

Co-constructing Meaningful Professional Development: Lessons for International Collaboration

Dawn C. Wallin, Ph.D.
University of Manitoba

Phyllis Hildebrandt
Lakeshore School Division

Sakil Malik
International Reading Association

This paper describes a conceptual framework co-constructed by international collaborators for a short course designed and delivered to participants in a development project in Pakistan. The purpose of the project was to support teacher educators in the development and management of effective and innovative pre and in-service teacher education programs. The conceptual framework of the course focused on three factors commonly found in the literature to influence the quality of professional development: (a) content; (b) process/structure; and, (c) context characteristics. Finally, this paper details the evaluation of this project using Guskey's (2003) model of professional development evaluation, and discusses the need for this kind of evaluation to be an integral part of all international development projects.

Keywords: *Professional development, evaluation, Pakistan*

INTRODUCTION

Although research clearly demonstrates that meaningful professional development is a key strategy for supporting significant improvements in student learning (Guskey, 2000; Guskey & Sparks, 1996; National Staff Development Council: Standards for Staff Development, 1995, 2001), there remains much contention in the literature and in practice regarding the pre-requisite characteristics of effective professional development that will support teachers in their endeavor to provide quality teaching and learning. Professional development has been defined as those intentional, ongoing and systemic processes and activities “designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of educators so that they might in turn, improve the learning of students” (Guskey, 2000, p. 16). Interestingly, although scholars have been able to define *professional development* quite clearly, it is much less clear what constitutes *meaningful* professional development, since what is meaningful tends to vary across context, need, and time. However, consensus does exist around the fact that professional development activities must focus on process and context as well as the content of the professional

development. Consensus also exists around that idea that professional development activities must include systematic evaluation at all phases of implementation, *including after the projects are complete*, in order to determine whether meaningful change has been facilitated that leads to increased student achievement.

Several models depicting the multi-dimensional relationship between professional development and improvements in student learning can be found in the literature (Fishman, Marx, Best & Tal, 2003; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001; Guskey & Sparks, 1996; Ingvarson, Meiers & Beavis, 2005). Common to most are characteristics that influence the quality of the professional development. These pre-requisite characteristics include: (a) content (*what* is the focus of the professional development); (b) process/structure (*how* that content is communicated); and, (c) context characteristics (why the content fits or doesn't fit the needs of teachers in the local area, and/or how that content could be supported, augmented or changed in order to meet those needs).

Recent research points to the importance of a comprehensive systemic approach to supporting professional learning experiences (Cranton, 1996; DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour, 2005; Guskey, 2000; Killion & Harrison, 1997; Roy & Hord, 2003; Sparks, 1996; Timperely & Wiseman, 2003), one which is "pursued in a social setting with opportunities for interaction rather than isolation" (DuFour, Eaker, & DuFour, 2005, p. 20). This conceptualization recognizes the power of informal types of learning experiences (Sparks, 2000), but has been critiqued for its potential to over-generalize its content or purpose, often without gathering evidence to determine whether and to what extent the efforts of providing professional development are worthwhile (Guskey, 2000), particularly in terms of their usefulness for teachers to facilitate student learning. On the other hand, however, the lack of a systemic approach to professional development makes it impossible to expect improvement in student learning, since sporadic and unevaluated professional development activities do not capture the imagination of professionals over time, nor do they provide any incentive, or responsibility, for implementing them.

Ultimately, high quality professional development serves to develop educators' knowledge, attitudes, skills, aspirations, and behaviors so that they may, in turn, apply what was learned to enhance classroom practice in the hopes of improving student learning (Guskey, 2000; Killion, 2002). This paper outlines a constructivist conceptual framework deliberately designed to include content, process and contextual characteristics within a collaborative project in Pakistan to support teacher educators in the development and management of effective and innovative pre and in-service teacher education programs. It will describe how facilitators and participants used the conceptual framework to effectively collaborate and co-construct learning across local, national and international contexts and constraints. Finally, this paper details the evaluation of this project using Guskey's (2003) model of professional development evaluation, and discusses the need for this kind of evaluation to be an integral part of all international development projects.

