

Teaching Practice and Student Learning affected by Professional Learning Communities: A Review

Rajiv Sinha¹

Available online at: www.xournals.com

Received 4th September 2018 | Revised 10th October 2018 | Accepted 5th December 2018

Abstract:

Researchers and professionals cited the Professional Learning Community (PLC) because of its capability to impact student achievement in a positive manner. It is recommended to foster collaboration of PLC and make teacher practice public for improving the features of teaching and learning in this current scenario of high risk of accountability. In this review paper, 10 American and one English studies were observed for finding the effect of PLCs on the practice of teaching and student learning after analyzing the professional learning communities' characteristics. It is suggested by the result that on both teaching rehearsal and student learning the well developed PLCs makes a positive impact. It is also included to implicate the research and proposals for the further research in the documentation of the effect of PLC on teaching and learning.

Keywords: *Communities of practice, Teacher collaboration, Professional Learning Communities, Professional Development*

Authors:

1. Puneindian Institute of Science Education and Research, Pune, INDIA

Introduction

There are example of shift gathering momentum in professional development of teachers since last 20 years. The difficulties of teaching and learning generate the environment of increasing accountability which helps to restruct the professional development that would support the achievement like new knowledge and skills for teachers. Professional development necessitates to aid the teachers rethinking which includes dual capacity in the teacher of both teaching and learning and also includes creation of new visions of what, when and how, it is suggested by the Darling Hammond and McLaughlin. The fundamental changes are required in Institutional structures for governing the schooling according to the most current model of professional development. There are many articles that praise the virtues of teaching communities in current professional developmental litrearture as an important factor to organize schools but recently it has been moved for the examination of changes that occurred in the practice of teacher and learning of students as a result of PLCs. While, it is both valid and valuable perceptions of teacher about the value of PLCs but it is crucial in this scenario of unusual resources and accountability to understand the results of these activities related to teaching rehearsal and student learning. Firstly, the chracteristics of PLCs are showed and then the development of the examination of recent literature is done which connects two basic questions that are as:

1. The participation in PLC gives the outcomes as, teaching practices changes in which ways and these changes are supported by what aspects of the PLCs?
2. Does the assumptions that student learning increases along with the participation of the teacher in PLC are supported by the literature and the increased student learning are supported by what aspects? (Vescio, Ross and Adams, 2008)

Important Features of Professional Learning Communities

The theory of PLC is originated from the business sectors in respect to the organizational capacity to learn. The learning organization became learning community which tried to develop cooperative work cultures for teachers (Thompson, Gregg, & Niska, 2004). There are two expectations on which learning communities are based includes an assumption that

the knowledge is enhanced by the teachers' experience which is attained day be day and is best understand by the critical reflection of the experience with students (Buysse, Sparkman, & Wesley, 2003). The other assumption, the actively participation of teachers in PLCs enhances their professional skills and the learning capacity of the students. Teachers must critically observe and examine the results of efforts made by the students for the achievements. Results can be proved by the PLCs in the form of data indicating the changed teaching practices and imporoved students learning.

Professional Learning Communities and teaching practice

PLC works with the principle as the improvement in the student learningthrough the improvement in teacher practice. Guiding questions are mainly focused in this review for example the outcomes due to the participation in PLCs, teaching practices changes in which ways and these changes are supported by what aspects of the PLCs? Dunne et al., (2000) recognized the finding of 2 years study n groups by Annenberg Institute for School Reform and used interview and observation data to compare the practices of non participants in his study. He stated that for the accommodation of varying level of student content mastery, the practice of techniques such as the participant make the environment of classroom flexible and change their way of instruction due to which the laearning would be easy for the students. However, the power of reported findings is decreased as the data regarding the practices was not provided by the researchers at the beginning of the study. The availability of professional community in a school donates the higher levels of social support to achieve the high levels of authentic education is documented by the Louis and Marks (1998). For explaining the effect of PLC on tutorial room, model provides the robust support and resultingas the model accountonly for 36% of the alteration in the quality of classroom education.

