SELF-DIRECTED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT APPROACH: A CHALLENGE FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this article is to investigate the provisions for secondary school teachers' self-directed professional development in Pakistan. Professional growth is vital for all professions, but it is especially crucial in the teaching profession because it directly influences generational change. Continuous professional development is necessary to update teachers' knowledge and skills, and to enable them to meet new challenges of the changing demands of learners. Self-directed professional development is the way to help instructors improve their expertise and skills in teaching. Adult learning ideas, such as learning according to one's needs and interests, were adopted to self-directed professional development. In situations where resources are scarce, budget allocation for education is lesser than requirement, and number of students are more than ideal self-directed professional development is very much important. While exploring the provision of self-directed professional development in secondary school teachers where it is seen as positive and motivational for other teachers, there are some challenges faced by self-directed teachers. The challenge for secondary school teachers is to perceive their development as a success in professional learning and teaching process that may enhance the quality of their teaching. These challenges must be reported to school administration as well as policymakers to minimize these challenges and set a proper mechanism to consider self-directed professional development as positive and value demanding for a teacher.
Keywords: Self-directed professional development, secondary school teachers.

INTRODUCTION
It is most important that a country must develop its human resource to harness its full potential. This learning process can be accomplished only by an effective educational system. The entire process of human resource development depends on the quality of education at all levels, starting from pre-primary education to higher education. In this sense, it can be said that teachers play a pivotal role in the field of education since they are directly involved in transmitting their knowledge, values, and ideas to students (Ahmad 2014). The professional development of secondary school teachers plays a vital role in contributing to the improvement of academic performance by enhancing their professional skills and competencies.

This study focuses on the Self-Directed Professional Development of Secondary School Teachers (SDPDs). There have been published many national and international types of researches, but little is known about SDPDs and their impact on promoting the teachers' professional development. The main objective of this research is to explore the self-directed professional development of secondary school teachers in Pakistan. Secondary school teachers are one of the most important sections of the population because they play an important role in their educational institutes. To increase the level of education and for making a strong nation, educators need a good curriculum along with excellent teaching skills. First of all, they should impact upon these two by improving their knowledge Hence, the purpose of this exploratory study is to identify what factors contribute towards improving professional development activities by experienced teacher educators in Pakistan.

The issue of quality teachers has been on the agenda of education policy in Indonesia as a current problem that needs immediate attention. Therefore, improving the quality of

teachers requires self-directed professional development which can be designed according to the needs and demands of individual teachers (Minott 2010). Professional development is also an important part of professional knowledge, skills, and abilities because it has the potential for facilitating career advancement for teachers (Domitrovich 2009). The development of secondary school teachers is one of the most important issues in a contemporary educational setting. As, the number of secondary schools in Pakistan has increased dramatically, but most teachers don't have enough knowledge and skills to be able to teach. With rapid globalization, this process has been increasingly accelerated and strengthened. The textbook "Teaching methods and techniques" by Rohani Abdullah shows that teachers are the agents in education itself, then how do we make them more effective as expected? The study attempts to find out how self-directed professional development can be used as a tool for teachers' professional growth by looking into the current situation based on the mapping method, expert interviews, and document analysis.

This research also focuses on one form of professional development technique, namely self-directed professional development, in terms of secondary education teachers' character development. Professional development is defined as skills and knowledge acquired for both personal development and career advancement, according to the author. Individuals may engage in professional development as a result of a desire to learn for the rest of their lives, a sense of moral obligation, a desire to maintain and increase professional competence, advance their careers, and stay current with new technology and practise. Several elements influence a teacher's willingness to participate in professional development; one psychological component that can influence his or her success is a sense of moral obligation (Alshaikhi 2020).

From time to time the role and function of schools along with the duties and responsibilities of teachers have always been changing. To meet such changes, the job of teachers has become much more demanding especially in assisting their students to excel in academics, despite several quite obvious factors like a consistent growth of the class size, new tests and measures for evaluation, along with other administrative responsibilities than teaching, consisting of both interpersonal and intrapersonal involvement.