THE PROJECT

Two of the authors of this paper, Dr. Dawn C. Wallin and Phyllis Hildebrandt, acted under the auspices of the International Reading Association (IRA) as support faculty for a short course delivered by Aga Khan University's Institute for Educational Development (AKU/IED). The short course was provided to faculty of the Provincial Institutes for Teacher Education (PITE's) under the Education Sector Reform Assistance to the Government of Pakistan by USAID through Research Triangle Institute-Education Sector Reform Assistance (RTI-ESRA). Its intent was to enhance the professional knowledge and skills of PITE faculty for developing and managing effective innovative pre/in-service teacher education programs in Sindh and Balochistan.

The course was held at Aga Khan University, a private university in Karachi, Pakistan, from April 23-May 7, 2007, each day from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm. The participants of this course were faculty representatives of PITE, whose roles varied from Assistant Professor, Head Master, high school teacher, senior instructor for PITE, and Master Trainer. Their primary responsibilities as employees of PITE included planning, conducting, monitoring, documenting and evaluating in-service teacher training programs. Most participants held at least one Masters degree in their area of specialization, along with numerous certificates. Their years of service with PITE varied from one year to 10 years. Participants indicated they had registered in the short course in order to develop their professional, programmatic and research skills as they related to their role responsibilities. As one participant mentioned, "my role in PITE as a planner and middle manager is much related to the aims of this course." Others suggested that they had enrolled to "enhance my knowledge and practical experience," or "to learn new techniques for conducting new programmes." A fourth indicated that he had enrolled in the course so that he could "receive information about global trends, new methodologies, strategies, etcetera and make it applicable in context." Two respondents focused on the need to integrate ICT into their programmes. And a final participant emphasized his desire to develop research knowledge and skills in terms of collecting and analyzing qualitative and quantitative data pertaining to teacher education programmes, as well as conducting impact studies.

The short course was part of a larger systematic project designed by RTI-ESRA to build the knowledge and capacity of educators involved in pre/in-service teacher education programs. Our purpose as IRA faculty, an affiliate of USAID, was to act in a supportive capacity to the Coordinator and all assisting faculty of the short course. Such a team approach to the design of content and delivery of the short course was anticipated to uphold and model the collaborative nature of the program.

Constructivist Design: Content, Context and Pedagogy

Because we represented an international collaborator of the overall project, and because the research on professional development advocates for a constructivist framework for effective professional development (Guskey, 2003), we engaged in collaborative discussions with each other as we developed our model using the content areas provided

to us by Aga Khan faculty. The content areas under consideration in this course included: (a) Global Trends in Teacher Education; (b) Critical Review of Teacher Education Programs in Pakistan and the Role of PITE's; (c) Design and Development of Teacher Education Program; (d) Distributed/Teacher Leadership for Effective Management of Change; (e) Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Practices; and, (e) Information and Communication Technology for Professional Development. Since one of us is a faculty member in educational administration, and the other is a superintendent of a school division and a doctoral student whose dissertation focuses on effective professional development, both of us had extensive expertise in designing content for these areas of consideration from a local (Manitoba), and national (Canadian) perspective. However, to those in Pakistan, our perspective represented an international view, and we were conscious that our initial ideas might not address the contextual realities found in Pakistan. With this in mind, we began to collaborate by email, telephone, and face-to-face meetings with each other and with Aga Khan faculty before and during our stay in Pakistan. In addition, we often conferred with the participants themselves, who time and again discussed how, and to what extent, the content we had designed supported them in their local work. In this way, both the planning of the content and the delivery of the content were collaboratively constructed (and sometimes reconstructed) in order to facilitate meaningful professional development for participants.

Figure 1 outlines the conceptual framework that was eventually agreed upon by the project collaborators. The model used by the IRA faculty members that had been sanctioned by the AKU/IED instructors was premised on building knowledge and capacity of participants by focusing on individual, local and global contexts within each of the six themes of the course.

In order to address the knowledge and capacity building goals of the short course, instructors tried at all times to use pedagogy and assignments that would relate to and increase the skills of participants in these two areas, focused on the personal, local and global levels of analysis. In addition, instructors attempted to model the collaborative nature of teaching and leading in their own pedagogical styles, and often deliberately deconstructed these processes to help participants see the meta-cognitive relationships between pedagogy and the design of the course, and its relationship to participants' possibilities for teaching, leading and learning in their own contexts.

