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Quality monitoring of self-education component of higher school learning process

There is determined the role of the self-education component of a learning process in the development of future specialists and the peculiarities of its quality management by each subject of the learning process, signs of its quality. Based on the analysis of scientific literature there is developed the monitoring procedure “Level of development of self-education component of a learning process” and given the results of its implementation.

Key words: *learning process at a higher school, self-educational work of students, self-education component of a learning process, monitoring of the self-educational component of a learning process.*

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THE SIGNIFICANCE OF PEDAGOGICAL RESOURCE CENTERS IN ERITREA

The article is about the role of Pedagogical Resource Centers (PRCs) that serve as potentially effective base for teacher in-service training. However, the success of resource centers and clusters, to a large extent, depends on the availability of human and resources dedicated to them; in the absence of which, they can not be expected to do better and sustain themselves as support systems. So long as they remain not institutionalized entities; it is hard to expect PRCs/ Resource Centers and clusters to achieve their intended objectives. Usually, when out side support ceases, they seem not sustain themselves, and hence, they must be rooted in community's and stakeholders' support engagements in order to sustain themselves.

Key words: *institutionalization, stakeholders, intervention, engagement, continuing professional development Centers.*

Soon after independence, Eritrea committed itself to revise its national curriculum, which was drafted during the years of armed struggle. Revising the national curriculum was necessary in order to address the educational demands of new Eritrea. Parallel to this, teacher training initiatives stood among the main priorities of the Ministry of Education. And hence, teacher training programs were organized at different places and at different times, i.e. at national, regional, clusters and school levels. The Ministry of Education wants and/or wanted to maximize Pedagogical Resource Centers' (PRCs) potential fully; as it was moving to implement the Education Sector Development Program (ESDP) for Eritrea. The ESDP was five year rolling (2004–2008) to improve access, equity and relevance of education, enhance the quality of learning, promote vocational education with an emphasis on science, technology and communication skills, and also to strengthen capacity with a strong in-service teacher training.

Basically, PRCs were and still are entrusted to help improve the quality of education in the Eritrean school system. The ‘*Concept Paper for Rapid Transformation*’ called for a new Learner-Centered Curriculum and Interactive Pedagogy, which aims at promoting learning

with understanding, among other things. PRCs as catalysts, in the main, were meant to focus on local teacher training programs; by involving stakeholders to take part in an active engagement in the management of schools and the improvement of teaching in general.

The Pedagogic Unit, Department of General Education, took the responsibility of rehabilitating and re-orientating the functions of PRCs. Accordingly, the primary Goals, objectives and functions of PRCs, the roles and responsibilities of PRCs' coordinators, the responsibilities of stakeholders, the roles of supervisors, directors of satellite schools, clusters' coordinating committees etc were drawn as guidelines. 23 Standard PRCs' Buildings were put in place with the help of Danida (Danish International Development Agency) project in the six regions of Eritrea to address teachers' professional support.

As a long term vision, the Ministry of Education State of Eritrea, aspires to restructure PRCs into Continuing Professional Development Centers (CPDCs). (Report on Restructuring PRCs into CPDCs. The structuring of PRCs into CPDCs is seen as part of the development of a comprehensive strategy to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and not as a separate component.

The Development of Pedagogical Resource Centers. The national policy of education, in some developed and developing countries focuses on access, quality, equity, efficiency and relevance to reform education with the help of active support systems. Educational planning with policy and decision-making attempts to bring substantial educational changes by mapping, targeting, acting, evaluating and correcting education programs rigorously which leads to national development [7].

The support system model has developed in many places under different names such as Pedagogical Resource Centers (PRCs), Teacher Resource Centers (TRCs), Teacher Advisory Centers (TACs) etc. found in rural and urban areas in Latin America, Asia, and Africa and even in industrialized countries. These centers influence very successful way being compacted with resourceful personnel, material kits, training packages etc. It has intensive purposes for attainment of quality education [10].

Also, this model is developed with teacher libraries, examination centers, community meetings, interactions and meetings of program coordinators and staff members for its effective use. Attention is focused on teachers' enthusiasm and involvement of staff, students and community

for its effectiveness and its worth return of extensive efforts and strategic investment on resource centers. However, schools in poor and isolated areas face great difficulty in providing education of a decent quality and with necessary infrastructure due to location beyond within reach, limited resources and facilities and lack of coordination between resources centers and cluster schools. In order to its remedy, some countries like Bolivia and Peru, UK and India have already developed its initiatives with the idea of school clustering i.e. grouping schools together to share experiences and practices, improve their materials and skills so as to benefit mutually. A cluster provides a network of support and ideas for generation and diffusion of pedagogical innovations and good classroom practices [15].

