

## Impact of Teachers' Professional Trainings on Students' Learning at Secondary Level in Punjab Province, Pakistan: Problems and Prospects

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### Abstract

Teachers are national builders, responsible to educate students in better ways. Professionally trained teachers by using advanced innovative pedagogical skills in classrooms, produce good results. Purpose of this study was to highlight importance of teachers' professional trainings, problems, effects on improving students' learning and suggest some measures to overcome these problems. Population of the study, comprised on all teachers 3781 (2266 M+1515 F) teaching secondary classes in total 185 (109 M+76 F/M) public secondary schools of Okara district. Sample of the study consisted on 300 (150M+150F/M) teachers (5 teachers from each school), selected through random sampling technique from 60 (30M+30F/M) schools both from rural and urban areas of Okara district. Data was collected through a self-developed questionnaire comprised on Five - point Likert scale. Statistical tools like standard deviation, mean score, frequency and percentages were used to find answer of the research questions. It was revealed that teachers' professional trainings has positive impact on students' learning. It was also found that due to lack of updated regular professional trainings, teachers were facing many problems in classrooms. It was recommended that advanced ICT related innovative professional training courses may be run for all teachers on regular bases for improving students' learning.

**Keywords:** Professional Trainings, Challenges, Improvement, ICT, Students' Learning

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### **Introduction**

Teachers are the greatest national asset, responsible for educating future generation on right direction for meeting demands and expectations of the society in true spirit, as no country of the world can move on way of development and prosperity without joint efforts of teaching force (Arshad & Ahmed, 2019). They can play leading role for achieving national educational goals. This prime target can only be achieved if they were fully trained to teach students in classrooms in better ways, but if they are lacking training on modern trends, surely their performance will be low which directly affect students' learning (Bhut, 2020). Services of teachers for national development can never be overlooked (Balbir, 2016). In this regards, Korthagen (2010) said that teachers in present modern era has a great responsibility to perform by facilitating students for knowledge acquisition, skills, upgradation of social and moral values as teaching force is considered top most respected job all over the world. It was found from research that teachers' professional trainings is a major indicator for their job satisfaction, due to this they feel comfortable and perform their responsibilities effectively, has direct impact of students' learning (Collie, Shapka, & Perry, 2012; Kunter et al., 2013).

Teachers' professional trainings comprised on all training facilities provided to teachers for improving their professional competency ultimately improve students' learning. It includes in-service education & training (INSET), staff development, continuing or lifelong education, professional development (Ahmed, Munshi & Jumani, 2015). It is a systematic preoperational process for the development of teaching skills for teaching students in classrooms in better ways (Berry, 2001). Similarly, OECD. (2009) also defined professional teachers' training as that it includes all types of teachers' learning activities provided to them for enhancing their professional pedagogical skills to be used in classrooms to improve students' learning. Similarly, Anees (2005) was of the opinion that teachers 'professional trainings are designed to improve continuous development of the teachers. The need for further training of teachers is to prepare them for future global changing situations in the field of education for better teaching to students in classrooms. Teachers face many challenges in classrooms including large classes, lack of physical and instructional facilities, new curriculum non- parental and administrative support. They require students-centered/ needed-based, ongoing continuous professional development trainings and school support so that they can teach students in better ways (Devtrio, 2018).

Highlighting value and importance of professional trainings of teachers, Farooq. (2006) found that highly qualified and trained teachers have positive impact on students' learning, as they know very well how to use various teaching skills to teach students in classrooms effectively. Furthermore, AEPAM.(2014) also pointed out that teachers' professional trainings has positive impact on teachers performance as it increases professional knowledge and skills necessary for meeting successfully their job requirements like classroom management, developing teaching skills, team management, teamwork, students' motivation, monitoring, assessment or evaluation of students' learning outcomes. Similarly, Ahmed, Munshi & Jumani (2015) were in favour that teachers' professional trainings has positive impact on professional competency of teachers, which ultimately improves students' learning. It helps

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teachers for improving their pedagogical skills, students' motivations for taking keen interest in studies, helping indicator to use various teaching methods for obtaining high learning outcomes, use of various types of audio-visual training aids and ICT new instructional technological training aids in classrooms to uplift students' learning skills, better classroom management, maintenance of students' discipline, understanding students' psychology, helping students to solve their problems by guiding and counseling.