MAJOR FINDINGS
1. Self-directed professional development
Self-directed professional development is a continuously self-motivated learning process that has a larger impact and reserves better influence on the learning activity. An individual is more focused on exploring better mediums and methods to generate lifelong impact and learning productivity. Lifelong learning is possible when self-directed professional development is prioritized by teachers.

Preparing pupils for lifelong learning is becoming increasingly popular at present. Everyone has personally experienced and recognised the transformational power of an effective teacher to some extent. Those teachers were enthusiastic about the subjects they taught and showed real concern for the pupils with whom they collaborated. They possessed the drive and talent to blend their studies and expertise with practical teaching approaches in order to engage pupils and relate them to the topic's final goals and objectives. They encouraged students to experiment with concepts, think thoroughly about the material, take on more difficult tasks, and even seek professions in a certain field of study (Bain 2004).

Age and geographical locations have nothing much to do with education and the learning process. The knowledge and in-depth learning experiences have a greater influence on the learning processes and their impact on the educational as well as personal lifelong incidences both in terms of long- and short-term objectives. Balanced learning is possible only when the focus is based on polishing the skills and generating fine knowledge outcomes. Lifelong learning is more about identifying personal needs through valuable learning experiences and reaching their desired knowledge destinations through optimal paths. Today, the world has transformed into a global community where every field lays its foundation on top of rapid information and communication technologies. The modern era targets the acquisition of knowledge and skills which are directly focused on the modern world in contrast to a specific

stream of traditional knowledge and learning processes. The modern world relates to skills of the twenty-first century which derive from the basics of information societies. In today's world, self-directed learning skills have become the new normal. Self-motivation and self-derivation have started spreading their impact on the field of education and learning (Tekkol 2018).

Self-directed learning has been found to have a deep and prolonged impact on learning practices as well as learning journeys. Lifelong learning executes hand in hand with self-direction and self-motivation. Some studies show that self-direction and lifelong learning are equally important to each other (Candy 1990). Other studies emphasized that self-direction is more critical than lifelong learning and thus it needs to be streamlined properly to gain success and invaluable learning in lifelong learning periods (Greveson 2005).

For good progress in terms of self-directed learning, teachers play a vital role by developing professionally as well as showing progress as lifelong learners. The choice of teaching materials as well as practices influences their professional competence and how proactive they are in preparing for any future challenges. Teachers are the role models who can transform the whole environment of the learning environments and classrooms by involving the students through active participation activities.

Self-directed professional development can help teachers and educators in facing difficult situations which was hardly possible with traditional ways of professional development. Former enables individuals to struggle in finding outcomes to unexpected situations. Such practices result in wide experience and learning of diverse skills as an individual and completely independent of what a classroom environment can train them on. Also, they engage the students at their pace and capacity proving better learning outcomes and gains (Thornton 2013).
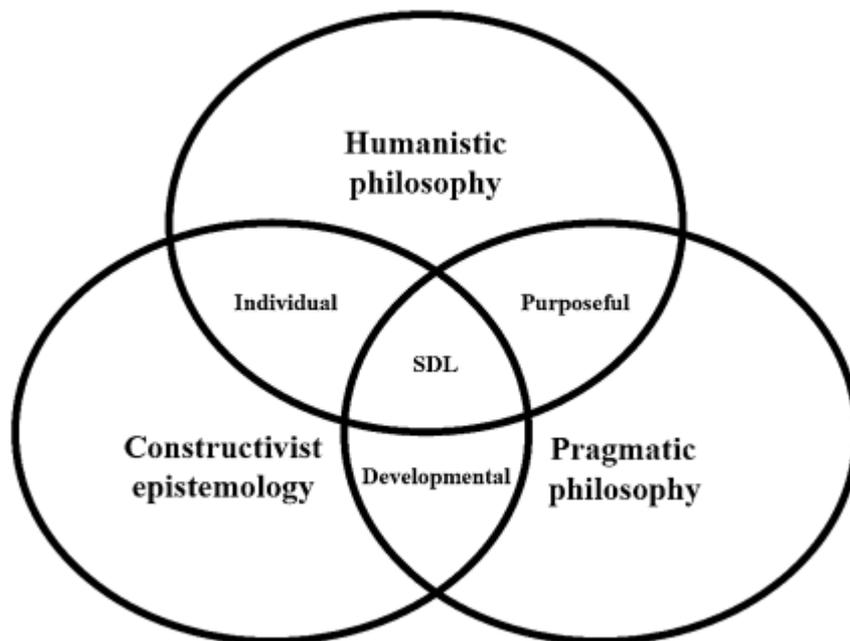

