

**IS ANYBODY LISTENING?
Teachers' Views of Their In-Service
Teacher Professional Development Programme**

*Freddy James, Sharon Phillip, Susan Herbert, Désirée S. Augustin,
Jennifer Yamin-Ali, Shahiba Ali, and Joycelyn Rampersad*

This paper reports on a segment of a research project that conducted an overall evaluation of the Diploma in Education (Dip.Ed.) programme provided by the School of Education of The University of the West Indies (UWI), St. Augustine for the period 2004–2009. The Dip.Ed. programme provides initial training for teachers employed in the secondary school system in Trinidad and Tobago. The overall study utilized the following models as theoretical and conceptual lenses: Guskey's (2002a) model of evaluating the impact of continuing professional development (CPD) on teachers' practice; and Guba and Lincoln's (1989) fourth generation evaluation model. This paper, which reports on the teachers' perspectives, presents findings on the extent to which the Dip.Ed. programme met their expectations, the benefits and limitations of the programme, and the impact of the programme on their practice. Data from teachers were gathered using an open-ended questionnaire, and were analysed with the NVIVO qualitative data analysis software. The paper considers the implications of these findings for the overall improvement of the Dip.Ed. programme and teacher professional development.

Background and Introduction

The School of Education (SOE) at the St. Augustine Campus of The University of the West Indies (UWI) includes as part of its mission the provision of professional development programmes for educators. Its primary clientele is Trinidad and Tobago's (T&T) Ministry of Education (MOE) and, by extension, practising and prospective teachers at the early childhood, primary, and secondary levels who seek qualifications at graduate and postgraduate levels in the field of education.

The Postgraduate Diploma in Education (Dip.Ed.) is an in-service programme that runs from July to May of the following year. It was developed in response to a request from the MOE to equip secondary school teachers with professional training. The in-service Dip.Ed.

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programme provides initial teacher training for teachers who are already teaching at secondary schools. Certification in the field of education is not mandatory for entry into teaching in secondary schools in T&T, therefore most teachers enter the classroom with content knowledge acquired from a B.A. or B.Sc. degree programme but with little or no professional training. The goals of the programme, as stated in the SOE's *Regulations and Syllabuses* (The University of the West Indies [UWI], 2004, p. 63), are:

- To encourage teachers to give the greatest attention to past and present practices and future possibilities in the teaching of their subjects
- To encourage teachers to read and think about various problems related to the history and practice of education generally and their own subjects in particular
- To encourage teachers to think about education as a process involving delicate relationships among teachers and students
- To lead teachers to consider the professional implications of the nature of their occupation and to strive for continued professional growth.

An evaluation of the Dip.Ed. programme for the period 2004–2009 was undertaken by a team of lecturers who deliver the current programme, some of whom taught on the programme during the period under review. It aimed at eliciting stakeholders' views on the SOE's effectiveness in providing professional development experiences which facilitated the delivery of quality instruction that was relevant to teachers' context and that promoted advocacy.

Employing a qualitative approach to evaluation, the overall research project investigated stakeholders' expectations of the in-service Dip.Ed. programme; the extent to which their expectations were met; and the impact of the programme on teachers' practice. It sought to elicit multiple perspectives through the lenses of various stakeholders in education. The participants comprised officials from the MOE—the Chief Education Officer, the Director of Curriculum, and Curriculum Officers; principals; heads of departments (HODs); deans; all teachers who had graduated from the programme during the period 2004–2009: the National Parent Teacher Association (NPTA); The Trinidad and Tobago Unified Teachers' Association (TTUTA); and lecturers who deliver the Dip.Ed. programme.

Data were collected through interviews and open-ended questionnaires. One-on-one interviews were conducted with officials of

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the MOE, while principals, HODs, and deans participated in focus group interviews. All graduates of the 2004–2009 Dip.Ed. programme were asked to complete questionnaires which solicited their views.

The SOE's Dip.Ed. programme presents a peculiar circumstance in terms of teacher professional preparation, in that while most teacher preparation programmes are pre-service, the SOE's Dip.Ed. is in-service. As such, according to conventional definitions within the field of teacher professional development (TPD) it would be described as continuous professional development (CPD). Nevertheless, as mentioned previously, the programme provides the initial teacher professional preparation for secondary school teachers in T&T. As a result of the peculiar positioning of the SOE's Dip.Ed. programme, for purposes of this paper the conceptual lenses used in the study relate to theoretical perspectives on CPD as well as TPD. The research is located within the field of TPD and evaluation of professional development. It draws from the literature on models of evaluating teacher development and CPD programmes. Overall, the study used the following models as theoretical and conceptual lenses: Guskey's (2002a) model of evaluating the impact of CPD on teachers' practice; Ottoson's (2000) model of evaluating continuous development programmes; and Guba and Lincoln's (1989) Fourth Generation evaluation model.

