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Enhancing Teachers’ Reading Instruction through Professional Learning

Susan Main
Enhancing Teachers’ Reading Instruction through Professional Learning

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The Research

This research explored the classroom practices of six teachers within three schools who were involved in a professional learning experience. These six teachers were part of a cohort of 60 teachers undertaking professional learning focused on increasing their knowledge of effective literacy practices.
Professional learning, as conceptualized by Fullan, Hill and Crévola (2006), involves teachers in ongoing learning both individually and collectively. Therefore it can be seen to incorporate both professional development activities and involvement in professional learning communities.
Moats (1994, 1999, 2009) has consistently expressed concern about the preparedness of teachers to teach reading. She suggests that there is a focus “program selection, school organization, and student test scores – not teachers, the contexts in which they teach, or the leadership and professional development required to ensure ‘teacher quality’” (2009, p. 387).
The Methodology

“Richly developed portrayals of expertise in teaching are rare” (Shulman, 1987, p. 1)

A case study approach provides descriptive data for explanatory purposes as well as to test explanations for why specific events have occurred (Yin, 1981)
Concurrent Triangulation Design

QUANTITATIVE + QUALITATIVE

Phase 1 Data Collection

Phase 2 Data Collection

Phase 3 Data Collection

Quantitative

Qualitative

QUALITATIVE

QUALITATIVE

Data Results Compared

Data Analysis

Source: Adapted from (Creswell, 2009)
Pre Phase 1

Initial Professional Learning Sessions for Project

- Survey of Teachers' Theoretical Orientation
- Survey of Teachers' Literacy Self-Efficacy
- Survey of Literacy Block Activities
- Assessment of Teachers' Literacy Skills

Phase 2

Selected Case Study Subjects

- Interviews with Teachers
- Classroom Artefacts
- Classroom Observation Checklists

Phase 1

Self-nomination

- Identify Case Study Teachers' Surveys
- Classroom Artefacts
- Classroom Observations and Checklists
- Survey of Teachers' Theoretical Orientation
- Survey of Teachers' Literacy Self-Efficacy
- Survey of Literacy Block Activities
- Assessment of Teachers' Literacy Skills

Phase 3

Project Completion
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item (rated 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = somewhat agree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree)</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Case Study Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Professional Learning on your teaching</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impact of Professional Learning on your students</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Paired Samples Test  SE questions from SLCRC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshi SE pre – TOT</td>
<td>-2.11</td>
<td>2.45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joshi SE post – TOT</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paired Samples Test for Self-Efficacy Survey

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SE Total Pre – Post</td>
<td>-2.24</td>
<td>2.20</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# The Preliminary Findings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Positive Influences</th>
<th>Detracting Influences</th>
<th>Requests</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Information on effective practice</td>
<td>Loss of key driver</td>
<td>More modelling of practice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessing their students and analysing this assessment data</td>
<td>Existing cultures of practice</td>
<td>Differentiation of content based on individual teacher needs</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussing their practice with peers</td>
<td>Differing levels of commitment to project</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feedback from observation of practice</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Being provided with materials to support teaching</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>