Aligning ourselves deliberately within a constructivist framework enabled the group to acknowledge the extensive learning and professional backgrounds of both participants and instructors. This acknowledgement facilitated class discussion, and led to critical engagement of the themes of the course at the personal, local and global levels. In addition, from the onset of the course, collaboration and co-construction of knowledge demonstrated quite clearly that we were learners along with participants, and that we all brought to the course valuable information and experiences to share.

To reinforce the importance of both content and process in teaching, leading, and learning, we deliberately designed a variety of strategies and activities to engage participants. These included, among others: (a) the design, implementation and analysis of a pre and post-test to elicit levels of understanding related to the themes and design of the course; (b) a general orientation process that provided an overview and "agenda" for

the short course that helped to ground the content and processes and offer an avenue for refinement; (c) the introduction and use of a strong international literature base that accented the themes of the course and offered food for the critical discussions in class; (d) a review of existing local policy documents regarding the role of PITE; (e) the use of daily reflections from the previous day's learning as a means of self-reflection and reinforcement of the subsequent day's work; (f) an interactive facilitative style whereby the IRA support faculty and AKU faculty could interact with each other, augment the discussion, and provide contextual links in content areas; (g) participant-led literature searches, demonstrations and presentations of action plans using ICT; (h) the use of a

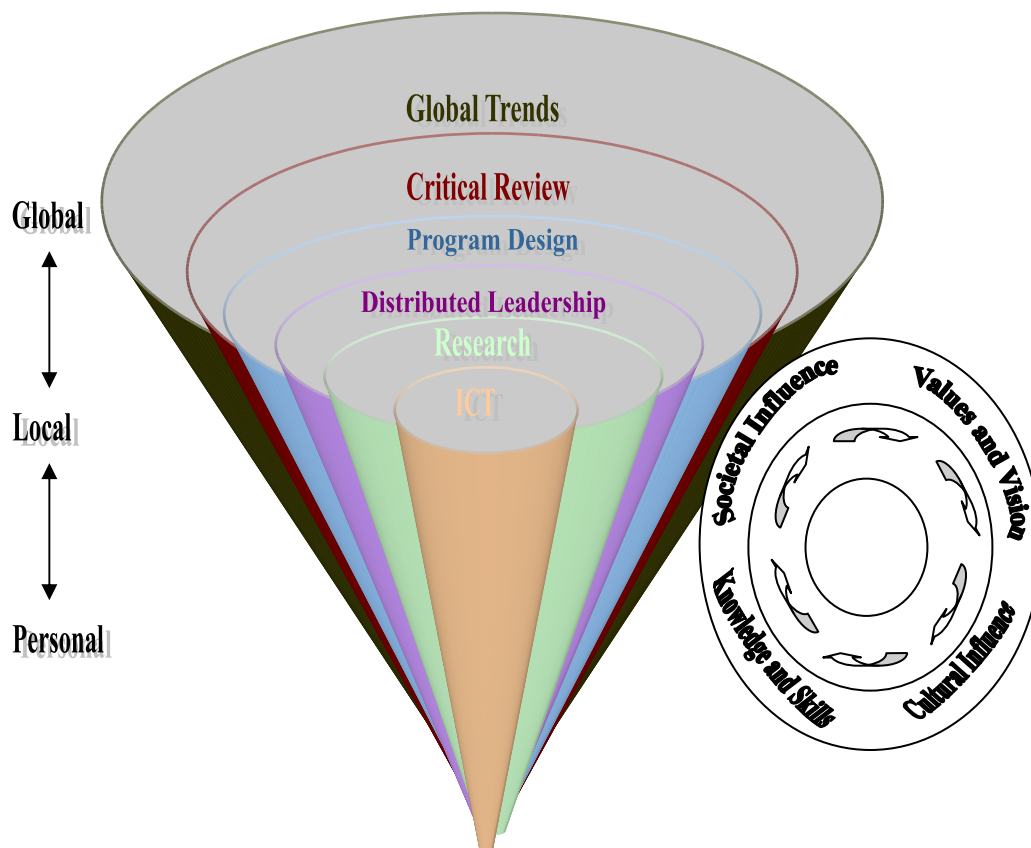


Figure 1

SWOT (strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats) analysis to determine “gaps” between local and global trends in teacher education; and, (i) the inclusion of a final day of synthesis and celebration to bring closure to the course, recognition for the hard work that had been done, and reinforcement of primary content.