These conceptual and theoretical frameworks guided decisions about what types of data to collect and from which stakeholders. The fourth generation evaluation model emphasizes the importance of garnering stakeholder input when conducting evaluations to determine the quality of programmes. Under the fourth generation evaluation model, the definition of stakeholders includes all members of the learning community who might have a stake in the outcomes of the programme, thus not limiting the definition to programme funders and managers as previous generations of evaluation models had done. Stakeholders are critical to the evaluation process because their claims, concerns, and issues provide data and facilitate the negotiations among the various stakeholder groups to arrive at a consensus.

Drawing on the fourth generation evaluation model's approach to evaluations and Guskey's model of evaluating the impact of CPD on teachers' practice, this paper reports on the experiences of one group of stakeholders—teachers. It investigates the extent to which teachers' expectations of the Dip.Ed. have been met, and seeks to determine how their practice might have changed as a result of participating in the Dip.Ed. programme. Data were gathered through open-ended

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questionnaires that solicited teachers' initial expectations of the programme and the impact it had on their pedagogy and practice.

The participants for this aspect of the research comprised teachers who were enrolled in the programme during the period 2004–2009. Although the questionnaires were distributed to all teachers who completed the programme during the period, approximately 15% of them completed the questionnaire. The responses were organized according to the year of enrolment and curriculum groups. The demographic data for the questionnaire did not include teachers' names or their schools, thus ensuring anonymity. This ensured that ethical considerations were adhered to during the research process. The qualitative data analysis software, NVIVO, was used to analyse the data and identify emerging themes from the teachers' experiences, expectations, and impact of the programme.

This study provides the SOE with views from teachers on its effectiveness in providing a professional development programme for secondary school teachers. The results of the study are expected to inform future adjustments to the Dip.Ed. programme. It also adds a Caribbean perspective on the field of CPD through the evaluation of an in-service programme.

Review of the Literature

This review is divided into two subsections. The first section critically examines the context-literature on TPD in terms of matching TPD to the needs of individuals and organizations. As such, issues of the nature and purpose of TPD and its effectiveness are discussed. The second section critically examines the literature on evaluating TPD. As a result, the review explores the literature on models of evaluation and CPD. In particular, the overall study used the following models as theoretical and conceptual lenses: Guskey's (2002b) model of evaluating the impact of CPD on teachers' practice; Ottoson's (2000) model of evaluating CPD programmes; and Guba and Lincoln's (1989) Fourth Generation evaluation model. Nevertheless, this paper, which reports on teachers' perspectives, essentially utilized the fourth generation evaluation model's approach and Guskey's (2002b) model.

What Do We Know About Teacher Professional Development?

It is useful to start this discourse by qualifying the term *professional development*. This paper adopts the definition proffered by Day (1999), which states:

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Professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purposes of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives. (p. 4)

TPD is about teachers engaging in programmes and reflective activities whereby they learn or relearn, with a view to altering their beliefs, attitudes, values, understandings, and professional practice for the benefit of improving their students' learning (Darling-Hammond, Newton, & Wei, 2010; Day, 1999; Griffin, 1983; Guskey, 2002a; Hopkins & Harris, 2001; Steadman, Eraut, Fielding, & Horton, 1995). The nature of TPD involves two main elements that are mutually dependent: knowledge acquisition and skills development (Field, 2011). TPD can take two main forms—pre-service, in which case the training occurs prior to teachers actually working in the classrooms; and in-service, which relates to training that takes place after persons are already teaching. In-service programmes usually involve an extended programme of accredited or non-accredited learning (Day 1999).

Whether in-service or pre-service, TPD is important and its main purpose is to facilitate the enhancement of teacher quality through engagement in a systematic programme geared to bring about change in three main areas (Guskey, 2002a; Knight, 2002):

- Change in teachers' beliefs, attitudes, values, and understandings
- Change in teachers' educational practices
- Change in student outcomes

Guskey (2002a) admits that there is no guarantee that engagement in TPD programmes will bring about the projected changes in teachers, their practice, and student outcomes. The process is not linear, and researchers into TPD consistently make the point that many TPD programmes are ineffective and will continue in this vein unless the programmes are realigned to the needs of teachers (Guskey, 2000; Hunzicker, 2010). The Centre for Education Research and Innovation (1998) cautions that distinctions must be made between wants and real

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needs, and submits that the responsibility for need identification lies not only with the teachers, but also with policymakers and other stakeholders within the system. Nevertheless, there is agreement among writers (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009; Field, 2011; Fullan, 1995; Lieberman & Pointer-Mace, 2008; Quick, Holtzman, & Chaney, 2009) that effective TPD programmes have the following characteristics:

- Instructionally focused – on the study and application of content and pedagogy with a view to improving student outcomes
- Personalized – to suit the teachers’ needs
- Frequent – the time span in TDP is not too long so that new skills and knowledge are quickly disseminated
- Job-embedded/relevant – in that they connect to teachers’ daily duties and they are seamlessly incorporated into each school day
- Collaborative – involving teachers in active and interactive learning where they have to work with others to solve problems, make decisions, and create innovations
- Supportive – in so far as the needs, interests, and concerns of the teachers as well as the school and district are considered
- Reflective – such that teachers can evaluate their own practice and outcomes, and find ways to improve both
- Ongoing – in that multiple opportunities are available for interaction and learning
- Evidence-based – contains some capacity for inquiry and is formulated based on inquiry

Field (2011) suggests that unless the TPD programme involves a systematic process of reflection, its impact on professional learning is compromised, and this in turn compromises the sustainability of any change on the teachers’ part. Field (2002) states that:

The emulation of ideas and the use of materials developed without reflection do not empower the teacher, but can make them over-reliant on the use of the products of others’ learning. Reflection helps teachers to address planning and to assess the outcomes of teaching for themselves. (p. 2)

According to Guskey (2002a, p. 382), the majority of TPD programmes are ineffective “because they do not take into account two crucial factors: (1) what motivates teachers to engage in professional development and (2) the process by which change in teachers typically

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occurs.” It is worthwhile to explore these two factors and examine the reasons why teachers participate in TPD programmes. In other words, it is important to review TPD: What’s in it for teachers? Teachers are attracted to professional development for various reasons, which can be put into two categories: professional enhancement, and personal and pragmatic. There may be some overlap in these categories (see Table 1).

Table 1. Reasons for Participating in TPD

Professional Enhancement	Personal and Pragmatic
Enhancement of skills and pedagogical knowledge	Personal development
Improvement in their effectiveness with students	Accreditation/certification for promotion
Improvement in student outcomes	Gaining better student subject pass rates
	To gain practical designs and actions that that they can relate directly to their day-to-day procedures in the classroom

Guskey (2002a) suggests that there are flaws in the assumptions made by earlier teacher change theorists, such as Lewin (1935), in their models regarding the process by which experienced teachers engage in TPD change. The flaws lie in the sequencing of the three major outcomes of TPD. Earlier models assumed that change in teachers’ beliefs and attitudes came as a direct follow-on from engagement in the TPD activities and therefore proposed a model sequenced as follows:

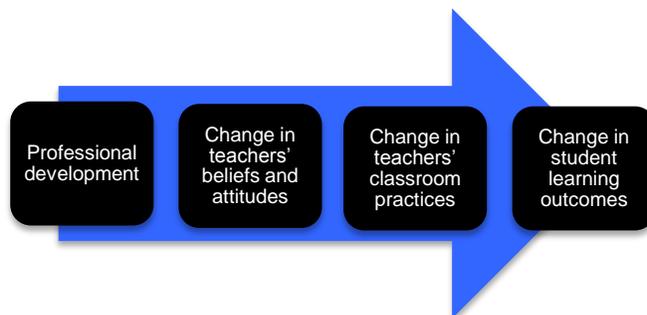


Figure 1. A model of teacher change (based on Lewin, 1935).

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Guskey (2002a) proposes an alternative model, which sequences the outcomes of TPD differently and places change in attitudes and beliefs as the final outcome, as follows:

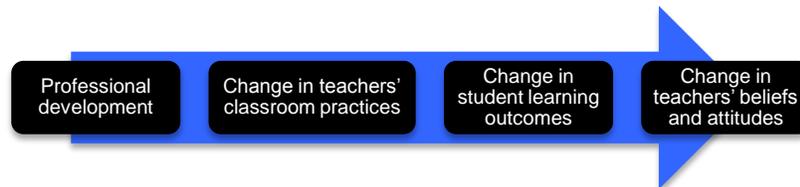


Figure 2. An alternative model of teacher change (Guskey, 2000a).

The key point made by this alternative model is that what brings about the change in teachers' attitudes and beliefs is not the professional development per se, "but the experience of successful implementation" of change in teachers' classroom practices and student learning outcomes (Guskey, 2002a, p. 383).

Having interrogated the issues of the nature and purpose of TPD, its impacts, and why it is important for teaching and learning in the previous sections, it is critical to pay some attention to how TPD operates, in terms of delivery. This particular paper is focused on in-service TPD programmes and, according to the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (1998), in-service TPD programmes can take a "top-down," "bottom-up," or "bottom-across" approach. The top-down approach involves education authorities providing courses in areas where they believe teacher competencies require development. The bottom-up approach begins by identifying the needs of teachers or schools and custom-fits courses and developmental activities to suit. The bottom-across approach adopts a systemic approach and involves collaboration among networks of teachers across schools, thereby facilitating the spread of good practice. No individual model can necessarily meet all the training and development needs of a school or system. The top-down approach is useful if the objective is information dissemination. However, if the objective is to engender attitudinal change then a bottom-up approach is more useful, since it allows for taking ownership.

