

Status and Significance of Professional Development for Agriculture Teachers in Nakuru County, Kenya: A Teachers' perspective

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What is Professional Development ?

- Activities that develop an individual's skills, knowledge, expertise and other characteristics as a teacher (OECD)
- Structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond, Hylar & Gardner, 2017)
- All types of professional learning undertaken by all teachers beyond the initial point of training. (Craft, 1996, p. 6)





Does professional development for teachers matter?

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Think about this



- Out of 150 factors which influence learning, PD is ranked 19th (Hattie,2009)
- Its often said that, the quality of an education system cannot be greater than the quality of its teacher.
- Becoming a competent teacher is a process not a training event.(LLL)



Importance of PDT

- Supports teachers in their role as facilitators of learning
- Helps reduce achievement gaps
- Managing requirements of special-needs students
- Teachers are updated on new content knowledge and pedagogical skills
- Helps teachers cope with challenges they encounter in teaching



Methodology

- Descriptive survey
- Sample size-151 agriculture teachers
- Three instruments were used:-
 - ATQ-Likert type items
 - COG
 - FGG



Results/Findings

From the ATQ

Agriculture teachers **agreed**

- have exposure to new teaching approaches thro PD
- there are limited PDA organized for agric. teachers
- they have attended at least one PDA in the last 12 months
- that they want to apply what they learn from the PDA.

However they **disagreed** that the PDA are regularly offered.



Results/Findings contd....

From the Focus groups:

PDT are:

- Rare
- Not targeting the real issues
- Subject biased- frequency and support
- Teachers not involved



Results/Findings contd...

Classroom observations:

- Lecture method mainly used
- Manipulation of materials-none
- Few questions from learners
- Congested classes-some
- Learner involvement low in most classes
- Traditional seating arrangement



Discussions

- Agric teachers have challenges in teaching the subject
- Agric teachers lack sufficient support thro PDA
- What is offered is irregular and fails to address the real needs
- They want to have a voice and choice for PDT
- Would like all subjects to be treated equitably when organizing for PDT



Significance of Ineffective PDT

- Poor performance in agriculture persists
- Agric teachers' morale goes down
- Reduced enrolment into agric related courses

Future for agriculture in Kenya



Conclusions



- Professional development activities should be continuous
- Involve the agriculture teachers in planning-participatory approach
- PD should be to solve issues at hand-practical not theoretical
- Review and re-think how PDT should be structured and handled



Implications

- Assess professional development needs and outcomes regularly in order to keep on improving
- Making enough funds available for a sustainable PDT
- Identify and develop expert teachers to act as mentors and coaches
- Professional development should include all stakeholders



Teaching philosophy



“A teacher can never really teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame.”

(Rabindranath Tagore)



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Thank you for listening



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