At the end of the short course, participants were asked in the post-test to indicate in what ways the instructors modeled practices that facilitated learning. The responses included the following: (a) due time given for discussion; (b) dialogues promoted; (c) interactive

sessions; (d) use of action planning; (e) use of standard tools, formats and models; (f) peer feedback and faculty input; (g) use of ICT and multi-media; (h) use of [white] board; (i) handouts; (j) lectures; (k) many activities; and (l) case studies. Besides being able to point to strategies that were used within the course, participants were able to articulate a meta-cognitive understanding of the conceptual framework and processes utilized by the instructors. This was emphasized in comments such as “all the models/practices are well-facilitated and they enriched my learning,” “issues were raised and we learned how to organize our future sessions,” “all the time they encouraged us to share our views,” and “instructors really used a constructivist approach to learning.”

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

Guskey (2000) suggests that the effective evaluation of any professional development activity needs to incorporate five levels of investigation: (a) participants’ reactions; (b) participants’ learning; (c) organization support and change; (d) participants’ use of new knowledge and skills; and, (e) student learning outcomes. The first level of evaluation examines participants’ general satisfaction levels with the logistics and organization of the professional development activity. In evaluating the second level, participants’ learning, evaluators assess whether or not participants have achieved an understanding of the knowledge and skills (general content) of the professional development session. The third level, organization support and change, examines whether organizational policies or practices may undermine or support the implementation of the professional learning. Because of this, the deconstruction of the local and/or national environment (context) is essential to determining whether or not the content or processes involved with the professional development activity can actually be achieved or implemented. The fourth level of evaluation, participants’ use of new knowledge and skills, is focused on whether or not the professional learning actually made a difference in participants’ professional practice. The goal of the final level of evaluation, student learning outcomes, is intended to evaluate whether or not the professional learning activity benefited students in any way.

Multiple evaluation tools may be devised for each level of analysis, both quantitative and qualitative in nature. In addition, evaluations do not necessarily have to occur at the end of a professional development session; productive evaluations run concurrently throughout the design, deliverance and conclusion of the professional development activity. This is particularly well served when a constructivist framework is utilized, since one of the goals of co-construction is to continually evaluate and modify, if necessary, depending on the views, knowledge and skills of the collaborators.

At this point we must address some of the limitations of our evaluation of the project. We entered the project as IRA faculty supports at a late stage of the larger, more systematic development project. We were not part of the original design or implementation of any of the other projects associated with the development project. In this regard we had no sense of the consistency or the efficacy of the project over time. Only one of us had worked on previous projects for IRA in Pakistan, with a focus on very different topics. Because we were volunteers, not designers of the development project,

we are not involved in the evaluation of the overall project, nor are we privy to long-term evaluations of our short course, if any are underway.

However, as scholars and administrators, we are aware of the importance of these levels of evaluation, and we worked within the context of our role as IRA support faculty to create an evaluation tool to gather some evidence of the effectiveness of the short course. Besides implementing the informal mechanisms of feedback and collaborative discussion with both faculty and participants as outlined in previous sections, we designed a pre-post test that incorporated the five levels of evaluation. We were able to evaluate levels one and two authentically, by utilizing paired t-tests of pre-post results of the survey instrument. The evaluation of levels one and two correspond to the knowledge-building objective of the course. Participants were asked in the pre and post-test to describe their level of knowledge related to the themes of the course on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=none; 2=limited; 3=adequate; 4=very good; 5=extensive). A paired t-test was then conducted to determine if there were significant differences between the reported knowledge base before and after the short course. The findings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Paired t-tests of Knowledge Related to Short Course Themes

