian and Israeli sides (Jabareen, 2003; Mazawi, 2000). In 1994, the Ministry of Education and Higher Education (MoEHE) was established followed by the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research in 1996 (MoEHE, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c). In 2002, the two ministries were merged under the Ministry of Education and Higher Education. Since then, the two ministries were separated and then merged a few times the last time being in 2019, when the two ministries were separated again. The MoEHE remains responsible for education at higher institutions. The MoE seeks in its mission to provide education for all and to improve the quality of education at all levels (MoEHE, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c).

Once formed, the MoE was overburdened with massive responsibilities to rectify education in an occupied land. The MoE was not able to operate at full capacity as it was performing under critical circumstances due to the occupation and its restrictions that impacted all aspects of the Palestinians' lives (European Training Foundation, 2019). There were major and serious obstacles in the way of reforming education in Palestine. These barriers included being a lower middle-income country, being under a military occupation, and going through an increased growth in the population which adversely affected the social and economic services (European Training Foundation, 2019). Additionally, being under years of foreign control and decades of occupation resulted in Palestinians being ill-equipped to reconstruct education (Ramahi, 2015).

The Education School System in Palestine

The education school system in Palestine is divided into three sectors, the public, the private, and the United Nations Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) schools. UNRWA has been providing education mainly to Palestinian refugees for about fifty years (MoEHE, 2016). These three sectors are supervised by the MoE, while the public sector is directly managed by the MoE (European Training Foundation, 2019). As of the school year 2019–2020, and according to the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics (PCBS), the number of schools in Palestine (West Bank and Gaza Strip) was around 3074 schools with about 1,309,165 students and 58,470 teachers (PCBS, 2021). Of the 3074 schools, there were about 400

schools in the private sector (PIPA, 2021), and 374 were UNRWA schools (UNRWA, 2020). These statistics demonstrate that the public schools sector in Palestine is the largest, comprising about 75% of schools (PCBS, 2021).

Education in Palestine is centralised. The curriculum, the subjects, the textbooks, the teachers' recruitment, upgrading and evaluation, and teacher training programmes for in-service teachers are unified for public schools (Matar, 2017). The UNRWA schools use the same centralised national curriculum but differ in their administration and teacher training and development procedures. Private schools have their own teacher selection process, PD, and teacher training programmes that meet their institutional goals (Matar, 2017).

Teacher Education Programmes

Teacher education programmes have evolved with the surfacing of public schooling in the world (Menter et al., 2016). Teacher education programmes have developed over time and shifted from the traditional style workshops to more engaging opportunities of professional learning in either the form of training or PD (Koeliner & Greenblatt, 2021). According to Menter et al. (2016), teacher education programmes are the programmes that contribute to educational theory, research, and practices that target both pre-service, in-service, and other professional educationalists.

Teacher education programmes have features to ensure their effectiveness (Gould, 2021). These features include that all participants of the education society need to be involved in the planning process of the programmes, tasks should be relevant, sessions need to be adequately spaced, and there has to be integration of theory, practice, feedback, and coaching. Additionally, the sessions need to be varied between formal and informal. Teachers must be at the core of the programmes, recognized for their participation, and given autonomy in studying and developing independently (Gould, 2021).

Types of Teacher Education Programmes

Teacher education has three inseparable stages; the initial teacher training or pre-service teacher training phase, the induction phase, and the in-service teacher training and professional development phase (UNESCO & International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2019). The initial or preservice teacher education is the education that teachers undergo through their universities or academic institutions that prepares them to become well-established teachers (Khaldi & Nassar, 2021; Nicolai, 2007). The induction phase of teacher education is the stage of supporting and mentoring newly qualified teachers (UNESCO & International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, 2019). The in-service teacher education is any course

of study, training, or education that practising teachers go through (Koeliner & Greenblatt, 2021).

Providers of In-service Teacher Education Programmes in Palestine

In Palestine, in-service teacher education is provided by three main providers. The first provider is the MoE that offers obligatory teacher training and PD programmes to public school teachers at its schools or at the National Institute for Educational Training (NIET) (Nassar, 2019). The NIET was established in 2005, under the supervision of the MoE, through Norwegian funding, to develop the human resources in the educational system, and to support the training department at the MoE (MoEHE, 2012; Nicolai, 2007). The NIET was initially established to provide training for managers and administrators at the MoE; however, a few years later, it was tasked with providing training for in-service teachers as well (Engelbrecht et al., 2015). The NIET aims at raising the capacity of teachers of different grade levels, equipping them with the needed competencies, and developing their pedagogical and technical capabilities through training and continuous rehabilitations (MoEHE, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c; Nicolai, 2007). The NIET provides certificates for in-service teachers through accredited specialised professional diploma programmes that aim to raise the level of teaching, supervision, and leadership in education (AmidEast, 2021a, 2021b; MoEHE, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c).