In terms of who provides the TPD, the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (1998) suggests that the provision can be made by the education authorities, such as the MOE in T&T, or by what it calls "third-party external provision" by universities and other tertiary education institutions. In the T&T context, both types of provisions are in use. More specifically, in terms of the SOE's Dip.Ed. programme, a combination of both types exists, in that the MOE commissions the SOE

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to provide and deliver the programme on its behalf. The approach taken in the delivery of the programme is eclectic, as it contains elements of both top-down and bottom-up approaches. While some measure of collaboration may be incorporated into the delivery of the programme, there are no formalized networks.

How Do We Evaluate Teacher Professional Development?

The overall study from which this paper emanates drew on the four models mentioned earlier as it evaluated the Dip.Ed. programme from the perspectives of many stakeholders. This paper reports on findings from the teachers' data, which sought to examine the effect of the TPD programme as teachers experience it, the extent to which their expectations of the programme have been met, as well as the scope of change resulting from their engagement in the programme, particularly in terms of their practice. As such, this paper essentially draws on Guskey's (2002b) Five Critical Levels of Professional Development Evaluation model as it seeks to determine the value of the programme to teachers. Guskey (2002b, p. 48) proposes five levels upon which effective professional development should be evaluated, as follows:

1. Participants' reactions
2. Participants' learning
3. Organization support and change
4. Participants' use of new knowledge and skills
5. Student learning outcomes

In garnering data from the teachers on their perspectives of the Dip.Ed. programme, the study drew on the five levels.

As suggested by Guskey (2002b), in conducting the evaluation the researchers accepted that they were seeking to find evidence rather than proof. Additionally, the researchers operated on the premise that the evaluation could provide valuable information for improving the Dip.Ed. programme. In this regard, in terms of making recommendations for improvement, the researchers also took into consideration Guskey's (2002b) proposition that in order to plan TPD to improve student learning the order of the levels should be reversed. In other words one must "plan backwards," beginning where one wants to end and working backwards.

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Presentation and Discussion of Findings

The research sought answers to the following questions from an evaluation of the SOE's Dip.Ed. programme, which was undertaken to provide insights on teachers' experiences of the professional development programme and the scope of change resulting from such professional development:

- *What are teachers' experiences of the Dip.Ed. programme?*
- *To what extent have teachers' expectations of the Dip.Ed. been met?*
- *How have teachers' practice changed as a result of engaging in the Dip.Ed. programme?*

The following sections provide a discussion of the findings in terms of the research objectives and the literature reviewed for the study. A summary of the findings is presented in three different ways. Firstly, the findings that specifically relate to the research questions posed are discussed. Secondly, the findings that emerged as a result of cross-cutting themes from the research are explored. Finally, in order to effectively analyse and draw recommendations from the findings, the data were synthesized by constructing a list of "issue statements" and these are presented with recommendations.

Summary of Findings in Relation to the Research Questions

Research Question 1

What are teachers' experiences of the Dip.Ed. programme?

When asked about their experiences in the programme, teachers revealed that they were exposed to professional, personal, and interpersonal experiences that generally impacted on them in a positive way. The professional responses are dealt with separately, while the personal and interpersonal experiences are discussed together.

Professional experiences

Teachers felt that they gained pedagogical knowledge and skills. Some of the specific gains were teaching strategies and methods, and lesson planning. The teaching practice sessions allowed them to reflect on the strengths and weaknesses of their own practice. Also, they acquired an understanding of different school cultures through their school visits. Teachers characterized their experience as:

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“Very good; it was intellectually stimulating and informative. Sharing similar experiences was very heartening.”

“Intensive, enlightening, inspiring; I learned new methods/philosophies about teaching/learning. A great opportunity to reflect on my practice as well as get feedback...”

“Stimulating, vibrant ...sessions were enlightening and provided clarification as to your own philosophy of education and your desire to see positive changes in the system.”

Although most of the respondents indicated that their experiences on the programme were worthwhile, a few had different views. Some teachers felt that, overall, the programme did not address the specific needs of their schools:

“However, the Dip.Ed. experience did not cater to my needs as a teacher of [School X] – the remedial, academically challenged students who can barely read/write or who are surely underexposed and impoverished or are violent/prone to severe indiscipline...”

Participants indicated that although the programme was rewarding, challenging, intellectually stimulating, and informative, it tended to be overwhelming at times. Their responses indicated that the challenges were with the amount of content covered as well as the time frame in which the work had to be covered. In addition, they experienced challenges with time management and balancing their full-time teaching responsibilities with the demands of the programme. They commented:

“At this stage of my teaching career I felt that the Dip.Ed. Experience was perfectly timed. The work content was enlightening, however, too intensive.”