Figure 1: Self-directed learning and its foundational position (Morris 2019)

In the representation of researchers who have marked salient contributions to the concepts and theories behind adult learning and development, Allen Tough becomes the pioneer to define the self-directed learning process (Tough, 1971). Tough was the first ,one to understand the need and dynamics around adult learning and emphasized the basic principles, especially in the area of informal adult learning (Morris, 2019a). Tough highlighted through structural studies with adults that they appreciate self-motivated and self-taught learning in comparison to formal learning where they are the learner as well as the facilitator of the content. He learned that adult education does not necessarily require a teacher (Morris 2019). This became the start of adult learning and it matured tremendously over time. The evolution of the

digital world contributed to the underpinning theories and methods. The connectivity across the geographical boundaries through wireless media has evolved the basic methods and materials in the educational world (Agrusti 2017).

Different studies have investigated the importance and relationship of specific types of professional development to the performance and outcome of teachers (Wei 2010) (Darling-Hammond 2009). It has been investigated that teachers prefer self-directed professional development as it relaxes the boundaries in what they can learn, and how they can proceed with it and they can decide the desired level of knowledge based on their personal and professional needs (Colbert 2008). Self-directed learning is not completely in isolation yet it also involves meeting people and interacting with them for help and guidance (Voltz 2004).

Professional development programs should be considered as a continuum of lifelong learning by teachers. Teachers are asked to continuously update their knowledge and skills to improve the teaching profession. Self-directed professional learning is an important part of a teacher's career as well to Learning and taking initiative is the ability of every teacher. With the rapid development and changes that taking place in today's world, many professionals including teachers need continuous training to improve and upgrade their knowledge and skill levels. According to some references (Duţă 2014).

To sum it up, self-directed learning has a direct relationship to change and evolution. It helps to appreciate, accept and practice change. Self-directed learning supports change that is defined to be cultivated and nourished by an individual for a purpose through different developmental stages (Morris 2019). The modern world demands every individual to become not only a responsible citizen but also remain responsible for his/her journey of education, learning, and career. It helps the individual to break the stereotypes of mastering a single professional skill or education and enter into a world of owning a diverse variety of skills. This helps the individual to adapt to changing routine life and social situations. Competence in self-directed learning defines success in career and professional development (Clardy 2000). Thus, it becomes important to highlight the different requirements and concepts related to professional development.

2. Self-directed professional development (SDPD) Effectiveness in Secondary Education

The growth of the educational environment and challenges in the teacher's profession, especially in secondary education has been growing rapidly and personnel development is important to maintain the quality of education. It is essential for teachers to improve their teaching performance. There are three main types of personnel development activities, i.e. professional development, technical development and general development. Professional development encourages strengthening teacher abilities that are expected to contribute to improving educational quality. Technical development efforts to increase the technical capability of teachers so that relevance to the world of work changes. General development refers to fluency in written and oral communication.

The redesigned Professional Development Guide explores six dimensions of developing the whole teacher—self-concept and efficacy, cognitive development, pedagogical development, moral development, and physical wellness—and provides specific strategies for each area. The guide is a comprehensive resource with tools to help teachers understand ways that they can grow professionally as well as provide resources that support the self-confidence they need to become successful leaders in their schools. Together they provide a framework for improving the effectiveness of professional development programs focused on integrating theory and practice with individual teacher growth and school improvement.

