

Original Article

Professional Needs of Literacy Teachers for Pedagogical Training

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Abstract

The study was to explore the current practices of literacy teachers for pedagogical training, to analyze certain measures for professional development of literacy teachers and to identify the professional needs of literacy teachers for pedagogical training. The study was survey and descriptive in nature. The quantitative as well as qualitative (QUAN-quan) method was used and an explanatory sequential technique was adopted. The questionnaire was developed for data collection. The validity of questionnaire was ensured through the expert opinion and reliability of questionnaire was calculated through Chorobach Alpha. The results showed that 72.2% respondents agreed that literacy teachers were informed about ethical responsibilities towards pupils, 73.4% respondents agreed that literacy teachers cleared the concepts of topic during teaching, 77.3% respondents agreed that literacy teachers assessed students' learning, 78.6% respondents agreed that literacy teachers organized the classroom to facilitate the instruction for all students. The study concluded that majority of literacy teacher were informed the ethical responsibilities towards pupils, majority of literacy teachers cleared the concepts of topic during teaching, majority of literacy teachers agreed assessed students' learning, majority of literacy teachers organized the classroom to facilitate the instruction for all students. The study recommended that proper professional training may be launched for literacy teachers to improve their professional and teaching skills.

Keywords: Professional needs, Pedagogical training, Literacy teachers, Professional development

1. INTRODUCTION

The focus of Literacy Teachers (LTs) is on improving the reading skills of students. There are some other titles used for the LTs such as reading specialists and reading teachers. According to Kane (2017), literacy has been used for reading and writing traditionally; however, it has taken a larger context more recently. Kane (2017) stats that literacy is used as "the capacity to accomplish a wide range of reading, writing, speaking, and other language tasks associated with everyday life" (p. 217). LTs assure a continuous progress and transmission of relevant knowledge and necessary skills amongst their students. Literacy of content area is associated with teaching to learners the techniques used to make sense of a disciplinary text, for instance, how to study a history book for an examination. Such techniques are organized for teachers and readers for what to do before, during and after reading (Kenna, 2018).

The need of literacy teachers for professional knowledge is broadly accepted for the successful mastering tasks that are typical for their profession. Teacher knowledge has been differentiated into three components including content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, and general pedagogical knowledge (Shulman, 1987). Many research studies have related their work on teacher knowledge, assuming these components can be identified and contribute to the effective teaching of students and their learning outcomes. A large number of empirical studies have assessed teacher knowledge and provide



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evidence that the subject-specific knowledge and skills of teachers are pivotal factors with respect to the achievement of their students (König & Pflanzl, 2016; Sadler et al., 2013). Moreover, research on the effectiveness of teacher education has established the importance to measure the teacher knowledge as an outcome at various stages of teacher education (Kaiser & König, 2019).

Professional Knowledge of Teachers

The contribution of teacher knowledge to student learning and effective teaching has been emphasized by a variety of research studies (Kaiser & König, 2019; Gitomer & Zisk, 2015). Research studies conducted on teacher expertise have provided evidence that teachers need professional knowledge for mastering typical professional tasks (Berliner, 2004; Stigler & Miller, 2018). The content knowledge of teachers is related to the content of teaching and specific subject. According to Freeman, (2002), content knowledge is shaped by academic disciplines underlying the subject. The general pedagogical knowledge of teacher, on the other hand, is not limited to a general pedagogical knowledge rather it involves "those broad principles and strategies of classroom management and organization that appear to transcend subject matter" (Shulman, 1987, p. 8).

Although broad agreement exists that the teacher professional knowledge base comprises at least the three knowledge components content knowledge (CK), pedagogical content knowledge (PCK), and general pedagogical knowledge (GPK) (Grossman & Richert, 1988), hardly any empirical study has investigated the question how these cognitive components are interrelated. For example, PCK may serve as knowledge category that draws on both CK and GPK as foundations. While theoretical distinctions have been pointed out, empirical educational research has not provided clear answers with respect to the differentiations proposed. Existing studies in mathematics either show that CK and PCK are very highly intercorrelated (Krauss et al., 2008) or even suggest that CK and PCK could be merged into one knowledge category. None of these analyses has systematically accounted for the significance of GPK, therefore leaving open the question of whether teachers' PCK draws on both CK and GPK. For German language secondary teachers, the recent study by König and Bremerich-Vos (2020) integrated all three knowledge components, showing that PCK of German language teachers was more highly intercorrelated with their CK of linguistics and literature than with their GPK. How CK, PCK, and GPK are interrelated in case of teachers' professional knowledge for teaching early literacy remains an open question though.