The MoE provides in-service teacher training at three levels. The first level is a mandatory training for the newly practising teachers that targets the curriculum, its content, teaching methods, and assessments. The second level is developmental workshops to support teachers in tackling learning problems in their learners as well as workshops on innovative application of the curriculum. The third level is the pioneering training workshops that aim to enhance the teachers' pedagogical skills to further improve learners' critical thinking skills (Engelbrecht et al., 2015).

The second provider of in-service teacher education is the UNRWA. UNRWA provides extensive teacher training courses and sessions for teachers working at its schools (MoEHE, 2016). In 2013, UNRWA endorsed a teacher policy to provide teachers with PD opportunities to strengthen the teacher workforce and their supporting systems (UNRWA, 2021). UNRWA's approach in reforming education has been holistic and coherent. UNRWA attempts to divert from the traditional cascade approach that has been mostly employed in Palestine over the past years.

The third provider of in-service teacher training and PD programmes for teachers in Palestine comes from foreign non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that aim at teacher improvement and empowerment (Engelbrecht et al., 2015; Khaldi, 2010).

Evolution of In-service Teacher Education Programmes in the Public School Sector in Palestine for the Years 1994–2019

Once the MoE was established in 1994, it prioritised its massive duties and started focusing on designing a Palestinian curriculum after all the previously imposed ones. Teachers then were perceived as a means to implement the new curriculum; hence, their commitment and enthusiasm to teaching started deteriorating. Additionally, teachers have lost their social, economic, and political status due to the MoE's firm hierarchy (Wahbeh, 2000). The MoE was so consumed in training the teachers on the new curriculum (Nicolai, 2007) that it overlooked other integral parts of the teaching process. It was not until years later that the MoE started paying attention to the importance of enhancing the quality and development of teachers (Nicolai, 2007). There were no clear guidelines for the development or evaluation of any teacher education programmes during that period of time (Burke et al., 2020). With the absence of an accredited licensing system for teachers, there were no standards or rigid requirements for appointing teachers in the Palestinian schools. Hiring school teachers was not done on the basis that teachers hold a university degree or a professional teaching qualification, so neither was a requirement (Burke et al., 2020).

In 2007, there was an obvious need to have a comprehensive approach for teacher education (Shinn, 2012). The MoE launched a reform plan in 2008 to address the issue of lack of quality of education and development programmes for teachers (Dajani, 2015). A five-year Teacher Education Strategy (TES) project was developed by UNESCO in 2008 to be implemented by the MoE despite the minimal access to resources (Burke et al., 2020; MoEHE, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c). The TES aimed at improving education in Palestine, and one of its objectives was to enhance the continuing PD programmes for teachers. The TES provided critical assessment to the teaching profession in Palestine, which evoked donors and attracted attention to the importance of teacher education in the process of reforming education. Based on the strategy, a report was conducted to assess and measure its success. The report highlighted that the available teacher education programmes in Palestine were outdated, focused mainly on theory, lacked the elements of practical activities, and did not have adequate measurements and assessment tools (Burke et al., 2020; Hashweh, 2011). At that point, teachers seemed to be adopting a teacher-centred pedagogy along with utilising the basic and traditional assessment approaches in their teaching (Shinn, 2012). That approach affected the education system adversely. Accordingly, experts called for the adoption of a framework for in-service teacher training and PD programmes as well as providing adequate training for school principals, trainers, and supervisors (Hashweh, 2011). Moreover, the TES report showed that most of the participating teachers did not have a university degree while teaching, and about half of the participating teachers only had professional teaching qualification (Burke et al., 2020). The MoE took action and required that all teachers need to have both a university degree and a professional teaching qualification. The MoE put plans in action to improve and accredit the teacher education programmes as

well as establish a career structure for teachers (MoEHE, 2019). Throughout these years, the MoE started implementing its plans and establishing a career development structure to encourage and motivate teachers to engage in the provided in-service teacher education programmes (Engelbrecht et al., 2015). Despite the efforts, it was not until the years of 2013–2014 that formal licensing for teachers was established (Dajani, 2015).