Professional Learning Communities In School Culture

The skilled values of the school demonstrate that through the launching of PLC, the important changes are occurred in the mind's habit which are seen in the daily routine of the teachers, present in the class room. Therefore it is a significant findings in pedagogy. The empirical data cited by all the 11

studies suggesting that there is a change that occurred in the school's professional culture. For the promotion of changes in teaching cultures there seems to be characteristics innate in learning communities. It is also essential duty to note that the difficulties of this process are recognized because it plays the role in various lived contexts and the processes are classified according to the goals of PLC. Unfortunately, we have only one path to analyze the lies with the desirable actions related to the simplification and classification in the matter of complex and contextual text. Professional learning communities and school culture includes following points which an essential role.

1. Collaboration
2. An attention on student learning
3. The power of teacher
4. Constant teacher learning

Professional Learning Communities and Student Achievement

It is proven by the previous literature that the PLCs affects the teaching. Now the question is, does it also affects on students or not? The achievement gained by the student in the field of education environment shows the feasibility of PLCs and this feasibility is increased on the demand of accountability. The role of teacher is increased as they have to demonstrate that result how their effort improve the student learning through learning communities.

Review of Literature

Stoll et al., (2006) reviewed on professional learning communities and through his international evidences, he suggested that educational improvement's progress relies on teacher's individual and collective capacity and its link with school wide capacity for promoting pupil's learning. He concluded that this is a timely moment to unpack the meaning and consequences of professional community at the level of practice.

Vescio, Ross and Adams, (2007) take 10 American studies and one English study. In their review, he analyzed the impact of professional learning communities. Their review contained the impacts and suggestion regarding the further steps for making the documents of PLCs' impact on teaching and learning. This review paper has the limitation because of their decision as the report will published only due to the review process is

considered as the tools for the determination of the quality of research reports.

Usun, (2009) worked on the comparative review the planning to prepare the teachers for using the information and communications technologies (ICT) to teach the student all over the world. For utilizing the ICT in teacher training, International applications were introduced by Turkey. Conclusion found in this review was that there is a crucial requirement of fast growing and relevant empirical research in this field.

Lee and Lee, (2013) worked on case study of exploring the empirical fit of two professional learning community in Singapore and found out that the conceptualization of the construct to be inextricable from the history of how national level reform has been institutionalized. Objectives for a Fullan-inspired approaches are evident, but still rest in the stage of conceptualization.

Hairon et al., (2015) worked on an agenda for professional learning communities through which the capacity of teachers can be increased. They proposed six aspects affecting the methodological rigor for supporting the professional learning community research.

Ratts et al., (2015) examined the elementary teachers and descriptions of their professional learning community. Results indicated the positive correlations between teacher level of education and observing peers and also found positive correlation between student works, working with colleagues to judge the quantity of student work, and discussing centered educational issues.

Zhang, Yuan and Yu, (2016) studied on the barriers of the development of professional learning communities in China and perceptions from leaders and frontline teachers in three schools of Shanghai. Result shows that the barriers identified by teachers in the development of professional learning communities involves insufficient collaborative time, ineffective school leadership, unfavorable accountability policy, and lack of collaborative professional culture.

Dogan, Tatik and Yurtseven, (2017) worked on professional learning communities assessment adaptations, multidimensional model testing and internal validity in Turkish context. They also demonstrated the connection between individual, interpersonal and organizational dimensions of professional learning communities used for teacher

characteristics and school relative factors after the completion of adaptation study for elementary teachers.

Conclusion

After studying the research and review papers, this paper is reached on the conclusion that PLCs that is professional learning and communities are proved very helpful to improve the quality of teacher training

and student learning. After applying the PLCs in schools, teachers' mind is changed due to which they bring the change in their daily routine. This paper also concluded that Characteristics of PLCs are affected by the student achievement through which the validity of it can be checked. After inbuilt the new techniques in the PLCs, there is need to establish the relevant and fast growing techniques.



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