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IPS Working Paper No. 2

**From Training to Improving Classroom Practices:
Learning from School Improvement Program Intervention in a
Mountainous Public Secondary School in
Gilgit-Baltistan, Pakistan**

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**From Training to Improving Classroom Practices:
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Abstract

This study reports learning from a professional development (PD) session and classroom action research from an English class conducted in the mountainous northern part of Pakistan. The researcher got training from Professional Development Centre North (PDCN) as a member of the Quality Assurance Team and then conducted a five-day workshop for teachers on various general teaching techniques, lesson planning, writing reflections/portfolios and classroom management. After the sessions, the teachers applied these knowledge and skills in their respective classes, and English teachers did action research with the researcher to improve the language skills of grade 7 students for three cycles. Pre- and post-intervention tests, teachers' reflective diaries, lesson plans, portfolio books and discussions with teachers were sources of data collection. The present study shows that there is a thirst amongst teachers for professional grooming. Also, students gradually benefit from new teaching techniques. This study suggests including various PD models in the school development plan to improve teachers' pedagogical content knowledge, which will result in improved learning outcomes for students. The sustainability of these initiatives is a challenge due to the lack of proper mechanisms and policies in the government schools of Gilgit-Baltistan. Therefore, there is a need for a school policy for English teachers' PD at the classroom level to improve teaching practices and students' learning.

Keywords: Professional development of teachers; English teaching; Action research; Hands-on and minds-on activities

Introduction

In school systems across the globe, school-based professional development (PD) is an important tool for developing teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and bringing innovation in their teaching to improve students' learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner 2017). However, Pakistan's education system is full of paradoxes and issues, including poorly qualified and untrained teachers, poor infrastructures, outdated curricula and few resources. Above all, the three-parallel education systems: the public, private, and Madrassa¹ system. These systems simultaneously promote three ideologies that contradict each other on fundamental beliefs. In addition, political interference and out-of-school children (22.8 million) serve as an issue. As a signatory of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, Pakistan spends 2.3 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on education, which is below the target of 5 percent. Besides, there is a learning crisis and gap in lower grades for the early years, and there is a need for immediate attention to the basics of literacy and numeracy (UNESCO 2020). Although more than 200 teacher institutes work in Pakistan, their quality except few is questionable for producing teachers with poor content and pedagogy. As under-researched country Pakistan needs to train its teachers and engage them in research activities.

Among the 200 training institutes across the country, Professional Development Center North (PDCN) is one of the private institutes training teachers and improving schools, particularly public schools in Gilgit-Baltistan (GB). Since its inception in 2001, PDCN has been committed to improving public schools in GB, training teachers through its various short and long courses and interventions. School Improvement Program (SIP) is one such flagship program of PDCN where headteachers and subject teachers are trained and sent back to the

¹ Madaris system of education in Pakistan is run under the leadership and management of religious leaders. These systems are non-registered institutions and seen as suspicious by elite class.

schools for training their school teachers and intervention for improving students' learning outcomes. I attended a quarterly week-long SIP training titled "Quality Assurance Team" (QAT) for one year. The training exposed us to various theories of learning, teaching strategies and leadership practices. SIP training majorly focused school-based PD of teachers and promote research culture in the school to help classroom teachers become reflective practitioners and creative solvers of their classroom teaching through hands-on and minds-on activities to enhance students' learning outcomes getting support from School Management Committee and Mother Support Groups.

As a district-wide intervention, SIP heavily relied on the headmaster of the school for its success because the headmaster plays a key role, and this happens only if the headmaster believes in distributed leadership where the various tasks of the school are widely distributed, and the teachers and headmaster work together to achieve the goal. The headmaster ensures that teaching and learning are smooth, and teachers get sufficient support and access to available resources to improve classroom practices. However, government-school classrooms in GB are predominantly traditional and teacher-centred and heavily rely on the talk and chalk method. Some headmasters are very conventional and discourage innovation and creativity; instead, they only focus on their official work. Nonetheless, some headmasters are well trained and try to create a learning environment for their teachers (Tajik and Wali 2020).