#### **Review of Literature**

Teachers' professional trainings mean all types of training facilities, subject based knowledge, pedagogical skills prove helping indicator to enhance teachers' professional competency (Darling-Hammond, 2012). To have effective teaching in classrooms, updated knowledge based information included in teachers' professional training programs has positive impacts on improving students' learning (Uusiautti and Maatta, 2013). It was further concluded in the research that provision of professional trainings to teachers was seen as an integral intergradient plays active role for improving students' learning (Freeman, Simonsen, Briere, & MacSuga-Gage, 2014). Moreover, DeMonte (2013) was of the opinion that subject based instructional training help teachers to uplift their professional capabilities. In views of Urevbu, (2017), teachers professional trainings includes all the content based training programs relevant for improving professional competency in their subjects ultimately prove helpful for further uplifting students' learning. Researchers like Ningtiyas and Jailani (2018) were of the views that teachers need all types of professional trainings including improving subject based knowledge, uplifting teaching methods, pedagogical skills, teaching and learning techniques and teaching strategies. They also found that by using information technology they can further improve their teaching skills prove helpful indicator for improving students' learning.

A number of problems faced on way of teachers' professional trainings includes lack of financial resources, lack of professionally qualified teachers, outdated curriculum, non-professional administrative staff, lack of physical and instructional training facilities, unorganized training programs (Javed.et.al (2012). Similarly Arshad, et.al (2019) found that teachers were facing many problems while getting professional trainings, it include short duration of training programs , non-availability of training material, out-dated teaching method, lacking of professionally qualified teachers, lack of training programs monitoring, lack of transport, and residential facilities, non professional attitude of administrative staff, shortage of instructional and physical facilities. Furthermore, it was also found that while providing professional trainings to teachers, teacher training institutions face many problems including shortage of buildings, furniture, equipment, library books, teaching aids (AEPAM, 2015). It was also revealed from research that teachers' professional trainings has positive impact on uplifting teachers pedagogical skills helpful indicator for improving students' learning. It was further found that trainee teachers were facing many problems during professional trainings, it include lacking of professionally competent teachers, lack of advance ICT innovative training aids, ,physical and instructional facilities (Ahmed, Arshad & Munshi, 2019).

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Teachers' professional trainings plays vital role to update their knowledge helpful indicator for better teaching in classrooms. It is a powerful catalyst for bringing change in teachers' teaching methods, pedagogical skills and help for developing professional development among teachers ultimately affects students' learning. But from inception of the country till now teachers from all over the country especially with reference to district Okara of Punjab province, Pakistan: problems and prospects is still facing a lot of problems during attending professional trainings in the teacher training institutions. There are many factors responsible for not provision of proper professional trainings to teachers on regular basis, not only creating hindrances for teachers showing low performance in schools but also effects learning outcomes of students. So, it was decided to conduct a research study on "Impact of teachers' professional trainings on students' learning at secondary level in Punjab province, Pakistan; problems and prospects" to explore the problems related to teachers' professional trainings and suggest preventive measures how these problems can be solved for further improving students' learning.

#### **Study Objectives**

The present study comprised on the following research objectives;

1. To explore importance of teachers' professional trainings in this modern era.
2. To find out problems of teachers' professional trainings.
3. To suggest preventive measures to overcome the problems for improving students' learning at secondary level.

#### **Research Questions**

To achieve research objectives, following questions were asked;

1. What are the major problems teachers faced during professional trainings programs?
2. How these problems can be controlled to improve students' learning at secondary level?