“[It was] intensive and grueling trying to balance demands of the course with school workload.”

“A lot of work was done but it could have been stretched over a longer period.”

Personal and interpersonal experiences

Teachers also had positive personal and interpersonal experiences that they seemed to value as much as the professional experiences. They characterized their cognitive experiences as intellectually stimulating. They had positive affective experiences as well. Almost all of the

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teachers highlighted the positive social experiences they gained. They felt that the programme encouraged professional and social networking with their peers, which kindled a sense of collegiality and collaboration that continued after the programme ended:

“Participants were friendly and willing to offer help/advice. We developed strong bonds and even keep in touch up till now.”

“It was an intimate group...there was an air of camaraderie, which allowed us to learn from each other and help each other.”

In terms of programme delivery, generally the teachers' experiences were pleasant. They commented that lecturers were accessible and competent, and, as mentors, they facilitated group sharing and created environments that were conducive to work:

“My experience was a positive one. My group had excellent, professional tutors who clearly enjoyed teaching/lecturing to teachers. They were always prepared and were willing to answer questions and give constructive, sound criticism.”

“Tutors were also quite efficient and approachable.”

However, some teachers indicated that there were some shortcomings with the delivery of the programme. They found that there were different standards with respect to course content, supervision of practical teaching sessions, and grading of assignments. Additionally, they pointed out differences in the teaching styles or modes of delivery adopted by some lecturers, which appeared to be inconsistent with what they expected from teachers in the classroom:

“Most presenters/tutors encouraged independent thought but not all. In my opinion this is critical.”

“It was challenging not in terms of content but in terms of the many inadequacies of the administration. What was being taught was not exemplified by some tutors. There was too much inconsistency in marking by some tutors.”

“Individual curriculum groups did not seem to have common content which was standardized.... It was also more difficult to work ahead and organize readings where course content outlines were not provided by lecturers.”

Research Question 2

To what extent have teachers' expectations of the Dip.Ed. been met?

In general, most of the teachers' expectations for this professional development programme were met. They expected to gain or improve their pedagogy in the following areas:

- teaching methods and strategies
- understanding students' learning styles
- lesson planning
- improved curriculum delivery
- assessment techniques
- using the research literature

They expected the programme to provide insights into effective classroom management practices in order to enhance classroom discipline.

On a more personal level, the teachers wanted to learn techniques and strategies to become better teachers and to become reflective practitioners to gain a better understanding of their students and for their own self-evaluation. For example, teachers said they expected the programme:

"To make me be a better teacher; to understand the client a little better; to critique what I was currently doing – make amends..."

"To acquire a repertoire of teaching strategies; to improve curriculum delivery..."

"To gain practical insight and strategies to be able to deliver the academic curriculum in an efficient, fun, educational, time managed, student friendly manner. Be better prepared to plan, organize and deliver stated goals..."

Overall, the teachers valued their exposure and participation in practical teaching and clinical supervision. They commended the programme's focus on an holistic approach to education, more specifically pedagogy and the exploration of the theoretical background of education. They felt that these areas facilitated their professional development and helped to improve their efficacy and confidence. Teachers commented:

"I found that the entire programme was well organized and relevant to improving my professional needs."

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“All aspects were met including new avenues that I never even knew existed – the psychology of children. This was important since without this teaching and delivery of lessons will be almost impossible.”

“Foundation courses assisted me in going in depth insight [sic] into my students. The portfolio assisted me and allowed me to trace my growth and development.”

Although they did not specifically indicate expectations for personal and interpersonal development, teachers’ responses demonstrated that the programme facilitated growth in these areas:

“I know that I have grown emotionally and socially because of it. My perspectives on teaching, learning student ability [sic] and my relationships with my students have been widened and challenged for the better.”

Despite the fulfilment of many of their expectations, some teachers felt that the Dip.Ed. programme did not meet all of their goals. Some teachers felt that the programme did not have an adequate focus on teacher professionalism, the professional identity of the teacher, and changing teacher attitudes. For example, teachers stated:

“There was not enough focus on changing attitudes and ensuring that teachers developed a professional identity – areas like time management, stress management...”

“Even though all aspects of the programme was satisfying for me, I felt that more can be done in training a teacher to be more ‘professional’ especially when it came to dress and behaviour...”

Others noted an inadequate link between theory and practice. They believed that some of the teaching methods which were introduced did not meet the needs of diverse learners in the secondary classroom, particularly those below average or those with learning disabilities. In addition, they pointed out that some of the teaching strategies they were exposed to were not designed for large classes. Teachers commented:

“The programme seemed entrenched in theory and did not give adequate guidance to young/new teachers as to working in local schools and coping with local issues and problems of the physical school structure, student issues and social issues. It appeared to be based in theory applicable to western society.”