This study aims to explore the professional needs of LTs for effective literacy teaching. From this perspective, the objectives of the study include:

- To explore the existing pedagogical practices of literacy teachers
- To identify the professional needs of literacy teachers for pedagogical training

2. METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive quantitative research design to gather information to make accurate predictions about the professional needs of LTs for effective literacy teaching. From this perspective, a predesigned questionnaire based on a 5-points Likert scale was used having 1 as a least while 5 as a highest level of agreement. To gather the data, the in-service teachers currently serving in Government Higher Secondary Schools in Rahim Yar Khan were targeted. A convenient sampling was used to select the teachers from the targeted schools. A prior consent from both the teachers and the administration of their schools was taken to implement the ethical considerations. On a pre-scheduled day, the researcher visited and revisited the schools and distributed the questionnaire forms amongst the teachers to fill out. Reversed coded items were used to discard the invalid received questionnaire forms.

Data Analysis

Table 1

I know how to teach the subject matter of literacy

Theme	Stat.	Responses						Mean	SD
		SDA	D	UD	A	SA	Total		
Content Knowledge	F	13	9	8	137	85	252	4.08	0.987
	%	5.2	3.6	3.2	54.4	33.7	100		

Table 1 showed that literacy teachers know how to teach the subject matter of literacy. According to data 88.1% literacy teachers agreed that they knew how to teach the subject matter of literacy while 8.8% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 3.2% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of

literacy teachers knew to teach the subject matter of literacy. Mean score 4.08 and SD 0.987 supported the statement.

Table 2

I implement the course curriculum of literacy

Theme	Stat.	Responses						Mean	SD
		SDA	D	UD	A	SA	Total		
Content Knowledge	F	9	10	20	112	101	252	4.13	0.973
	%	3.	4.0	7.9	44.4	40.1	100.0		

Table 2 showed that literacy teachers implement the course curriculum of literacy. According to data 84.5% literacy teachers agreed that implement the course curriculum of literacy while 7.9% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 7.6% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers implement the course curriculum of literacy. Mean score 4.13 and SD 0.973 supported the statement.

Table 3

I understand the literacy content with reference

Theme	Stat.	Responses						Mean	SD
		SDA	D	UD	A	SA	Total		
Content Knowledge	F	6	9	30	125	82	252	4.06	0.895
	%	2.4	3.6	11.9	49.6	32.5	100.0		

Table 3 showed that literacy teachers understand the literacy content with reference. According to data 82.1% literacy teachers agreed that understand the literacy content with reference, 7.6% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 7.9% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers understand the literacy content with reference. Mean score 4.06 and SD 0.895 supported the statement.

Table 4

I relate the literacy content with context

Theme	Stat.	Responses						Mean	SD
		SDA	D	UD	A	SA	Total		
Content Knowledge	F	10	18	19	112	93	252	4.03	1.044
	%	4.0	7.1	7.5	44.4	36.9	100.0		

Table 4 showed that literacy teachers relate the literacy content with context. According to data 81.3% literacy teachers agreed that relate the literacy content with context, 11.1% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 7.9% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers relate the literacy content with context. Mean score 4.03 and SD 1.044 supported the statement.

Table 5

I understand the learner's psychological needs

Theme	Stat.	Responses						Mean	SD
		SDA	D	UD	A	SA	Total		
Content Knowledge	F	15	24	37	100	76	252	3.79	1.151
	%	6.0	9.5	14.7	39.7	30.2	100		

Table 5 showed that literacy teachers understand the learner's psychological needs. According to data 69.9% literacy teachers agreed that understand the learner's psychological needs, 15.5% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 14.7% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers understand the learner's psychological needs. Mean score 3.79 and SD 1.151 supported the statement.

Table 6

I understand learning theories of literacy

Theme	Stat.	Responses						Mean	SD
		SDA	D	UD	A	SA	Total		
Content Knowledge	F	5	15	23	103	106	252	4.15	0.954
	%	2.0	6.0	9.1	40.9	42.1	100.0		

Table 6 showed that literacy teachers understand learning theories of literacy. According to data 83% literacy teachers agreed that understand learning theories of literacy 8% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 9% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers understand learning theories of literacy. Mean score 4.15 and SD 0.954 supported the statement.

Table 7

I know ethical responsibilities towards pupils

Theme	Stat.	Responses						Mean	SD
		SDA	D	UD	A	SA	Total		
Content Knowledge	F	17	23	30	115	67	252	3.76	1.143
	%	6.7	9.1	11.9	45.6	26.6	100.0		

Table 7 showed that literacy teachers know ethical responsibilities towards pupils. According to data 72.2% literacy teachers agreed that know ethical responsibilities towards pupils 15.8% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 11.9% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers know ethical responsibilities towards pupils. Mean score 3.76 and SD 1.143 supported the statement.