With the analyses of the different studies, it has been demonstrated that professional development is a central paradigm for any program targeted for the development, refining, and improvement of learning and education. It has been accredited that schools have developed to an extent where they maintain the latest educational equipment and classroom facilities (McChesney 2019). This leaves the policy-makers to ponder on ways other than these that can complement greater efficiency and effectiveness of the education systems.

Additionally, schools have invested well in hiring skilled workers including teachers and administration staff. Professional development initiatives and programs are well-structured and well-designed efforts to not only evolve the practices and methods followed by the teachers in the classrooms but also evolve the teaching attitudes and underpinning values (Chen 2021). This is aimed at influencing the way students learn and perceive the course materials by showing positive learning outcomes. These programs can vary among different places in terms of their content and structure but the overall emphasis remains the same i.e. to improve and alter the professional methods, materials, and strategies. This is being targeted to increase student learning.

Different models and strategies have been developed in the studies that pay importance to the change in teachers' perspectives and involve the administrative staff while the policy is being planned. Teachers and administration are involved in terms of their opinion and structuring of the program but this has been observed to lay down less emphasis in terms of change in their attitudes and commitment.
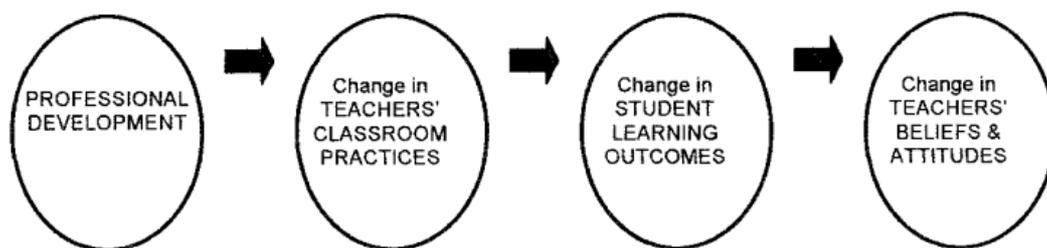

Figure 2: Gusky's model of teacher change (Guskey 2020).

To effectively incorporate evolution in learning environments, different sequences of the three major goals have been discussed. Guskey (2020) has defined a model that targets change in teachers by presenting a unique combination of these goals. According to this model, the major change in the attitudes and beliefs of teachers occurs when they experience the impact of their professional development exercises on the learning outcome of students. Teachers evolve the way they teach, and the material they present in a classroom session and bring in more discussion during these sessions. This reflects in the interest, attention, and outcomes of the students (Guskey 2020). Thus, it can be seen that it is not professional development that generates the change in teachers' attitudes and perceptions. It is the evidence of student learning and the success of teachers' efforts and change that brings a change in teachers' beliefs.

3. Character Building Role of Self-directed professional development

The literary study explores the role of character building in the self-directed professional development of secondary school teachers. It is found that primary school teachers can be motivated to take self-directed professional development by their knowledge about the career ladder (Utami 2018). However, secondary school teachers' motivation factors are different from those of primary school teachers because some factors such as the career ladder could not apply to them. In addition, it was seen that moral obligation was one of, but not the only, factors which can influence secondary school teachers in participating in the self-directed professional development program to improve their teaching skills or improve students' academic performance.

Since the beginning of time, human beings have wanted to learn. Continuing education or in other words self-directed professional development (SDPD) is one way that humans continue learning. Self-directed professional development is not just learning from a book, it is also interacting with others, finding resources online and through books, and taking courses that are offered (Rose 2021). Self-directed learning can be done at any age but is most important during the young adult years when they are learning what career they want to choose, how they want to affect society, and whether they would like to start a family. This study examines secondary school teachers' self-directed professional development, specifically the design and development of an effective teaching curriculum based on Andragogy. We focus on self-

directed professional development by analyzing six cores of adult learning principles: independence to choose goals, support in the form of human and nonhuman resources to achieve goals, personal ability required to achieve goals, individualized instruction and assessment, self-managed learning environment, and action-orientation. Andragogy was shown to be applicable as a drive for today's students as well as a tool for teaching adults. However, there are issues that need to be investigated further before Andragogy can be fully developed for use in schools. These include determining how we can ensure teachers' self-directed professional development through effective means and identifying what instructional resources are most suitable for adult learners.