Literature Review

What is Professional Development in School?

Professional development (PD) at the broader spectrum refers to providing a conducive environment to strengthen teachers' ability to work and perform in innovative and creative ways. These include teaching in a better way and adjusting to the environment and needs of the classroom. In a school context, PD can be defined as teachers' ability to learn, reflect,

meaning-making and apply what they have learnt to foster students' learning outcomes. In other words, teachers' PD has a direct bearing on student learning (DeMonte 2013).

To pursue teaching and learning goals in the school, the teachers play a crucial role, but due to the rapid growth of knowledge in the globalised era, teachers always feel difficulties keeping themselves updated. For professional survival, the teachers need to undergo continued training to refresh and update their knowledge, skills and disposition to fulfil the contemporary classroom and education demands. Therefore, they struggle to implement theories into practice for their professional renewal and avail opportunities for professional training. We need to be cognizant that PD is not an accident or one-time activity; rather, it is a meticulous and ongoing renewal of skills, content, ideas, reflection on practices and a curiosity to learn new things all the time. It needs resources, commitment, motivation and guidance from the headmaster (DeMonte 2013).

Professional Development Models

Several PD models are being practiced in Pakistan and other parts of the world for teachers' training and development. These models include Continuing Development Program (CDP), Cascade Model, Site-Based Models, Mentoring Model, Deficit Model and Communities of Practice and Deficit and Emancipatory Model in action research (Stieler-Hunt and Jones 2019). Some models are briefly explained below.

Continuing Development Program

Padwad and Dixit (2014) explain that CDP is an ongoing and planned struggle by teachers to enhance professional and personal pedagogy and sharpen or renew their knowledge skills and practices to improve students' learning. These authors view that the primary function of CDP aims to foster teachers' competence and become self-motivated and self-directed learners. For several years, CDP has broadly caught the attention of policy practitioners, professionals and school administrators to enhance the quality of work and better outcomes in their organisations.

In Pakistan, the national teacher standard emphasises continuous learning and PD. Therefore, in all provinces, ministries and directorates develop the CPD framework for teachers and implement it. In Punjab province, district teacher educators perform this job. Teacher educators' roles are administrative and managerial; however, the role of deputy teacher educators is purely academic. The challenge these educators face is the non-seriousness of the teachers. The educators cannot force them to take the training seriously because there is no such policy that makes them accountable and binds them to follow the training. Consequently, government teachers enjoy freedom from being asked about their performance or students' learning (Saeed and Akhtar 2017, 2). GB also relies on the federal government for teachers' trainings.

Cascade Model

Cascade Model is a top-down model for teachers' PD. In this model, information travels from expert to lower level of teachers at different layers (Abeysena, Philips, and Poppit 2016). In this model, the senior teacher gets training from experts and then trains other teachers in the school. In this way, the new information obtained from the expert is passed on to lower tiers, and finally, it reaches the classroom to improve teaching practices and students' learning outcomes. It is concerned that the Cascade Model would fail, and all the efforts will go away if handled unsystematically (Abeysena, Philips, and Poppit 2016). According to Ngeze, Khwaja, and Iyer (2018), teachers in China, Bangladesh, Nepal and the UK have successfully trained teachers through this model. Benefits of this model include the use of existing teachers, cost-effectiveness and short timing span during training. However, information flow in this model is a one-way transmission from experts to the lower-level teachers without feedback and discussion. Therefore, the likelihood of misinterpretation of the content, the lack of confidence in conducting training and the lack of knowledge have been reported. It is essential that before conducting the training, the trainer should have mastery over the content and have the

confidence to teach in a better way (Ngeze, Khwaja, and Iyer 2018). There are hardly studies on this model from Pakistan.

Action Research

As the name indicates, action research simply calls for action to bring a change or solve an issue related to a class. There are other terms associated with action research, such as “participatory”, “collaborative” and more. However, the core idea is that a group or a pair of teachers reflect on their classroom practices, identify an issue, make a plan, implement the plan and see the results if the problem related to their teaching is resolved or not (Moran 2007).