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“The teaching methods that I learnt were for above average students and I have below average and learning disabled students so I was only able to use some aspects of the methods.”

“The implementation of the strategies learnt – they are not designed for large classrooms; students at various intellectual levels in one class...”

Further, some teachers indicated that there was an inadequate focus on innovative methods of teaching that would cater to students with different learning abilities:

“There was not enough focus on catering for different learning abilities/styles.”

Other criticisms of the programme were aimed at its structure. Usually, teachers are trained in a specific curriculum area or in educational administration, and due to the intensity of the programme there is little or no opportunity for students to be exposed to both areas. As a result, teachers in the curriculum-specific groups expressed their disappointment at not being exposed to educational administration, and those who did educational administration did not receive training in their content areas. In addition, some teachers felt that there was a need for a follow-up programme, especially for teachers with middle management responsibilities, such as HODs and deans, since the Dip.Ed. programme does not provide specific teacher preparation for these areas of responsibility.

Research Question 3

How have teachers' practice changed as a result of engaging in the Dip.Ed. programme?

Teachers reported that the Dip.Ed. programme impacted on teachers' pedagogical, personal, and interpersonal growth. They believed that they became more competent in lesson planning and curriculum delivery as they were able to implement new teaching methods and strategies in the classroom. This improvement resulted in part from an increased knowledge of students' learning styles and their ability to adjust the pedagogy to meet the students' needs. Moreover, they indicated that the programme promoted the use of research literature to expand their knowledge, and this added to the pedagogical impact.

Teachers expressed the belief that participating in the programme helped to increase their efficacy as they felt that they were more effective in the classroom and were able to implement their new knowledge:

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“I became more student-centered and my Dip.Ed. experience made me more ‘human’ towards my students.”

“I have become more flexible in planning and teaching lessons. I have become more reflective and willing to seek out new teaching strategies and learning resources.”

They felt that their students benefitted from their improved delivery. One teacher noted:

“Students seem more interested and feel included. Students respond positively, becoming more involved...”

Moreover, for many, the programme fuelled an interest in professional development and encouraged them to either consider or actively enrol and participate in workshops, courses, and graduate programmes:

“Being exposed to the best lecturers at the university has also motivated me to be more aware of research and innovations in the field of education.”

“Another benefit is appreciating the business of education as evolving – being open to various changing methods of teaching to reach students. Exposure to the vast amount of research being done in the field of education was another definite benefit. I am now encouraged to research and look at new ways of developing my work and myself.”

Teachers revealed that as a result of the impact of the programme on their professional development they encouraged other teachers to enrol in the programme. Some were engaged in collaboration at the level of their individual schools, by sharing the information they had gained at informal and more formal professional development sessions, as well as mentoring teachers who had not yet been exposed to professional development programmes. For example, teachers reported that they were engaged:

“By sharing at the departmental level at meetings; by encouraging continuous reflection by staff.”

“Sharing with other teachers, especially newer ones; informal ‘workshops’.”

Many of the teachers in the study pointed to the peer collaboration and networking that began during the Dip.Ed. programme and continued to the present. They noted that their interaction with teachers from other

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schools helped them to reflect on their own school context and on the ways in which differences in contexts impact on what happens in the classroom:

“Continued networking/communicating with others from the programme... a sharing of problems, finding or sharing possible solutions; development of a camaraderie with others in the profession.”

Although a few of the teachers felt that there was not much of an impact due to the dynamics of schools, at the end of the Dip.Ed. programme most teachers felt more empowered because of the new and improved pedagogical understandings.

Summary

The data revealed that teachers were exposed to professional, personal, and interpersonal experiences during the programme. Generally, teachers' expectations of the Dip.Ed. programme were met. The expectations were categorized as pedagogical knowledge, classroom management skills, assessment skills, teacher efficacy, and reflective practice. However, some teachers felt that there was an inadequate focus on training and development, professionalism and the professional identity, strategies for meeting the needs of diverse learners, innovation, and a connection between theory and practice.

Most of the participants indicated that the programme positively impacted on their pedagogy and overall professional growth. They pointed out that they collaborated with their peers during and after the programme, building a network of teachers who supported each other. The level of collaboration and collegiality was extended to their school context through the sharing of ideas and teaching strategies, either in formal workshops or through informal discussions. Moreover, the Dip.Ed. programme encouraged many teachers to continue to use research literature to inform their teaching and to continue their professional development, either through research or enrolment in professional development programmes.