(1) Readiness to learn,
 (2) Motivation to learn.
(3) Prior experience of the learner,
(4) Orientation to learning,
(5) Self-concept of the learner, and
 (6) The learners need to know

The adult learning reflects that the professional development should be congruent to the teacher's needs. Here, the congruency depends on each teacher's character itself. The character means "mental abilities, interests, attitudes, values and creativity" as mentioned above. Character education is a growing movement that aims to teach children values such as respect, honesty, fairness, and citizenship. The goal of character education is to encourage students to be active participants in their learning process. In this study, the researcher tries to show how teachers of secondary schools have used informed character count as a means of promoting character development through the six pillars of character which are trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and citizenship (Brenneman 2019).

Character education is a valuable educational strategy that can be used to improve and enhance student achievement. Character education programs include both instructional methods and related opportunities and strategies for character building. Successful character education programs emphasize the building of core values that are widely acknowledged across cultures as essential to personal integrity and successful functioning in society.

The above description can be concluded that the definition of character education has a different point of view each other than dependent on the way of life in their society or their nation. The term "character" is derived from Greek word "ὑποκριτικός", which means the discipline of acting. Related to this paper, self-directed professional development as enriched professionalism of teachers is expected to improve the quality of the teacher's character in the learning process and after attending professional development. Based on those statements, the characters are proposed to grow in a self-directed professional development approach, i.e. awareness, honesty, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, perseverance, self-discipline and citizenship (Wu 2021).

CONCLUSION

The professional development of the Secondary school teachers involves assisting the teachers to build their knowledge and skills through a process of inquiry which brings about changes in their practice. The study is aimed to investigate the self-directed professional development approach as an alternative one for improving the competencies of secondary school teachers in enriching their professionalism. The result showed that, in implementing self-directed professional development, teachers are required to have knowledge and skills which enable them to plan, do and check their activities that need to enhance competencies themselves. It was concluded from the findings that, the more teachers know about their own competencies, the better they can develop plans to improve them. According to these findings, it is recommended that there be a training program on self-directed professional development approaches with practical examples together with counsellors or psychology experts who are able to support teachers in analysing their competencies compared with others.

The literature review and evaluation of studies on the impact of self-directed professional development on educational goals like student achievement, classroom practices,

and teachers' satisfaction has revealed that teachers in a profession often experience some limitations and barriers. The main objective of this research was to identify factors that limit the professional development of secondary school teachers, indicators that can support their self-direction in adopting new ideas for themselves, and also address some important challenges facing educational organizations. This study has also attempted to propose some solutions for addressing some current challenges commonly faced by most educational bodies. Educational systems around the globe are restrained because of their resistance to change and evolution (Glazzard 2019).

There are different factors behind this resistance including, social, economic, and political pressures. However, the research community acknowledges the need to allow teachers to learn of their own will and comfort. This invites the change in perception from a pre-designed curriculum and classroom schedules to flexible fellow learner ideas. Teachers need to evolve in terms of accepting and exercising change in their classroom practices (Caena 2019). Concepts of transformational theory need to be integrated with the classroom concepts that invite reflection. With this uncertainty of not fulfilling the professional needs, teachers might remain incompatible in maintaining a fine balance in their personal and professional lives.

As schools continue to look at alternatives for professional development, there is a need to understand the concept and identify what works best with teachers. The findings from this study indicate that many local initiatives may not be well documented but serve an important role in providing professional development for secondary school teachers. This includes formal workshops; non-formal (unplanned) interactions between colleagues; curricular-based learning opportunities; and support for teacher research projects or program implementation efforts.

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