Proponents characterise action research that the scientific rigour and systematic approach make it unique from other problem-solving tools. The researcher robustly engages with literature to identify and modify the methodological tools to suit the exigencies of the situation and collects, analyses, and presents data on an ongoing and cyclical basis. In action research, teachers focus on research, learn from the best practices, involve in hands-on and minds-on activities and apply their new learning in their class to make a difference. The teacher-researchers do not endeavour to act objectively rather openly acknowledges their bias to the other participants.

The above discussion highlights various models being practiced in different countries and Pakistan. It is clear that each model has its pros and cons. Important to understand is that no model fits all well and works well in all the contexts. As educators, how can we relate to our context is important? What these models focus on is to train the teachers only. What happens later or how those training travels to the classroom to influence students learning is missing in these models. Therefore, this study takes one step further by doing an intervention in the class to improve students’ learning based on the new learning of the workshop.

Due to nature and scope, this study does not fall under a single model; instead, it falls under many of the models mentioned above. It is hard to label this study with a particular

model. Instead, it is an amalgamation of several models, which have been synthesised in the findings section. Since the action research part of this study is about English language skills, it is important to discuss the position of English as a second language in the educational curriculum of Pakistan.

English and National Curriculum

The national curriculum gives great importance to English for development in Pakistan. The document reads: “In the current scenario, English is the language of international communication, higher learning and better career options. It should, therefore, reach the masses so that there is no discrimination amongst the rich and poor in Pakistan in terms of opportunities for personal, professional and economic development” (Ministry of Education of Pakistan 2006, 1). Both *National Curriculum 2006* and *National Curriculum 2009* emphasise activity-based teaching and teaching beyond text to teach English. These policies specifically mention students’ learning outcomes (SLOs), standards and benchmarks for each class. To achieve the SLOs and standards, these policies encourage the use of reference books and materials other than the given textbooks.

English Textbooks in Public Schools

English textbooks (taught curriculum) in public schools—though of poor quality—also emphasise activity-based teaching. While the majority of teachers, if not all, place their teaching predominantly on the talk and chalk method, these teachers nonetheless have the ability to advance. What they lack currently are teaching skills, motivation and determination to make changes in their classrooms. The traditional teaching method focuses on the lecture method without hands-on activities, making the students hardly fully understand the language pattern and differentiating teaching language from teaching a science or other subject that focuses on understanding scientific concepts (Warsi 2004).

Research Design

Research Questions

This study addresses the following three research questions.

1. How has QAT's school-based PD workshop improved teachers' pedagogical practices?
2. What are teachers' perceptions about the PD workshop?
3. How can grade 7 students' learning in English be enhanced through action research intervention?

Methodology

The study was conducted in a public secondary school situated in a mountainous northern part of Pakistan. Currently, the school enrolls 450 students (178 female and 228 male). The school runs classes from Early Childhood Development to grade 8. There are ten teaching staff (including me as headmaster) and two ancillary staff in the school, which caters to society's most marginalised and ultra-poor segment.

As a QAT member, I had to conduct training in the school, keeping in view the needs and context of the school and the cluster. Therefore, for teachers' need analysis, a meeting was held with teachers. Afterward, a five-day workshop of 2.5 hours each was conducted in the school after recess. Key elements covered in the workshop were teacher's lesson plans, reflective writing, preparing portfolios and activity-based teaching through hands-on and minds-on activities, including Think-Pair-Share, Building Vocabulary Bank, Numbered Head Together, One-Minute Monologue, Trust Your Brain and Word of the Day. Similarly, John Dewey's original work of reflection was used to define reflection as active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it and the further conclusions to which it tends (Thorsen and DeVore 2013). The

workshop session was conducted using PowerPoint slides, group activities and presentations by teachers. Also, the teachers benefited from some videos related to classroom management and activity-based teaching.