Derived from the outcome of the TES project and with funding from the World Bank, a Teacher Education Improvement Project (TEIP) was launched in 2011 as a pilot phase till 2015, and with more funding, it was put in action from 2015 till 2019 (MoEHE, 2019). The TEIP aimed to further develop the teaching profession and the teacher education programmes and enhance the leadership and management skills. The TEIP focused on supporting the PD of in-service school teachers with an emphasis on the underqualified ones (MoEHE, 2019). The TEIP developed a Palestinian Teacher Professional Development Index (PTPDI) as a framework to specify competencies for in-service teachers and to monitor their progress for the period of 2011 till 2019 (MoEHE, 2018). Additionally, the PTPDI was perceived to guide the process of planning for PD programmes for teachers based on their needs. There were some positive impacts reported of the TEIP model but not during the pilot model. Teachers' views changed positively, teaching became more student-focused, and there was an improvement in in-service teachers' use and applications of new teaching strategies and skills (Burke et al., 2020; World Bank, 2019). Overall results showed improvement in the percentage of teachers who had access to in-service teacher education. Recommendations included involving all stakeholders in a participatory approach to prepare and apply any educational phase to ensure its success. Other recommendations were providing continuous supervision, monitoring of on-sites to assess PD needs, as well as reducing the number of modules offered to in-service teachers (World Bank, 2019).

The TEIP programme focused on primary grade-level teachers. As for the secondary school teachers, a Leadership and Teacher Development programme (LTD), that was developed by AmidEast and MoE, was launched in 2012 (AmidEast, 2021a, 2021b). The LTD programme came as a response to the unsatisfactory previously attended teacher education programmes as reported by teachers (Dajani, 2015). The LTD programme was a comprehensive education reform with an objective of improving the teachers' classroom practices (Dajani, 2015). However, the LTD targeted leadership and principals not only in-service teachers. The LTD project pillared the development of the PD diploma programme that was provided for in-service teachers at the NIET. LTD continued for six years till 2018 and demonstrated some improvement in the teaching and learning practices as well as contributed to decentralisation of decisions-making in the MoE (AmidEast, 2021a, 2021b). Despite the fact that findings demonstrated progression in lesson writings, strategies of teaching, and assessment tools, major elements such as critical reflection were not accounted for in the programme (Qindah, 2019). The programme lacked tools for assessing long-term impact on teachers. Based on the LTD project, there were recommendations to include teachers, their perception, and voices in the process, and

conduct longitudinal study of learners' achievements (Cristillo et al., 2016). Recommendations called for more research to be conducted on PD and teacher training programmes and their impact on the education system (Qindah, 2019).

The Current Situation of In-service Teacher Education at the Public Schools in Palestine

There seems to be a lack of research about teacher education programmes for in-service teachers in Palestine for the last few years. Part of this gap could be related to the impact of COVID-19 that resulted in announcing a state of emergency in Palestine in March 2020 with a shift to online teaching (Shraim & Crompton, 2020). COVID-19 caused an disruption of education and subsequently hindered proper delivery of in-service teacher education programmes. The NIET summarised in its 2021 report that it had adapted and adjusted its programmes to be delivered remotely to its teachers during the year of 2020 and part of 2021 due to COVID-19 restrictions (MoEHE, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c). Nonetheless, there was no evidence of any tools used to collect and assess teachers' needs before the programmes, nor was there an evaluation of the outcome of the programmes. So far, the teacher education programmes have often come as a response to the previously reported unsatisfactory ones; however, there seems to be no major impact of the newly provided ones. Teachers are still reporting dissatisfaction and disappointment. Does the problem lie in lack of assessing teachers' needs or lack of proper tools to assess or evaluate the outcome of the programmes or in the approach or the model or in teachers' motivation or in everything altogether?

This section will highlight the current situation of the in-service teacher education programmes thus far based on certain features such as the plan, the methodological model of teacher education, the approach, the outcome, the integration of content, pedagogy and knowledge, and the funding of the programmes.

The Plan

The MoE published its Education Sector Strategic Plan for the years 2017 till 2022 based on the Education Development Strategic Plan of the years 2014–2019. In its generic education plan, the MoE set goals that focus on ensuring quality education in all sectors, progressing a student-centred teaching and learning pedagogy and environment, and assigning progress measures to evaluate outcomes and collect feedback (MoEHE, 2017). Although the plan did not target teacher education directly, it attributed the required achievements of the sought changes in education and curriculum to teachers. The MoE called for implementing the TES for all teachers so that the number of qualified in-service teachers based on the TES standards would

increase (MoEHE, 2017). The MoE planned to achieve the set goals by providing professional training, guidance, and incentives for educators under satisfactory work conditions to develop learners' skills and values. To motivate teachers to take part in PD programmes, the MoE planned on linking career development to training programmes (MoEHE, 2017).