A Resource Center is housed within a cluster school to provide cluster teachers with professional and pedagogical support. The studies by Mac Nail in 2004 and Hoppers in 1998 have reported many aid programs have utilized resource centers to ensure the rapid delivery of in-service training or to train unqualified teachers to be well equipped and ready for an action plan classroom. Also, in some rural and urban areas system has been developed to diffuse required information and communication technology (ICT) to equip schools with internet access and attract teachers, students and community members for the same. Cluster-based teaching-learning quality and professional development and practice is perceived as cost effective and positive impact carrying strategy.

Teacher Advisory Centers (TACs) in Kenya provide information for teachers, conduct demonstration lessons, develop teaching aids from local materials, conduct studies on local education needs and disseminate information on curriculum innovations (Republic of Kenya, 1988). Investment in the TACs tutors helps as support role to teachers for their professionalism and capacity to use materials and for better classroom practice and outcome [3].

PRCs Policy, Strategy and Program. The government's educational policy and strategy concentrate on building PRCs closer to delivery, decentralizing organization and management of resource structure and programmed activities.. It focuses on conducting in-service training, holding seminars and workshops addressing identified needs, producing teaching learning materials, curriculum materials, facilitating the implementation of new changes, innovations, providing library services, holding professional meetings to discuss and exchange ideas, experience/ expertise; thus bridging the gap if any by following program assessment techniques [11].

The UK resource model has been promoted widely adhering to its innovative strategies to improve teaching and learning conditions through school cluster programs under efficient governance with decentralization of education reforms, giving more responsibility in education administration, encouraging school autonomy and promoting community involvement in decision-making and educational finance [10].

The Management of Pedagogical Resource Centers and School Cluster.

The management of PRCs is the responsibility of the management committee of different nature: consists of the District Chief Administrators, District Education Officer, District Inspectorate, District Works Supervisors, Representatives from local Head-Teachers Association, Representatives from Parent Teacher Association (PTAs), Representatives from Board of Governors, Chairperson District Education Committee, Women in Development Offices, Local Employers Association, Representatives from local National Teacher's College, Representatives from District Subject Professional Association, PRCs' coordinators. This committee decides the administrative and financial aspects, professional matters and resource provision of PRCs management. The stakeholders in secondary education in the district are involved in the decision-making process. The day-to-day running affairs of the resource centers is the responsibility of the coordinator who is the fulltime employee by the government. Supervision at the cluster level allows a more inside view of the issues faced by cluster teachers and head teachers for school support [5]. Pedagogical supervisors provide advice, guidance and information. Their intervention is intended to improve teachers practice in the classroom. Some programs use resource center tutors to support teacher's development by providing classroom observation, feedback as well as follow up on teaching. The committee plans and implements its own programs.

The development of these centers and recurrent expenditure are included in the national budget. The district office of education provides support service to school clusters and guidance in planning. The province levels screens the clusters' grant proposal and determines the role of clusters in decentralized management. School clusters are now responsible for the management of funds for operational expenses and developing their own quality improvement action plans through planning, monitoring and evaluation [6].

Teacher groups and clusters bring teachers, supervisors and administrators to focus on

common objectives, which can help to bring about improved working relationships, shared priorities and the potential toward betterment of students' education as reported by World Bank. Parental involvement in schools and PRCs financing and governance has turned out as essential for the success of program [2].

The impact of PRCs to improve Quality Education. School clusters and resource centers serve as potentially effective base for teacher in-service training and pedagogical support and thus, for improving the quality of education. Raj Khania, (1979) has notes that resource centers play a positive role in improving the teaching-learning process. Participation of educators in networks leads to positive changes in teaching by means of teaching groups, in-class support and needs-based training. Teachers are motivated by the trainings in the clusters enhancing their professionalism, which creates a positive impact in the delivery of subject areas. The opportunity to come together with other teachers also improves teachers' moral. In Nepal, teachers' professionalism has improved due to the support and training. Resource centers and school clusters also play a role in raising awareness of child-centered pedagogy, positive impact on content, materials, preparation and enhancing teaching outcomes. As a result, methods used by teachers in classroom, training in child-centered approaches for isolated schools could be enhanced. And more activities in child-centered approaches could be addressed.

The coordinated work of resource centers and cluster schools also help in creating clearer goals for learning and improved transition. Cross-site teacher groups working within clusters and networking of schools move toward harmonizing teaching criteria and defining master skills in each subject grade level increase access materials to wider curriculum coverage and additional educational activities, in science, technology, language and arts classes [5].