#### **Research Methodology**

Survey method was applied to collect requisite information through a self developed questionnaire from respective respondents as in descriptive type survey in nature social sciences research studies, this method is most suitable for receiving answering of the research questions (Nassaji, 2015). Furthermore, this method is also used for elaboration of population characteristics very clearly as per demands of the research objectives to be achieved in due course of time. Moreover, it also supports the researchers to describe samples as per needs demands of the study to describe educational phenomena in true nature (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009; Leob et al., 2017).

#### **Population**

Population in research studies is consisted on large group of persons having requisite characteristics meeting desired standard to collect required information which will be comprised on all persons constitute a known as a whole (Asiamah, Mensah & Oteng, 2017). It is further said that population is consisted on whole set of cases which required sample

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further taken out for research purposes (Mills & Gay, 2018; Alvi, 2016). It was further described as a targeted group of individuals having definite set of characteristics drawn for collection of required information consisted on all the possible cases constituted known whole persons (Gay, 2008). Furthermore, population in research studies is related to the number of people living in a specific area (Taherdoost, 2016). All the teachers 3781 (2266 M+1515 F/M), serving in total 185 (109 M+76 F/M) Govt. High Schools of district Okara were comprised on population of the study (<http://schoolportal.punjab.gov.pk/census/schoolcensusNew.htm>).

#### **Sample**

In social sciences research studies, sample is consisted on a small number of respondents taken out from the population for investigational purposes. Keeping in views the research objectives to be achieved in due course of time, simple random sampling technique was selected as sample taken out from the population, due to this reason that this type of research technique is most suitable technique as it represents equal chances of selection as sample of the research study (Mills & Gay, 2018; Best, 2016; Alvi, 2016). Out of total population, 300 (150M+150F/M) teachers from 60 (30M+30F/M) schools (5 teachers from each school) both from urban and rural areas of Okara district were randomly selected as sample of study.

#### **Tool for Collection of Data**

To answer research questions, a self-developed questionnaire comprised on 5 points Likert scale validated through pilot testing was used to collect required information from concerned teachers serving in sampled respective educational institutions. Furthermore, for collection of data, researcher personally visited each sampled school, approached heads and after seeking their permission, questionnaire was handed over to respective teachers to fill up by following instructions given mentioned in questionnaire. The researcher also helped teachers for properly filling up questionnaire. So, requisite information through questionnaire were collected properly for achieving research objectives in due course of time.

#### **Results and Analysis**

Data received from respective teachers of sampled schools through questionnaire was arranged, tabulated, analyzed and interpreted in descriptive form by using suitable statistics tools like percentages, frequency scores, mean scores and standard deviation. The detailed description of the results was given in the following tables;

**Table .1 Professional trainings help teachers to improve their professional competency**

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score	SD
Professional trainings help teachers to improve their professional	SA	48	16.0	3.72	.937
	A	164	54.7		
	UD	53	17.7		
	DA	26	8.7		
	SDA	9	3.0		

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competency

The above table-1 describes that  $48+164=212$  (70.7%) teachers were of the opinion that professional trainings help teachers to improve their professional competency, whereas  $26+9=35$  (11.7%) respondents disagreed regarding the statement. Furthermore, 53 (17.7%) teachers were remain uncertain about the statement. The mean score and standard deviation of the data were (3.72) & (0.937), which clearly indicate that majority of the trainees teachers were agreed that professional trainings help teachers to improve their professional competency.

**Table .2 Professional trainings help teachers to update their pedagogical skills**

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score	SD
Professional training help to update pedagogical skills.	SA	93	31.0	3.98	.969
	A	146	48.7		
	UD	27	9.0		
	DA	29	9.7		
	SDA	5	1.7		

Table.2 shows that  $93+146=239$  (79.7%) teachers were of the view that professional trainings help teachers to improve their pedagogical skills. Moreover  $29+5=34$  (11.4%) respondents were disagreed the statement. Furthermore, 27 (9.0%) teachers were remain uncertain about the above statement. The mean score and standard deviation of the data were (3.98) & (0.969) which clearly shows that majority of the trainees teachers were agreed that professional trainings help teachers to improve their pedagogical skills.