Key Findings as Part of Cross-Cutting Themes

Teachers' values

Teachers ascribe the most value to activities that involve experimenting with classroom practices, innovations that they can implement in their classrooms, peer collaboration/networking within the programme, and

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the reflective process that facilitates self-evaluation. They view the main purpose of TPD as improving their pedagogical skills to have a positive impact on their teaching and student achievement. These findings are consistent with the literature (Day 1999; Field, 2011; Hunzicker, 2010) on what teachers value most in a TPD programme. Enhancement of their individual personal and professional competence is what they value most from a TPD programme, and they don't seem to align what they're doing in the TPD programme with wider strategic benefits such as whole school improvement.

Structure of TPD

Teachers see the structure of the programme as being restrictive, burdensome, and overwhelming. The current in-service Dip.Ed. programme is structured so that teachers have a five-week internship during their July/August vacation and then they attend classes on Fridays during the school term. They are burdened because some have their normal teaching load cramped into four days (Monday to Thursday) instead of five to allow them to attend TPD classes on Fridays. This is experienced by some teachers at the school level perhaps because of inadequate guidelines from the MOE with respect to teachers in training.

The programme offers participants two pathways to certification. They can enrol to pursue teacher preparation based on their curriculum content specialty or educational administration, the latter being for persons interested in senior and middle management. Some participants felt that they should have had exposure to both their curriculum area and educational administration, especially those who were HODs and deans. This gave rise to the expression of a need for follow-up programmes after completion of the Dip.Ed. for middle management positions (HOD and dean).

A key theme running through the findings is the assertion that the programme did not sufficiently facilitate innovation in teaching strategies and methods. There is also the implication that the programme itself can be more innovative; the form this innovation should take was not articulated.

The findings on teachers' values and the structure of the programme are consistent with the literature that speaks to the characteristics of an effective TPD programme—providing opportunities for teachers to work collaboratively to solve problems, make decisions, and create innovations; job embedded and connected to teachers' daily roles and responsibilities in a seamless way; and personalized to suit the teachers'

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needs (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Field, 2011; Fullan, 1995; Lieberman & Pointer-Mace, 2008; Quick et al., 2009).

Importance of school context

There is the perception among teachers that the benefits of TPD are highly linked to individual school contexts. Many believe that there is a disconnect between the strategies and methods provided in the TDP via the Dip.Ed. and their school context. The emergent perception is that teaching strategies and methods learnt on the programme apply to schools that are: well-organized, adequately resourced and staffed, supported by parents and the community, and have students who are independent learners who take responsibility for their learning and have little or no psychosocial problems.

Quality of the TPD

The Dip.Ed. programme tends to reflect a number of the characteristics of an effective TPD programme, particularly in terms of: content and pedagogy; reflection and self-evaluation; collaboration/networking with colleagues; and delivery and evidenced-based, in that it provides opportunities for some form of inquiry. However, the teachers' use of new strategies seem not to be sustained or embedded, and the TPD provided by the Dip.Ed. programme seems to be focused on personal development rather than the broader impact on school improvement. There is some variance within the different curriculum groups in terms of instructional delivery and content focus.

Barriers to TPD engagement

Barriers to TPD engagement include time and competing professional responsibilities and tasks. Many participants indicated that the programme is too intense and overwhelming, as they have to maintain their normal teaching workload and school responsibilities while engaging in their teacher preparation programme. Also, there is no follow-up after completion of the programme to build capacity; and teaching strategies and methods, some of which do not seem contextually relevant to individual schools, are seen as barriers.

Accreditation/promotional opportunities

The Dip.Ed. professional certificate is a requirement for promotion in secondary schools. Some teachers engage in the Dip.Ed. TPD programme in order to get promoted to higher positions in their schools.

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Additionally, others use it as a stepping-stone for entry into master's level programmes. However, if certification is the singular purpose of engaging in the programme, the chances of the programme changing teachers' attitudes, beliefs, and values, which would have a positive impact on student outcomes, is significantly diminished (Guskey, 2002a).

Continuous professional development

Engagement in the Dip.Ed. programme acts as a catalyst for some participants to progress to doing higher-level degrees and further study such as master's programmes.

Summary

The Dip.Ed. programme is certainly having a positive impact on in-service teacher preparation, particularly in pedagogy and content. Nevertheless, it doesn't seem to be meeting the individual needs of some of the teachers in their singular contexts. Hunzicker (2010) asserts that TPD programmes which are not aligned to the needs of teachers are ineffective. However, in making judgements about the Dip.Ed. programme's effectiveness, it is useful to consider The Centre for Education Research and Innovation's (1998) point about making distinctions between wants and real needs, and that the responsibility for need identification lies not only with the teachers, but also with policymakers and other stakeholders within the system. Hence, the fourth generation evaluation approach used to conduct the overall evaluation of the Dip.Ed. programme could help in arriving at a consensus about how the programme should and can improve.