The Methodological Model

The MoE has been using the cascade model in its teacher education programmes to provide mass training for teachers within a short period of time (Engelbrecht et al., 2015; Nicolai, 2007). Besides the cascade model, the MoE provided training using the cluster approach, which aimed at teachers within a specific school cluster to train together to tackle their distinct local challenges (MoEHE, 2014). Using the cascade model, the MoE selected some supervisors or teacher trainers to attend the training sessions. The supervisors would then disseminate the training to other supervisors who would eventually cascade the training to their teachers (Engelbrecht et al., 2015; MoEHE, 2008a, 2008b, 2008c; Nicolai, 2007). The supervisors and teacher trainers delivered the material based on their own understanding and perspective of the training they received. Although the cascade model has been widely used and for a long period of time, it was not favoured by teachers as they reported it was of a poor quality (Nicolai, 2007). Another issue that surfaced in this model of training was that there were not enough teacher trainers. The MoE was looking for teachers to train other teachers but could not find the required skills in any teachers to deliver the training to others (Nicolai, 2007). Therefore, there was no guarantee that a quality training was delivered. Additionally, teachers reported that there was minimal application of what has been learned in the sessions of the cascade model in the classroom (MoEHE, 2014). Teachers stated that trainers' characteristics and relevance of material are of high importance when it comes to this kind of training to ensure its success (Nassar, 2019). Despite the fact that the cascade model provided less work on behalf of the MoE, many of the teacher trainers and supervisors stated that there was a lack of support from the MoE since they were expected to design their own training to disseminate to their teachers (Khaldi & Nassar, 2021). The cascade model still showed its weaknesses; however, the MoE has been using it because it can provide training to a large number of teachers in a short period of time (Nassar, 2019; Nicolai, 2007). The cascade model resulted in segmented in-service teacher trainings, and thus, the Palestinian education system has suffered from the fragmented approach in training and the methodological cascade model of training (Engelbrecht et al., 2015; Nicolai, 2007).

The Approach

The NIET, under the supervision of the MoE, has been providing mandatory in-service teacher education programmes to public school teachers with the aim to provide the education to as many teachers as possible in their different subject knowledge. In its 2021 plan, the NIET stressed the importance of investing in teachers and supporting their development, and to qualify as many teachers as possible to raise the percentage of the population of the qualified teachers (MoEHE, 2021a, 2021b, 2021c). The programmes offered at NIET are usually not tailored to individual teachers' needs or interests (Nassar, 2019). Teachers have reported that they were not given the option to participate in any step of developing the teacher education programmes, rather they were just asked to attend certain sessions on given dates on prespecified topics (Nassar, 2019). Attending teacher education programmes did not come from within the teachers nor were they motivated to develop professionally in the form that best suited them. The top-down approach of the MoE has demotivated teachers in their desire to develop professionally. Teachers did not see the value behind teacher education programmes. Teachers still reported their dissatisfaction from the obligatory and irrelevant programmes provided by the MoE (Bianchi & Hussein-Abdel Razeq, 2017; Dajani, 2015; Nassar, 2019; Wahbeh, 2011).

The Outcome

In spite of the improvements in some aspects of teaching, there are still many challenges throughout the offered programmes in Palestine. Some of these challenges are teacher demotivation, teacher resistance to changes and utilising technology, and lack of their satisfaction, enthusiasm and commitment to the training and development programmes (Bianchi & Hussein-Abdel Razeq, 2017; Burke et al., 2020; Nassar, 2019). The MoE has been centralised in its decision-making; teachers did not have any impact on the direction of education nor involvement in the process of delivering the teacher education programmes (Shinn, 2012). The outcome of the programmes did not have any long-term impact on the learning process. There is no evidence of actual implementation of the newly acquired skills and knowledge and thus lack of evidence of change in the classrooms. Sustainability and tools of maintaining positive and long-term impact of such programmes have been a major concern. The top-down management culture approach, the centralised approach of the MoE, and the fragmented nature of in-service teacher training have caused shortcomings in the field of adequately providing the appropriate teacher education programmes for in-service teachers, and thus, it has been challenging to assess the effectiveness of the programmes offered (Engelbrecht et al., 2015). Teacher education programmes remain ineffective and inefficient in enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills. Consequently, the learning and teaching process is not moving forward as planned, and the Palestinian education system is still in agony.

Pedagogy, Content, and Knowledge (PCK)

Most of the in-service teacher education programmes in Palestine were based on theory. Many teachers underwent very little practical training in teaching and thus did not have the chance to apply their knowledge (Nassar, 2019; World Bank, 2019). Many teachers have reported that there was a lack of practical activities in the programmes and that they were not contextualised (Nassar, 2019). The programmes offered at NIET targeted teachers according to their grade level regardless of the subjects they were teaching. These programmes were usually standardised and generic. Teacher education programmes have mostly been administered in a traditional way in Palestine (Burke et al., 2020). They either focused on theory or focused on subject and lacked practical elements. A combination of knowledge in the subject content, theories of teaching, and pedagogy would need to be designed in the teacher education programmes to ensure coherence and connection to real-life context (Burke et al., 2020).