In terms of internal efficiency i.e. in relation to access, coverage, intervention, enrolment, participation and retention of result-oriented outcomes resource centers and cluster schools play pretty good role [Duhamel, M.; et al... (2003) In Uganda, supports provided by teachers' resource centers, staff updating skills, expanding teaching approaches become more interesting and easier through workshops and demonstrations [16].

Why clusters/resource centers fail to achieve their intended purposes? There are some problems which arise and stand on the way of PRCs experiences. The training functions of PRCs are found to be costly and ineffective in

translating into classroom practices. Knamiller, G. (Ed.).(1999) in his four-country study has found that clusters-based in-service training does not cause any change in classroom practice.

In Nepal, though in-service training has been well planned and supported with resource materials, school conditions have made it very difficult to apply teaching skills learned through training remarks that teachers need to structure what they learn to apply it into classroom. Moreover, teachers have not attended fruitful meetings, no provision of accreditation, and no clear evidence of remarkable changes in classroom practice by using workshop results. Results without follow-up are even less effective. Teachers are not followed up in real teaching practice. They usually have difficulties in adopting the techniques learned in workshops into practices. It is also difficult for PRCs' coordinators to visit too many schools in a cluster far away from each other [12].

It has found that inconvenient location of PRCs do not help teachers to achieve their stated goals. Gibbs and Kazilimani, Knamiller (1999) indicate that PRCs must be less than two hours walking distance in order to be used on-drop-in basis. TRCs are open during school hours only, teachers are forced to leave classes to attend workshops, causing a lot of absenteeism. Resource persons are also absent visiting schools and resource centers remain closed.

Resource centers in many places have inadequate resources for teachers whereas they need refreshed stock of resources and materials. Some clusters experience problems like sharing resources due to difficulties in transporting materials or because of poor coordination among cluster members. In Thailand, some cluster office staff do not perform adequate job of circulating materials to teachers and schools. The end result is that in most clusters office staff wants teachers to come to resource centers to get materials or equipment [17]. Clusters and resource centers require reliable funding to carry out even the most basic activities. Many programs criticize the lack of community participation as a weak side. It may also threaten clusters sustainability on the long term. The support from the administrative side is very important for resource centers and cluster development. In Kenya, there is lack of support from education officials, not to recognize support group meetings within the mainstream of educational strategies [9].

In the case of Eritrea, as practices on the ground shows today, PRCs are not fully operational, because they lacked human and material resources, poor understanding of the true nature of PRCs

as intervention strategies leading to a shallow to a distorted notion of them as "teaching aids fabrics" or places for the "production of teaching aid materials" (MOE (2010). In addition, there is poor co-ordination of PRCs and school clusters and assigned to them under qualified PRCs [1].

Sustainability of PRCs as support systems. A study in Mozambique (1996) has reported that the institutional capacity building ensures sustainability within MOE. Financial sustainability depends upon the economical growth of the country. Another study in the Republic of Zambia MOE (1996) has reported that basically SHAPE (self help aid primary education) has encouraged TRCs at school/zone and district levels initiated by the communities with the intrinsic advantage of sustaining their operations using local funds. However, the project at times provides recurrent budget. Capital funding has been provided to colleges and some districts where initiative has been exhibited. Sustainability of TRCs lies in the SHAPE strategies apart from capacity building, encouraging the user fee-system, government counterpart funding, education with production as economic basis, supporting community involvement and activities.

Also, the integration of TRCs in the normal Ministry of Education operations is another way of sustaining the TRCs activities. MOE, Uganda (1996) has reported that many initiatives and projects fail because of little attention paid to the crucial factors. In too many cases sudden and noticeable improvements are made as a result of an unsustainable influx of resources provided through donor funds. When these funds cease, ultimately project activity, the initiatives ceases, and gains disappear. MOE has emphasized that funding is at the heart of this scenario to sustain developmental education system. The Ugandan secondary education system is possibly unique in the world with regard to the level of funding obtained from private sources. About 50–90% of school recurrent expenditure is met from private resources.

In contrast to the above, MOE Lesotho [MOE, Lesotho (1996) has reported that the teachers resource centers are financed wholly by the government. There is no prospect of income generating activity by these centers due to the fact that these are meant for teachers. The development of these centers and recurrent expenditures are included in the national budget.