For the intervention, the teachers were paired in four subjects: English, mathematics, science and social studies. I was paired with an English teacher for classroom intervention. In the whole process, I performed multiple roles, such as resource person to conduct the workshop, a collaborator and critical friend in action research, and a headmaster to oversee the functioning of SIP intervention in the school. After the workshop and the intervention that the teachers carried out in their classes, I did group discussions with the teachers to know about their views and new learnings from the workshop and the practices that they have started after the workshop. I also reviewed their lesson plans, portfolios and classroom displays for further deeper insights.

This working paper only presents the findings from action research intervention of English class and teachers' perceptions about and learning from the workshop. I leave the findings of the intervention of mathematics, science and social studies pairs for future writing and reflections.

Action Research Intervention and Results

Pre-Intervention Test and Class Intervention

The English teacher was teaching to students of grade 7. The class had 20 students, both male and female. The English teacher desired to intervene in that class, and he also shared some issues related to reading and writing and students' comprehension of his teaching. To scan the overall situation of the English class and to determine the existing learning of grade 7 students, a pre-intervention test was administered with the following specification and assigned marks (see Table 1).

Table 1. Questionnaire Specification

Items	Marks
Questions related to reading comprehension	10
Write meaning and make sentences of your own	15
Write about eight to ten sentences on a given topics	10
Use of adjectives/verbs/noun/pronoun	15
Total marks	50

Figure 1 shows that all the students have scored below 25 marks, 90 percent (18) students scored below 20 out of 50 marks. Based upon the result, we agreed that students have issues in all aspects of the test. So, we decided to plan with very basics.

Figure 1. Pre-intervention test results.

Cycle-One Intervention and Results

For the first week, three lessons were planned (reading comprehension, story and essay writing, and part of speech). The teacher started teaching as planned, and I observed his class. The techniques he used were loud reading, silent reading, skimming and scanning. He did not allow students to speak the local language and would punish those who did so. He wrote five questions on the board and said, “skim through your book at page 3 and answer the questions”. He further said that nobody was allowed to discuss with each other as it was silent reading.

After five minutes, no student was able to answer any questions. All the students were confused. Then the teacher proceeded to the next activity by reading a paragraph twice and asked the students to follow. This time only one student did it. He wrote five words on the board with pronunciation and asked the students to repeat. The teacher then wrote their meanings and asked the students to take notes. He ended the lesson with an assignment: “use the five words we have learnt today to create a sentence of your own”. After the class, the teacher met met for five minutes to discuss and reflect on the session. Upon completing the first round of teaching, we took a short test to examine students’ learning outcomes.

Figure 2. Cycle-one intervention test results.

Figure 2 shows an overall gradual improvement in students’ learning. Only one student has scored above 25 marks. 255 students (5) have scored between 20 and 25 marks, and 10 percent students (2) have scored below 15 marks. It also elucidates that majority of the students are learning at the same pace. While checking the test paper, we found that most of the students solved the first part of the questions, which required them to answer questions based on a paragraph. But only two students attempted the writing part. We guessed that students knew the meaning of the words but misspelt them. Students could not make a complete sentence. This gave us an idea to plan for cycle two.

Cycle-Two Intervention and Results

Based on the reflections and observations, we did some different activities, such as peer assessment in the second cycle. Some techniques like a drill, loud reading and group work were continued. In cycle two, writing was introduced, as we believed that language skills were interlined, and one could support the other to develop. After the reading activity, the teacher assigned a task to the students to write a short paragraph of around ten sentences on 'my village'. The students performed this task in a group. Afterward, the students were asked to check the work of other groups and give them feedback with "stars" up to five if the writing was good and a "wish feedback" if the work had spelling and punctuation mistakes. This activity was a new idea for the students, and each group gave only stars to each other, even without reading the passage.

Moreover, while teaching grammar the next day, we introduced Think-Pair-Share, Word of the Day, Trust Your Brain and Vocabulary Bank strategy (Tomlinson and Moon 2013). Our purpose in the week was first to reinforce the previous learning. Therefore, the back and forth method was used to remind them of the previous activities and associate it with the current one. We decided to continue this procedure in the third week. It is noteworthy that students' learning was also assessed on the spot.