**Table.3 Professional trainings help teachers to develop communication skills**

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score	SD
Professional trainings help teachers to develop communication skills	SA	49	16.3	3.43	1.133
	A	119	39.7		
	UD	62	20.7		
	DA	52	17.3		
	SDA	18	6.0		

This table indicates that  $49+119=168$  (56%) teachers were agreed that professional trainings help teachers to develop teachers' communication skills. Moreover,  $52+18=70$  (23.0%) respondents were disagreed about the statement. It further shows that, teachers 62 (20.7%) were remain uncertain about the above statement. The mean score and standard deviation of the data (3.43) & (1.133) clearly indicated that majority of the respondents were agreed that professional trainings help teachers to develop teachers' communication skills.



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**Table.4 Professional trainings help teachers to update their content knowledge**

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score	SD
Professional trainings help teachers to update their content knowledge	SA	91	30.3	4.09	.787
	A	161	53.7		
	UD	35	11.7		
	DA	11	3.7		
	SDA	02	0.7		

Table 4 describes that 91+161=252 (84%) teachers were agreed, 13 (4.4%) were disagreed with the statement that professional trainings help teachers to update their content knowledge, whereas, 35 (11.7) teachers were uncertain about the statement. Mean score and standard deviation of the data (4.09) & (0.787) clearly indicates that professional trainings help teachers to update their content knowledge.

**Table 5. Professional trainings help teachers to learn new strategies of teaching**

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score	SD
Professional trainings help teachers to improve their professional competency	SA	70	23.3	3.92	.840
	A	156	52.0		
	UD	56	18.7		
	DA	15	5.7		
	SDA	3	1.0		

The above table No.5 describes that 70+156=226 (76%) teachers were in favour and 18 (6.7%) were not satisfied and 56 (18.7) were having uncertain about the statement professional trainings help teachers to *learn new strategies of teaching*. Moreover, mean score and standard deviation of the data 3.92 & .840 show clearly that professional trainings help teachers to *learn new strategies of teaching*.

**Table.6 Professional trainings help teachers to develop friendly environment with students**

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score	SD
Professional trainings help teachers to develop friendly environment with students.	SA	88	29.3	4.00	.890
	A	154	51.3		
	UD	31	10.3		
	DA	25	8.3		
	SDA	2	.7		

Table.6 describes that 88+154=242 (81%) teachers were agreed, 27 (2.7%) were disagreed and 25 (8.3%) were uncertain about the statement that professional trainings help teachers

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to develop friendly environment with students. Moreover, mean score and standard deviation (4.00) & (.890) of the data show clearly that professional trainings help teachers to develop friendly environment with students.

**Table 7 Deficiency of teaching material effects teachers' professional training**

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score	SD
Deficiency of teaching material effects teacher training.	SA	78	26.0	3.99	.846
	A	164	54.7		
	UD	37	12.3		
	DA	18	6.0		
	SDA	3	1.0		

Table.6 shows that 78+164=242 (80.7%) teachers were agreed, 21 (7%) teachers were disagreed and 37 (12.3%) teachers were uncertain about the statement that professional trainings help teachers to develop friendly environment with students. Moreover, mean score and standard deviation (3.99) & (.846) of the data show clearly that professional trainings help teachers to develop friendly environment with students.

**Table. 8 Teacher training institutions face lack of professional trainers**

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score	SD
Deficiency of teaching material effects teacher training.	SA	50	16.7	3.96	.903
	A	155	51.7		
	UD	61	20.3		
	DA	30	10.0		
	SDA	4	1.3		

Data of this table presents that 50 + 155=205 (68%) teachers were agreed, 34 (11.3%) disagreed and 61 (20.3%) teachers were uncertain about the statement that teacher training institutions face lack of professional trainers' effect teachers' professional training. Furthermore, mean score and standard deviation (3.96) & (.903) of the data clearly describes that that teacher training institutions face lack of professional trainers' effect teachers' professional training.