Funding

The MoE has been mostly partnering with foreign NGOs and importing programmes that target teacher PD (Ramahi, 2019). UNESCO has a major role in the teacher development in Palestine (Shinn, 2012; UNESCO, 2021). Additionally, World Bank, USAID, British Council, and countries like Germany, Finland, UK, and Norway have provided funding and training to the Palestinian education sector (Engelbrecht et al., 2015). The Palestinian Authority became aid dependent on the foreign institutions and thus on the foreign powers (Ramahi, 2019; Shinn, 2012). The approach of importing foreign programmes has contributed to infusing external values and promoting foreign powers, which resulted in obstructing the process of designing and developing of any local reform programmes (Ramahi, 2019). The MoE's dependence on foreign programmes that were not relevant or suitable to the Palestinian context was criticized by many members of the education society (Ramahi, 2015). Nonetheless, obtaining funding for educational activities is still a challenge for the MoE (MoEHE, 2017). Therefore, there seems to be a need to invest in local qualifications from teachers and teacher trainers to initiate local designing of teacher education programmes that suit the Palestinian context, needs, and interests.

To conclude, despite the tremendous efforts and intensive work the MoE has put into enhancing the education system and teacher development over the past two decades, achievements have been minimal. The teacher education programmes are still reported to have minimal impact on teachers' development. The MoE has not been successful in establishing proper, holistic, and coherent programmes. Although the MoE does not have an option but to rely on NGOs to develop its teachers, locally based agendas of reforming education in Palestine could still be developed. Transforming all the previous challenges into opportunities of learning and working

towards planning coherent and well-integrated teacher education programmes is a vision that is worth striving for.

In-service Teacher Education Programmes: Teacher Training or Professional Development Programmes?

There has been some language association in the field of in-service teacher training with the term professional development (Koeliner & Greenblatt, 2021), and thus, some training programmes may be classified as PD programmes and vice versa. However, there are various features for both types of the programmes that distinguish them from one another. In-service teacher training is a main element of the professional development of teachers that aims at equipping teachers with skills to upgrade the quality of education (Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019). PD, on the other hand, is a continuous recurring process that is influenced and prompted by changes in knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes of teachers to improve the learning outcomes (Cooper, 2004; Sparks & Richardson, 1998 as cited in Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019). This section will highlight the main differences between the two types of programmes.

In-service Teacher Training Programmes

According to UNESCO and International Task Force on Teachers for Education 2030, (2019), in-service teacher training is the process that employed teachers go through to refresh and reform their professional knowledge and skills. In-service teacher training is a short-term training that is targeted at practising teachers and professionals with the aim of acquiring new knowledge, methods, and strategies to improve their skills effectively and to fill any gap of professional inadequacy (Amadi, 2013; Osamwonyi, 2016). Teacher training programmes usually have the objective of solving or meeting an immediate need in a short period of time. These training or education modules can include refresher sessions or teaching workshops and thus may differ between primary and secondary school teachers (Singh, 2017). In-service teacher training usually aims for teachers to acquire new knowledge about changes to school curricula and the instructional skills required to implement a modified curriculum or new concepts (Omar, 2014). These trainings can also provide teachers with new teaching materials, new curricula, and new innovations that support them in their work to increase their level of professional knowledge (Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019; Safi, 2014). Effective in-service teacher training programmes aim at capacity building of teachers and foster teacher professionalism and development. They also develop competency in teachers within a formal process. However, there is not enough evidence that demonstrates how the new knowledge of the teacher

transfers to the learners. These programmes can take many forms such as lectures, conferences, seminars, and workshops (Amadi, 2013; Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019), and they are usually administered in groups. The training programmes need an expert to deliver the training, and they are often standardised with preset tools and guidelines to follow throughout the activities.

In-service teacher training is often compulsory for teachers to attend. It is essential for teachers to tackle the new changes in their profession by attending relevant training sessions to acquire the new understanding of the changes in the teaching and learning process (Omar, 2014). In-service teacher training is imperative to aid teachers to perform effectively and efficiently by obtaining new skills, learning to use certain tools and strategies, and updating their methodologies in their teaching practices (Osamwonyi, 2016). The major objective in in-service teacher training is to inspire and encourage teachers to self-evaluate their strengths and weaknesses as well as their knowledge and pedagogical skills (Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019). To promote growth in the academic qualifications, performance, and PD of teachers, the teacher training programmes have to be well planned, inclusive of resources and incentives, appropriately applied, and constantly evaluated (Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019). An imperative factor in teacher training programmes is that they have to be available for all school teachers (Safi, 2014) so that all teachers learn whatever new skills, strategies, or knowledge there is to capture. In-service teacher training can have an impact on the PD of teachers (Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019).