Figure 3 shows 10 percent (2) students scored 30 marks. Thirty percent (6) students have scored between 25 and 30 marks. The same number of students scored between 20 and 25 marks, and none of the students scored below 15 marks. Compared to cycle one, where 10 percent (2) students (NG & SB) had scored 14 marks, these two students have jumped to 19 marks and 18 marks, respectively. Students learning increased from 19 percent to 24 percent on the second cycle.

Figure 3. Cycle-two intervention test results.

Cycle-Three Intervention and Post-Intervention Test Results

Like the previous weeks, we reflected on the techniques and their effects on students' learning. We introduced three new techniques this week. In the last cycle, we taught four lessons using hands-on and minds-on activities. This time we could feel that students were almost familiar with what we were doing in the class, and they would wait for the time restlessly to work in a group and give feedback to each other. To make the class more exciting and captivating, we adopted another activity: the think-Pair-share technique. Students took a keen interest. The specific arrangement of the activity of telling five characteristics of their favourite teacher was as follows.

- **Stage 1: Thinking.** The students were asked to think critically on the assigned task for two minutes.
- **Stage 2: Pairing.** After two minutes, students were asked to form a group with students of their choice and discuss their thoughts for five minutes.
- **Stage 3: Sharing.** Students shared their ideas with the whole class.

The next day, another technique, Numbered Head Together, was used. This technique meant to assess students' understanding of a lesson topic.

- **Step 1: Numbering.** Students were divided into 3- to 4-member teams and assigned with a number.
- **Step 2: Questioning.** Students were asked a general question, like how can you improve your English-speaking skill?
- **Step 3: Head Together.** The students were instructed to put their heads together and discuss the answers so that every student knew the answers well.
- **Step 4: Answering.** A random number was called, and students of the number from each group came in front of the class and answered the question.

It was a very good activity, and we also learnt that explicit instruction was fundamental for students to understand the questions and act accordingly. Upon completing the three lessons, we again administered the same test as the pre-intervention one to see if there was any improvement in students' learning. Figure 4 shows the post-intervention test results.

Figure 4. Post-intervention test results.

The post-intervention result reveals that students have satisfactorily improved than before. One student (one percent) has scored 42 marks. Twenty percent (4) have scored between 35 and 40 marks. Fifty percent (10) have scored between 25 and 34 marks, and none

of the students was below 20 marks. Compared to the second cycle results, students' learning has improved by six percent. The mean mark was 16 in the pre-intervention test, and it was 18 in the first cycle test, 23 in the second cycle test, and 29 in the post-intervention test. In total, the mean score has increased by 13 percent.

Similarly, in the first-cycle intervention, the students' average learning score was 19, while in the second-cycle intervention, it went up to 24. In the last intervention, it was 30 percent, with an overall improvement of 11 percent, comparatively. This result shows that there was minor but gradual progress in students' learning. It was evident that the students were fragile, and with one intervention, such change is appreciable. In the third cycle, students not only participated in class activities but also participated in the presentations. With the gradual progress, we kept changing the techniques and found that students were keen on the activities and tried to speak English with the teacher and their classmates. When asked about the activities, the students said that they were happy to learn new things. One student said, "it was a very interesting activity and provided me the time to think. Teachers should use such technique daily" (Diary of Teacher C).

Teachers' Perceptions about and Learning from the Workshop

As mentioned earlier that, due to some practical reasons, classroom interventions of mathematics and science and social studies are not part of this article. However, I discussed with the teachers about their new learning from the workshop and the practices they applied in the class after the workshop. There were polarised views which I have put in three sub-themes: teachers' perspectives and new learning, changes in teachers' practices and challenges of teaching with new techniques.

Teachers' Perspectives and New Learning

Generally, the teachers have positive feelings about the workshop. They unanimously said that it was for the first time in school history they received this training which contributed to their learning and development. Also, the training engaged the community to play their role for the betterment of the school and students' learning. A teacher expressing his feelings said, "I am much thankful to you and PDCN for conducting the workshop for us. In the past, I have never got such training from the government. It is an amazing experience to learn new things" (Discussion with Teacher D).