Conclusion

Constructed Issue Statements With Recommendations

Issue 1: *There is a need to strengthen TPD via the Dip.Ed. programme in terms of levels of school-contextualized practice—collaboration with colleagues within schools to achieve wider school improvement.*

Recommendations

Teachers should be exposed to theories of differentiated learning and to practical strategies for differentiated instruction so that they can develop the requisite skills to adapt pedagogical strategies to their particular context. The SOE can place more focus on school improvement in the

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foundation area. Additionally, teachers need to understand the role of TPD and their particular role in achieving school improvement

Issue 2: *TPD via the Dip.Ed. programme is effective in terms of pedagogy, content, and delivery.*

Recommendations

Although teachers believe that the programme is effective, the SOE can continue to evaluate the programme to ensure that it meets expectations in pedagogy, content, and delivery.

Issue 3: *The Dip.Ed. programme infrequently provides for the broad range of professional development needs of upper and middle management that exist at the schools.*

Recommendations

The Dip.Ed. specialty in Educational Administration focuses on the roles and functions of upper management of schools, that is, Principal and Vice-Principal, and does not cater to any significant degree for the specific needs of HoDs and deans. Therefore, the SOE can develop CPD programmes that focus on the role and function of these middle managers. Further, the Dip.Ed. programme can be restructured so that all persons entering the programme would undergo training in a specific curriculum area as opposed to some doing educational administration as an option while others do a curriculum area. The SOE can develop CPD programmes in educational administration that teachers in middle and senior management positions could access after completing the initial teacher training offered through the Dip.Ed. This can be done in consultation with the MOE. All stakeholders need to engage in discourse and come to agreed understandings on what the real needs of teachers are in their varied contextual and cultural environments. Once this is done, then the SOE can plan strategically to meet these needs.

Issue 4: *Both school conditions and teacher perceptions serve as barriers to changes in teachers' practice.*

Recommendations

There needs to be more collaboration among stakeholders, particularly the provider (SOE); the client (MOE); and schools to structure the TPD programme in ways that are less restrictive on teachers' time and that are more closely aligned with the schools' contexts. The SOE needs to

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ensure that both its client and teachers entering the Dip.Ed. programme are clear about the scope of the programme so that they can be aware of and understand the programme goals. Involvement of other stakeholders, such as the MOE and TTUTA, may be necessary to establish policies regarding teaching conditions/responsibilities during the in-service TPD, since the MOE provides scholarships for the programme. The SOE cannot monitor teachers after completion of the programme so it has to be done by the senior and middle management of schools. However, the SOE can develop TPD programmes to equip school leaders with the tools to monitor teachers' practice. Although teachers' values, beliefs, and attitudes about the Dip.Ed. are personal, the SOE can do more to stress the values of this initial preparation programme beyond certification for promotion, so that teachers can be encouraged to consider the wider goal of school improvement.

Issue 5: *There is a need for effective mechanisms for collaboration among key stakeholders to derive school and system-wide benefits from the Dip.Ed. programme.*

Recommendations

There should be consultation among stakeholders to determine the TPD needs of teachers in the range of schools in T&T in order to realize school and system-wide improvement in education. Based on these identified needs, stakeholders should determine the best way to organize and structure TPD programmes to meet these needs. The results of the consultations among stakeholders might reveal that the initial teacher preparation programmes may be more effective if done pre-service rather than in-service. Through collaboration among all stakeholders, teachers can be required to disseminate and collaborate with peers in professional development sessions in their school context. There should be stronger collaboration among stakeholders to identify the TPD needs in the education system so that some of these needs can be addressed through CPD programmes. This should be more proactive than reactive.

Issue 6: *The need to standardize aspects of the Dip.Ed. programme in terms of content, focus, and instructional delivery.*

Recommendations

Quality assurance measures need to be continually monitored and reviewed to ensure consistently high standards of instructional delivery, and that the content specific to the various disciplinary fields offered in

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the programme is relevant, current, and standardized, wherever deemed appropriate.

Summary

Unravelling the identified issues related to TPD via the Dip.Ed. programme is key to designing effective TPD for in-service teachers. Notwithstanding the salience of the recommendations made, one should not ignore the fact that some of the issues teachers raised about the Dip.Ed. programme could be addressed through initial teacher preparation at the pre-service level. Notably, teachers participating in the in-service Dip.Ed. programme would have formed perceptions and developed cultures based on their experiences teaching in their individual schools and, by and large, it is difficult for the programme itself to change these perceptions. However, when teachers' initial professional preparation is pre-service, the programme can have a greater impact on influencing teachers' attitudes, values, and beliefs about teaching and learning.

Postscript

The SOE is listening and some of the changes thus far are as follows:

1. Inclusion of sessions devoted to "Learning Disabilities," "Anger Management," and "Conflict Resolution," to which all students are exposed.
2. An increased number of (i) sessions on technology integration in curriculum, and (ii) lecturers who incorporate the use of wikis and blogs for teaching/learning.

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