**Table 9 Lack of proper monitoring system affects teachers professional trainings**

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score	SD
Monitoring system affects teachers training.	SA	73	24.3	3.57	1.198
	A	118	39.3		
	UD	30	10.0		
	DA	66	22.0		
	SDA	13	4.3		

Table 9 shows that 73+118=191(64%) teachers were agreed, 79 (26.3%) teachers disagreed and 30 (10.%) were uncertain about the statement that lack of proper monitoring system affects teachers professional trainings. Furthermore, mean score and standard deviation of



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the data 3.57 & 1.198 clearly indicates lack of proper monitoring system affects teachers' professional trainings.

**Table 10 Out dated curriculum effects teachers' professional trainings**

Statement	Responses	Frequency	Percentage	Mean Score	SD
Out dated curriculum effects teachers training.	SA	61	20.3	3.46	1.180
	A	110	36.7		
	UD	53	17.7		
	DA	59	19.7		
	SDA	17	5.7		

Table.10 describes that 61+110=171 (57%) teachers responded in favor, 76 (26.3%) teachers were not satisfied and 53 (17.7%) teachers were uncertain about the statement that out dated curriculum effects teachers' professional training. Furthermore, mean score and standard deviation (3.46) & (1.180) of the data clearly shows out dated curriculum effects teachers' professional training.

### Discussion

Professional trainings of teachers play an active role to teach students in class rooms effectively. It is the professional teachers' training which help teachers to update their subject matter knowledge, learn advanced innovative technological pedagogical skills, techniques, strategies prove major indicators for improving students' learning. Results of various studies conducted in past and even this study findings indicate that there are many problems faced to both the teacher training institutions, teacher trainers and the teacher trainees during professional training programs. Ahmed, Munshi & Jumani (2016) and Siddiqui (2021) were of the opinion that professional teachers' trainings has positive impact on uplifting professional competency of teachers. It prove a major helping indicator in improving various teachers' pedagogical skills. Findings of this research study further revealed that short duration, un-availability of latest standardized textbooks, lacking of coordination between school educational departments and teacher training institutions, lacking of transport, shortage of trainee teachers hostel facilities, shortage of instructional and physical training, irregular teacher programs were the main problems effects teachers professional training, needs to be solved on priority bases (Saeed (2013). The results of the current study revealed that 81% teachers were of the opinion that deficiency of teaching materials in teacher training institutions effects teachers' professional trainings. The results of the study conducted by Arshad; Ahmed. & Tayyab (2019) revealed that good salary of teachers, promotion of teachers on merit, provision of conducive school environmental facilities to schools, good cordial relationship of teachers with students, provision of professional trainings facilitates to teachers, maintenance of discipline in classrooms and teacher training institutions help teachers to help students' learning. The results of this study also describes that 79.7% teachers were of the view that professional trainings help teachers to improve their pedagogical skills.

### Conclusion

It was concluded that provision of regular updated professional training facilities to teachers

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has positive impacts for improving learning outcomes of students. It is the professional trainings which develop awareness among teachers to learn new innovative technological pedagogical skills helpful to use advanced instructional teaching materials in classrooms, which develop interest among students to enhance their learning skills. Although teacher training institutions, teacher trainers and trainee teachers face many problems for proper provision of professional trainings to teachers. It includes outdated curriculum, transport and hostelling facilities to trainees, irregular teachers professional training programs, lack of physical, instructional facilities, weak administrative structure, financial problems, low attendance of trainee teachers participation in professional training programs, lack of trainee teachers training, lack of trainee teachers' participation are the major problems. It is further recommended that that all the necessary facilities may be provided to teacher training institutions, so that they may be able to provide updated advanced ICT related professional trainings to teachers on regular bases , which ultimately improve students' learning.

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