In-service Professional Development Programmes

Villegas-Reimers (2003) defined PD for teachers as the professional growth that teachers attain due to their increased experience in teaching, and to their constant and systematic examination of their teaching. Teachers grow and develop throughout the act of practising their teaching and reflecting on their own practices. According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), (2009) PD for teachers consists of a series of learning engagements that are focused on developing an individual's skills, knowledge, experience, and qualities as a teacher. These activities need to be learner focused to result in promoting learner outcome and achieve development. Diaz-Maggioli (2020) stated that PD has to be continuous. Conversely, according to Quirke (2020), PD is a lifelong learning journey that teachers experience in which they develop their skills, knowledge, and practices so that they perform to best serve their learners.

PD programmes focus on achieving long-term impact of attainment of skills and knowledge for both personal and professional development in teachers using a variety of learning opportunities (Amadi, 2013). In order to ensure teachers' quality and progression of their teaching practices, teachers need to constantly develop their knowledge and skills and have the opportunity to use and apply what they learn in the classroom. PD programmes are usually intensive, cooperative and incorporate an evaluation phase throughout them (Amadi, 2013). PD programmes follow a

holistic approach and are usually customised and personalised with a focus on the individuals' needs, rather than on the profession, so that the activities are related to teachers' interests (Bayar, 2014). PD gives the chance for teachers to accept new teaching methods and work with different learning styles that would help with dealing with differentiation of students (Amadi, 2013). The teachers participating in the PD programmes need to show growth and progress in their self-learning process.

PD programmes aim at promoting knowledge and growth in the teachers that will reflect positively on teachers' performance and on the long run on the learners' output. (Bayar, 2014). In order for PD to be effective, it has to cause a change in teachers' practices and learners' outcome through structured learning engagements (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). PD programmes support teachers in making informed decisions to solve problems more professionally in the classrooms. Teachers need to be given ample time to learn the new strategies, tools, and methods, apply them in the classroom, master them, and integrate them in their practices (Amadi, 2013; Cleaver et al., 2020).

PD programmes need to have certain features to ensure their success. They have to be concentrated on individual teachers' needs, focused on content, engaging for teachers, supportive of collaboration and interaction, incorporating clear and successful models of effective practices, and providing coaching, expert support, feedback, and reflection (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Hirsh, 2015). Additionally, Hirsh (2015) advocated the importance of ensuring sustainability of the PD programmes as well as planning the programmes over a certain number of days rather than having them as stand-alone courses. PD can take a variety of formats and approaches (Hueber, 2011). It can be formal or informal. It can also be individual based or within a group. PD programmes can be either traditional or non-traditional. The former includes attending short workshops, sessions, conferences, and lectures, while the latter includes activities such as mentoring, coaching, performance feedback tasks, ongoing collaboration, and peer observation (Bayar, 2014; Cleaver et al., 2020; OECD, 2014). PD can focus in its core on content, curriculum design, lesson planning, pedagogy, practical activities, or a mix of all. To ensure a change in learning occurs and teachers' skills and knowledge progress appropriately, it is crucial for institutions to decide on and find the suitable activities that match a wide number of teachers' needs and interests. It is also recommended that PD programmes of teachers are aligned with their initial education in order to ensure connectivity and coherence (Sahlberg, 2015).

The Distinction

There is a difference between teaching teachers on how to do their job and teaching them how to excel at their job by continuously learning how to become more creative, innovative, and become better problem-solvers and critical thinkers. In-service teacher training teaches practising teachers how to be proficient in their

teaching practices, while PD teaches teachers how to excel in their teaching profession. Teachers first learn how to teach and then they move on to developing their knowledge and skills. PD for teachers is what takes place after teacher training has occurred. Teachers need to constantly upgrade their skills and knowledge and promote positive change in the learners' outcome.

PD requires teachers to take an integral part in transforming the knowledge they acquire into the classroom. Teacher PD usually has broader and deeper objectives than teacher training. PD focuses on the philosophical aspects with an emphasis on promoting change and improving skills. These objectives can be adjusted over time to meet the expectations and demands of the education society. Teachers may attend teacher training programmes and comprehend the introduced material; however, they might not apply what they have learned in their classrooms (Safi, 2014). On the other hand, PD takes place when the trained teachers apply the new knowledge or strategies in the classroom and develop their' practices and teaching instructions (Irisconnect, 2020; Safi, 2014).