Table 8

I clear concepts of the topic during teaching

Theme	Stat.	Responses						Mean	SD
		SDA	D	UD	A	SA	Total		
Content Knowledge	F	20	24	23	102	83	252	3.81	1.219
	%	7.9	9.5	9.1	40.5	32.9	100.0		

Table 8 showed that literacy teachers clear concepts of the topic during teaching. According to data 73.4% literacy teachers agreed that clear concepts of the topic during teaching 17.4% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 9.1% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers clear concepts of the topic during teaching. Mean score 3.76 and SD 1.143 supported the statement.

Table 9

I develop an instructional sequence for literacy learners

Theme	Stat.	Responses						Mean	SD
		SDA	D	UD	A	SA	Total		
Content Knowledge	F	17	17	22	100	96	252	3.96	1.161
	%	6.7	6.7	8.7	39.7	38.1	100.0		

Table 9 showed that literacy teachers develop an instructional sequence for literacy learners. According to data 77.8% literacy teachers agreed that develop an instructional sequence for literacy learners 13.4% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 13.4% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers develop an instructional sequence for literacy learners. Mean score 3.96 and SD 1.161 supported the statement.

Table 10

I teach to meet students' learning outcomes

Theme	Stat.	Responses						Mean	SD
		SDA	D	UD	A	SA	Total		
Content Knowledge	F	18	19	25	108	82	252	3.86	1.164
	%	7.1	7.5	9.9	42.9	32.5	100		

Table 10 showed that literacy teachers teach to meet students' learning outcomes. According to data 75.4% literacy teachers agreed that teach to meet students' learning outcomes 14.6% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 9.9% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers teach to meet students' learning outcomes. Mean score 3.86 and SD 1.164 supported the statement.

3. FINDINGS

- 88.1% literacy teachers agreed that they knew how to teach the subject matter of literacy while 8.8% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 3.2% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers knew to teach the subject matter of literacy. Mean score 4.08 and SD 0.987 supported the statement.

- 84.5% literacy teachers agreed that implement the course curriculum of literacy while 7.9% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 7.6% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers implement the course curriculum of literacy. Mean score 4.13 and SD 0.973 supported the statement.
- 82.1% literacy teachers agreed that understand the literacy content with reference, 7.6% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 7.9% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers understand the literacy content with reference. Mean score 4.06 and SD 0.895 supported the statement.
- 81.3% literacy teachers agreed that relate the literacy content with context, 11.1% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 7.9% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers relate the literacy content with context. Mean score 4.03 and SD 1.044 supported the statement.
- 69.9% literacy teachers agreed that understand the learner's psychological needs, 15.5% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 14.7% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers understand the learner's psychological needs. Mean score 3.79 and SD 1.151 supported the statement.
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- 72.2% literacy teachers agreed that know ethical responsibilities towards pupils 15.8% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 11.9% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers know ethical responsibilities towards pupils. Mean score 3.76 and SD 1.143 supported the statement.
- 73.4% literacy teachers agreed that clear concepts of the topic during teaching 17.4% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 9.1% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers clear concepts of the topic during teaching. Mean score 3.76 and SD 1.143 supported the statement.
- 77.8% literacy teachers agreed that develop an instructional sequence for literacy learners 13.4% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 13.4% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers develop an instructional sequence for literacy learners. Mean score 3.96 and SD 1.161 supported the statement.
- 75.4% literacy teachers agreed that teach to meet students' learning outcomes 14.6% literacy teachers disagreed, whereas 9.9% of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers teach to meet students' learning outcomes. Mean score 3.86 and SD 1.164 supported the statement.

4. CONCLUSIONS

The study concluded that majority of literacy teachers agreed that they knew how to teach the subject matter of literacy while some of literacy teachers disagreed, whereas few of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers knew to teach the subject matter of literacy. Mean score and supported the statement. The study concluded that majority of literacy teachers agreed that implement the course curriculum of literacy while some of literacy teachers disagreed, whereas few of literacy teacher were undecided. Collectively, majority of literacy teachers implement the course curriculum of literacy. Mean score and SD supported the statement.

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Recommendations

The study recommended that

- Professional development of literacy teachers may be launched for improving teachers competency
- Pedagogical training for literacy teachers may be initiated for improving the quality of learning.
- Capacity building workshops for literacy teachers may be organized for improving teachers' efficiency.
- Staff development workshops may be organized for literacy teachers performance.

Competing Interests

The authors did not declare any competing interest.

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