During the discussion, the teachers also expressed that there was learning for the government to initiate such programs for the betterment of teachers. Such programs helped teachers stay tuned and refuel with new happenings and refresh their learning to meet the classroom needs. One teacher said, "our department should also plan such training for us. They have resources, but why don't they invest in training and learning is beyond comprehension" (Discussion with Teacher D).

Mentioning his learning from the workshop, a teacher explained :

I learnt to make a lesson plan with SMART objectives and writing reflections in training. After the session, I made five lesson plans and wrote six reflections which helped me to revisit my way of teaching in the class, my interaction with students, and dealing with disrupting students. I try to engage students in group work, but group activity is very difficult because our classroom is very small. What I do is when the weather is warm outside, I take the students out for group activity.

(Discussion with Teacher B)

From the discussion above, it is clear that the workshop has provided the teachers with a learning opportunity, and teachers felt good about it.

Changes in Teachers' Practices

Discussion with the teachers revealed that they have had learnt new things that influenced their practices, feelings and behaviours. The teachers said they had learnt new techniques about classroom management, teaching strategies and reflections, lesson plans, dealing with students and many more, and tried to practice those techniques in their classes. A teacher mentioned that,

I am trying to implement activity-based teaching in the class. Daily I try to engage more students in my lesson rather than talking to them more. I try to engage them and encourage their participation. I also appreciate their views. Before attending the workshop, I was strict and harsh towards students and would say shut-up, and there would be pin-drop silence after that. But now I think students are important, and we should have good relations with them. (Discussion with Teacher B)

Another teacher augmented that, “when I initially started giving students activities in the group, there used to be noise everywhere. I could not manage them because students were not familiar with such activities. Now I call numbers, and students are used to it and form a group immediately. I also learnt to make a portfolio which I have started, and it is not complete yet” (Discussion with Teacher A).

Lesson Planning

Discussion with teachers and review of lesson plan registers showed that teachers had started written lesson plans. Some have made five lessons and eight while two teachers have made fifteen and eighteen, respectively. When I asked those teachers, who had made more lesson plans, they said that it was a good opportunity for them to learn new teaching techniques and modify their teaching methods. A teacher said, “what I intend to teach to the students should be in written shape so that it will help me to teach without any confusion” (Discussion with Teacher C).

Activity-Based Teaching

The teachers argued that only lecture and regurgitation of the same thing is not going to work anymore. They needed to update their knowledge and skills; otherwise, they would retire as the other teachers have been without learning new things. They showed up the will to teach with a variety of activities. A teacher said that “when a shopkeeper sells the old stock, fewer customers visit his shop, and when the shopkeeper brings new things to the market, the customers also increase. Similarly, if we teach the same ideas repeatedly, the students will get bored, but if we teach the idea involving students in different ways, the students will enjoy it” (Discussion with Teacher A).

Changes in Behaviour

After the workshops, the teachers collectively agreed that they tried to change their way of dealing with students and tried to create a calm and harmonious environment in the class. As one teacher elucidated, “this session taught us new ways of teaching and learning. I try to implement them in the class, and hopefully, it will affect students learning. I am friendly with my students now. I am not harsh anymore. It is important that we should value our students whether they learn or not. They learn at their own pace, and we should be caring about the students” (Discussion with Teacher A). Another teacher said, “we should not say that I am right and students are wrong. Students are also right as they have ideas to share and stories to tell. We should respect and listen to their views” (Discussion with Teacher B).

Group Work

The teacher said that they gave group work to the students because it helped them support and learn from each other. The mathematics teacher said, “when I asked the students to solve a question individually, only five students solved it, and then I thought to give in a group. Now the learning was maximised, and every student was able to solve it with the help of their colleagues” (Discussion with Teacher A).

Challenges of Teaching with New Techniques

In the discussion, while the teachers highlighted the engagement in activity-based teaching, they embrace certain challenges, such as small-sized classrooms, resource constraints and some students' dominance. On inquiring, a teacher said, "you know, Sir, our classrooms are very small. When I give group activity, there is no space for students to work in the group. So, what I do is that I take the class outside and do group work in the playground. But it is not possible all the time because the weather is harsh in our area. I do it only if the weather outside is pleasant" (Discussion with Teacher C).