Sahlberg (2015) referred to professionalism as the core feature of teaching that encourages teachers to utilise and apply the upgraded developments and knowledge in the teaching practices. Teachers learn and get exposed to new materials, knowledge, and skills. Then, they need to develop that new knowledge by attending PD programmes to ensure its application while practising reflection and getting feedback about the practices. The appropriate PD programmes can contribute to enhancing the teachers' quality and thus the quality of education. That can take place by allowing teachers the opportunities to update their skills, knowledge, and practices with the latest pedagogies, methodologies, strategies, educational instruments, and knowledge of content (Khaldi & Nassar, 2021).

The Distinction of Teacher Education Programmes in Palestine—Where Is the Fine Line?

In Palestine, many of the teacher programmes that are offered to in-service school teachers are mostly identified as PD programmes. On the other hand, the programmes that are offered to pre-service teachers are usually referred to as training programmes. There seems to be a misuse of the linguistic terms when it comes to specifying the programmes offered to in-service teachers' education. The career status of teachers is not the indicator to specify whether the programme is a training or PD, rather, the characteristics and objectives of each.

On a foundational level, what matters is whether each type of the in-service teacher education programmes offered is well defined and distinguished using the proper criteria and characteristics. Therefore, it is crucial for programme designers, policy-makers, and educational administrators to identify the objectives based on teachers' needs, the content, the type of activities included, the format of the sessions, the model, and the approach of recruiting teachers to the programmes. Raising teachers'

awareness and involving them in the process should increase their motivation and commitment to develop professionally.

Implications and Recommendations About In-service Teacher Education Programmes in Palestine

The following recommendations and implications for the future are suggested to facilitate the distinction between the two terms. That should contribute to designing and delivering fruitful teacher education programmes that empower teachers and enhance the quality of education in Palestine.

- **Raise awareness:** Policy-makers, administrators, researchers, and academics have a responsibility in threshing out the terminology used for teacher education programmes as well as the various features and criteria for each type. They need to raise awareness about the differences between teacher training and PD programmes. The distinction has to be clearly communicated to teachers and programme designers as well. That clarity may ease the path in setting the goals of each type of programme ahead of time to comply with the features of each when put into action. In consequence, communicating with teachers about the importance of each type of programme, as well as the objectives, will guide teachers in making informed decisions about which type they need to take part in if given the choice.
- **Role of authority in shaping education and society:** In order to benefit the education society and ensure it develops and progresses in a healthy and democratic way, and to foster evolving a society of open-minded, compassionate and well-educated individuals, there needs to be a properly exercising authority (Snelgrove, 2019). However, Snelgrove (2019) identifies the distinction between authority and power, from a philosophical point of view, in education to show how they can be utilised properly to promote an empathetic, knowledgeable, and open-minded society. Having said that, the policy-makers and administrators at the MoE can have a positive influence on involving teachers and professionals in the education field and in decision-making to work together to enhance the teacher education programmes in Palestine and thus contribute collectively to shaping education.
- **Make it research-based:** There is a lack of current research about teacher education programmes in Palestine, especially research that involves teachers. There has been a call for having teacher training programmes by conducting action research along with teachers' participation and involvement to develop their practices (Ramahi, 2019; Qindah, 2019). It is imperative to focus on having research-based teacher education (Sahlberg, 2015), which could occur through the in-service teacher PD programmes. Research shows that conducting empirical and scientific research through teacher education may promote effective progress in professionalism in the teaching profession (Sahlberg, 2015). When teachers conduct research, they will work with knowledgeable colleagues, professionals,

and practitioners, while at the same time contribute to decision-making and positive changes in the educational field. It is essential to design the programmes with teachers' involvement and around their needs and interests, while encouraging them to engage in research-based activities to develop their own skills and knowledge and aid in enhancing the quality of the whole education society.

