

AN INVESTIGATION OF TEACHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN SRI LANKA

B.M.S. Bandara

*Centre for Education Leadership Development, National Institute of Education, Meepe,
Padukka, Sri Lanka
bandara@live.com*

This study focused on contemporary situation of Teacher Professional Development programme in Sri Lanka. It investigated the possibilities, strategies, issues and challenges involved in implementing Teacher Professional Development programme in secondary education context. Particularly in the new millennium, the demands of education have become broader and more complex. Therefore educational institutions and people who are involved in the education system have to prepare to equip themselves for the 21st century learners. Under these circumstances, teachers who are able to provide facilities and encouragement for children's future education have a challenge in 'learning and doing' more in order to upgrade their professionalism. Professional development programme for teachers in Sri Lanka are divided into two groups. The first is the School-Based Teacher Development (SBTD) programme and, this programme is planned, organized and implemented by principal and the staff. The second is the Non-School-Based Teacher Development (NSBTD) programme, this programme organized and implemented by external organizations or institutes. Both professional development programme help to develop teachers' professionalism. They also have particular advantages and disadvantages. The research design was based on qualitative research approach and the case-study method has been employed. Ten secondary schools were selected from three educational districts in two Provinces. The data were collected by conducting interviews, non-participative observation and sample-based documentary searching. The data was coded, presented and discussed in four themes. Further, the data were analyzed using the Activity Theory framework in order to investigate the complex inter-relationships of the individual components of the Teacher Professional Development program's activity system. Research findings showed that NSBTD programme did not consider individual teachers' and schools' needs. The focus was primarily to impart changes in the syllabuses, and reforms. The administration of NSBTD programme was traditional, hierarchical and unqualified personnel resources were used frequently. On the other hand Schools did not have policy documents, circulars, or handbooks to provide guidelines to organize SBTD programme. Effective and innovative SBTD activities were identified in three schools. However, quality, occasions, amount of the activities varied from school to school.