Another teacher mentioned the challenges related to the resources issue. "Group work requires charts, crayons, markers and other materials, and our school has few resources. When we use them, we cannot get other resources. This is a big challenge for me" (Discussion with Teacher A).

In the same vein, another teacher said, "when I give group work, some students try to dominate the group and control other students. In this way, the rest of the students do not get a chance to present in the class or learn in a group. Therefore, sometimes, I discourage those dominating students and ask them to give other students an opportunity to learn" (Discussion with Teacher B).

The above discussion highlights that the workshop has helped the teachers learn new things about their teaching and classroom management. They strived to implement new learning in the class to help students learn more. The teachers felt changes in their practices, behaviours and planning. They taught students using activities, behaved the students well, gave importance to students' ideas, and planned in writing before teaching. They believed that changes in their practices might improve students' learning. Although they were optimistic about activity-based teaching, they also faced certain classroom challenges, resources and disrupting students.

Discussion

Synthesis of Learning and Study

The intervention started with the training and ended up with an action research. Also, as mentioned earlier that the study does not fall under a particular PD model. Consequently, the amalgamation of multiple models synthesised our learning into the following model (Figure 5).

Figure 5. Multi-input Learning Model.

The model suggests that there are great similarities between the PD models, and using them interchangeably can help improve teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and students' learning outcomes.

Reflections, Lessons Learnt and Conclusion

The school where this study was conducted depicts a vulnerable situation of chilly weather, scarcity of human and material resources, poor infrastructure and immense poverty. The area is a single crop zone, and 99 percent of the population earns their breed through farming and herding. Despite all these challenges, education is a spark of hope for the local people in that remote area. These teachers have strong content knowledge but need further training to sharpen it. Teachers face difficulties in teaching using the English language. The majority of the teachers speak broken English. However, they are eager to learn. To quench their learning thirst, they used their spare time to participate in this project. However, could they continue to be motivated and maintain this commitment? I leave this question to the discretion of the teachers for their reflections. For PD, acceptance and cooperation are important, but unfortunately, they are what these teachers lack. I saw that few teachers would leave the session and go to their homes without permission. I could not force those teachers to sit in the class or take an interest in the activities.

This study does not claim students' mastery over English or make teachers fully competent over the content. Instead, it was a little effort to arouse teachers' motivation and help them change. Simultaneously, the teachers should also come forward and take initiatives to change and improve their practices. Overall, these teachers have a vital role in the development of the school and the village. No outsider would change the teachers except themselves. Such a school-based policy decision will have a great effect on students learning.

Creating a culture of togetherness and collaboration does not only help teachers but also help students enhance their learning outcomes. How we can sustain such initiatives and make them involved in the teaching is questioned. Unfortunately, most of such innovative activities lose their essence soon after the maturation stage. It is due to a lack of policies and accountability in the system, which makes teachers not responsible.

There is a cultural, social and geographical hindrance for changing teachers and making them reflective practitioners. Also, there is a local myth that jobs in government schools are a permanent hot spring that never stops. There is a need to challenge this myth, and I think this is why most of the teachers in government schools do not bother to grow professionally and get retired in the position where they were at the beginning of the service.

Policy Implications

Based on the intervention with teachers and students, this study found many policy gaps that hinder smooth learning in the class, not only for English but also for general teaching in the public sector in Gilgit-Baltistan. Below, I highlight some policy-level implications of this study.

Training and Certification Centre

Due to rapid technological changes, the demands of society and teaching are changing. Therefore, there is a need to establish an institution to train teachers and certify them and ensure the sustainability of training through monitoring. It will attract talented persons to teach and discourage bribe, favouritism, and ideological affiliations, offering an honour exit to unqualified ones.

Effective Appraisal Policy for Teachers

There exists hardly any policy that makes teachers accountable for students' learning. In the public sector, the headmaster writes an Annual Confidential Report without considering students' learning. Therefore, an effective appraisal policy should be put in place and connected with an annual salary increment.

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