- **Focus on quality rather than quantity:** Due to the circumstances that the MoE has been operating under, it has been prioritizing quantity over quality when it comes to developing teachers. However, the education system needs more quality teachers in order to rise and operate effectively. No matter how many teachers a student may have, the learner's outcome may not be of high quality or value if teachers are not well-qualified. Instead of trying to provide training or PD to as many teachers as possible, it is worth working on deepening the intended learning outcomes of the programmes in order to have a long-term impact. Giving teachers the space to share their experiences and reflect on their practices will help them move forward in their teaching. Teachers can learn from each other and at the same time empower each other. There are models other than the cascade model that are feasible to adopt and adapt to suit the Palestinian context. At the end of the day, there has to be a model that matches the needs, interests, and cultural aspects of the Palestinian society, while meeting the intended objectives.
- **Integrate pedagogy, content, and knowledge (PCK):** No matter how many theories in-service teachers learn, learning occurs when these teachers practise real-life teaching and share examples from their experiences (Boud et al., 1993). There has been a development in reforming teacher education programmes to integrate both the subject matter and the pedagogy to link theory and practice in order to shape genuine knowledge and promote teachers' development (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Dewey, 1965; Shulman, 1986). It is essential to integrate pedagogy, curriculum, and content knowledge in any teacher education programme to enhance teachers' motivation and interest, equip them with the latest trends in teaching strategies and methodologies, and promote positive learner outcomes (Rice, 2003; Richards & Farrell, 2005). Teacher education programmes ought to be designed with a goal of shrinking the gap between theories taught and actual teaching practices. It is significant to combine the knowledge of teaching with the knowledge of content and pedagogies so that teachers are knowledgeable in a holistic and coherent way of the art of teaching and of the topic they are expected to teach professionally. Thus, teacher training programmes should allow teachers to put in practice their learning of theories and methodologies and start reflecting on their own learning and practices. Providing the opportunity for teachers to practice a variety of methods and teaching strategies would add to teachers' experience. That would be enhanced when teachers go through a detailed reflective process of their practices.

A Controversial Issue: Are Teacher Education Programmes Even Necessary?

Having elaborated on each type of in-service teacher education programme and specified each one's features, criteria, and benefits, the question remains: Are these programmes even necessary? It is imperative for policy-makers, school administrators, and people in the educational authorities to learn deeply about the ways teachers develop and advance in their profession. That will allow them to make wise decisions in terms of investing time, energy, and resources in professional development or teacher education programmes (Timperley et al., 2007). It is equally important to learn about adult learning and how teachers, in this case, would contribute to enhancing student learning and promote learner outcome. For instance, the theory of adult learning of Knowles (1984) distinguishes between the model of pedagogical focus of content and the model of andragogic focus of the process of adult learning (Knowles et al., 2020). This theory assumes that adults mature with their growing supplies of experiences more than any academic or social coercion to learn, and thus adults become oriented to learning because of their developmental tasks (Knowles et al., 2020). Teachers may not be very comfortable feeling challenged about their beliefs, practices, and the way they think the world works (Timperley et al., 2007). It is crucial to keep in mind that teachers' initial understanding about how the world works and their preconceptions need to be accounted for in the process of planning teacher education programmes (Timperley et al., 2007). That ensures that through the process of progressing professionally, teachers grasp new concepts and information while constructing their own learning and monitoring their progress by thinking about their thinking which is referred to by Flavell (1979) as the metacognition theory.

Conclusion

The changing needs and expectations of the Palestinian society and the advancement in technology put pressure on teachers to continuously upgrade their skills and knowledge. Teachers in Palestine are unmotivated and uninterested in updating their knowledge or skills professionally due to many reasons, such as the heavy workload, the low salaries, and the underestimation of the impact of the teacher education programmes. On top of that, teachers in Palestine teach under formidable conditions due to the military occupation, lack of resources, and restriction of movement. These factors form many obstacles in the face of the Ministry of Education and its educational strategic planning of any teacher education programmes for in-service teachers. Part of the weaknesses in the teacher education programmes is the lack of proper tools to assess, measure, and evaluate their impact on teachers and learners in an attempt to enhance any future programmes based on concrete feedback and research. There is a need to conduct more research about various teacher education

programmes for in-service teachers in Palestine to evaluate them and plan forward based on the collected feedback and assessment. There is also a need to have locally designed teacher education programmes that invest in the knowledge and creativity of local teachers, teacher trainers, programme designers, and decision-makers. Palestinians are the most expert in the Palestinian context, curriculum, educational society, and available resources. They can design, adapt, deliver, and develop the programmes to what suits their needs and interests to foster learning. It is recommended that the programmes are a collaborative work of all parties involved in the process to ensure coherence and cooperation and to raise motivation among teachers.

Although teacher training and professional development programmes differ in their design, objectives, and delivery, they are a continuation for each other. Raising awareness about the specifics of each type is essential to ensure its effectiveness. The appropriate teacher training programmes need to be well planned, taking into consideration all elements and features of each type to properly deliver them to the intended teachers. When properly planned, designed, delivered, assessed, and evaluated, the in-service teacher education programmes can foster growth in the teachers' professionalism and academic qualifications, and thus reflect positively on learners' outcome.

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