In France, UK and Chile schools collectively elaborate a program and present it to the local education authorities or a national committee, which then provides support or funding being

encouraged for innovative ways of improving education. This funding system seems to be sustainable and contribute much toward education quality improvement program in resource centers and school clusters. A. Hoppers [9] has stated that there is a growing interest in using school clusters and resource centers in local development with the goal of fostering self-reliance and sustainability of community participation in education, increased interaction between communities and schools, involvement of parents in their children's education and adapting school policies to local needs. Under New York State Education Law, teacher centers continue to receive a significant amount of funding from the state budget and are strongly supported by the teachers unions. Their institutionalization and sustainability appear strengthened by the new federal and state regulations requiring districts to provide professional development.

Conclusion. Resource Centers have been used in many developed and developing countries as intervention strategies; providing access opportunities to a wide range of cluster and school -based pedagogical activities. By and large, conditions on the ground do not seem to allow Resource Center Programs to play their part in improving the quality of education. In order to be effective, Resource Centers must be provided with enough material and human resources, where in most cases these are lacking, and are heavily dependent on outside donor support. Resource Centers can only be of good service, if they are well-equipped and staffed with competent and committed support staff and or/tutors, playing a real support role for teachers and serving as motivators and mentors for teacher development and improved classroom practice. Resource Centers and clusters are likely to operate most effectively, when local stakeholders, including educators, administrators, parents, as well as local government authorities are mobilized and committed to cooperating toward the improvement of education. In addition, in order PRCs/ Resource Centers to be effective and meet their intended ends, they must be institutionalized entities and be part and parcel of the structural framework of mother ministries in order to sustain themselves.

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Значение педагогических ресурсных центров в Эритрее

Рассматривается роль педагогических ресурсных центров, которые служат потенциально эффективной базой для педагогической подготовки. Успешность ресурсных центров во многом зависит от работоспособности человека и вложенных ресурсов; при отсутствии таковых нельзя ожидать улучшений в работе и оставаться системами поддержки.

Ключевые слова: институционализация, заинтересованная сторона, интервенция, обязательство, непрерывное профессиональное развитие центра.

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СТРУКТУРА ПРОФЕССИОНАЛИЗМА ВОЕННОСЛУЖАЩЕГО

Раскрываются структура профессионализма военнослужащего, критерии и показатели его сформированности, что представит интерес в отношении вопросов, связанных с формированием и развитием профессионализма в различных видах социума.

Ключевые слова: *воинский труд, профессионализм военнослужащего.*

Современные условия, в которых военнослужащим приходится выполнять обязанности по предназначению, требуют высокой ответственности, отличаются сложностью, напряженностью, экстремальностью. Защита Российской Федерации требует наличия у военнослужащего любой категории специальных знаний и соответствующей квалифика-

ции, развитых профессионально-личностных качеств, необходимых для воинского труда, осознания его смысла, специфических ценностных ориентаций, идеалов.

В связи с этим актуализируется вопрос о структуре профессионализма военнослужащих, критериях и показателях его сформированности. Данные знания могут стать ценным подспорьем для командиров и начальников всех звеньев управления в правильном и эффективном выстраивании целостного педагогического процесса формирования профессионализма у военнослужащих в условиях воинского труда.

Воинский труд определяется как «осознанное целенаправленное исполнение военнослужащим своего воинского долга, в процессе которого он реализует себя как субъект военно-профессиональной деятельности, повседневных отношений и личностно-профессионального развития и, оптимально используя предметы и средства этого труда (вооружение и военную технику), обеспечивает эффективное получение совокупных результатов военной службы» [4, с. 46].

«Воинский труд является частным случаем профессиональной трудовой деятельности. Это подтверждает наличие в нём всех элементов, определяющих последнюю: людей, занятых трудом; предмета труда; средств труда; продукта труда, обладающего специфической потребительской стоимостью, которая делает существование армии необходимым обществом; стоимости труда; содержания и характера труда» [6, с. 133].

«Воинский труд, являясь одной из разновидностей труда, выполняется в специфических условиях. Он составляет основу военной службы в Российских Вооружённых Силах. Этот труд осуществляется отдельными военнослужащими и воинскими коллективами на материальной основе, создаваемой усилиями всего общества, и отличается ярко выраженной военно-профессиональной направленностью» [4, с. 90].

В воинском труде военнослужащий формирует и отстаивает собственную позицию как профессиональный защитник Отечества, самобытная индивидуальность, компетентный исполнитель военной службы. При этом он добивается высоких результатов на основе сложившейся практики и инвариантных возможностей.

По мнению Ю.Г. Спицына, «воинский труд, как целесообразная деятельность лю-