Theme	Pre Mean Score	Post Mean Score	t	Significance
Global Trends in Teacher Education	2.33	3.17	-1.387	p=.224
Critical Review of Current Teacher Education Programmes in Pakistan and Role of PITE's	2.67	4.33	-5.000	*p=.004
Design and Development of Teacher Education Programmes	2.8	3.8	-3.162	*p=.034
Notion of Distributed/teacher Leadership for Effect Management of Change	2.83	3.83	-3.873	*p=.012
Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Practices	2.67	4.17	-4.392	*p=.007
Information and Communication Technology for Professional Development	2.5	4.00	-4.392	*p=.007

* indicates significance at p=.05

Participants acknowledged knowledge growth in all six themes of the course, and this growth was statistically significant for five of the six themes. In each, prior to taking the

course, participant mean scores indicated, at most, a limited to adequate knowledge base. After the short course, participant knowledge ranged between adequate to very good. This is a good indication that the themes of the course were designed and delivered in such a way as to facilitate the learning of the group. When one considers that some of the content knowledge was impacted by language translation issues, the significant differences in results are very encouraging.

Participants were asked in the post-test to clarify whether or not the course had facilitated the learning that they had hoped would be achieved. Respondents noted the following content as being valuable: (a) global trends, different experiences and models of teacher development; (b) identification of roles of different stakeholders and networks; (c) models of monitoring and evaluation for improvement and accountability; (d) action planning and reviewing plans; and, (e) use of computer for collecting relevant information.

In addition, some of the respondents made reference to the processes of debates and sharing that had facilitated their learning of the content. One of the respondents ended his commentary by suggesting “we learned a sufficient amount of learning—and I still would like to learn more!” Another alluded to the application of content to local context when he suggested, “I have learned different things during this teaching program and I hope I will be able to implement my learning in my context.” Perhaps the most positive comment related to the effectiveness of the short course to provide content and create an impetus for change was made by a participant who suggested, “No doubt the course was very beneficial for me. I’ve learned how global trends in teacher education are important to redesign our future programs. I have learned how leadership is important to bring change in an institution. A major paradigm shift occurred in my perceptions regarding leadership and its role.”

Participants were also asked to identify the strategies or knowledge that they would be able to use to strengthen PITEs that they had gained as a consequence of participating in the short course. This evaluation question was designed to reinforce the importance of process as well as content. Participant responses included strategies such as reading research articles, focusing on communication with partners, developing vision, action planning/strategic planning, considering all factors, incorporating ICT, and using reflective writing. The content knowledge that participants wanted to use to strengthen their own PITE’s included (a) the importance of shared visions and the understanding that huge consequences come from small actions; (b) an understanding of a model of change that has two aspects: (1) Ready! Aim! Fire! And Fire! Ready! Aim! (c) the five levels of monitoring and evaluation that needs to be “part and parcel of any evaluative study at PITE”; (d) the development of knowledge and skills in organizing, implementing and evaluating teacher professional development programs; (e) new articles provided in the “Educational Leadership” session that “improved my knowledge regarding different perspectives; and (f) the need to “start from myself: Step One: Personal Level; Step Two: Team and Institutional Level and Step Three: Global Level.”

The evaluation of level three was addressed directly in class discussion every day. For each theme of discussion, participants spoke of the organizational constraints and

opportunities they faced when trying to implement the ideas being promoted in the sessions. In addition, the design of the course deliberately focused on personal, local and international contexts with the aim of structuring conversations around organizational constraints and ideas on how to potentially remove or minimize those that existed.

As was indicated earlier, the short course had two primary objectives: (a) knowledge-building; and (b) capacity building. In terms of knowledge-building, we could easily gather a sense of the effectiveness of our session through our assignments and the pre-post tool. Evaluating the session at levels three and four was more difficult; for this we had to become more focused on future planning or possibility, which aligned with the second objective of capacity building. Because we did not have the luxury to see what participants *did* do in their practice as a result of their learning with us, we deliberately designed strategic planning activities within class and used questions within the pre-post test that asked them to speak to what they *could* do as result of their learning.

In addition to developing content knowledge regarding the themes, part of the vision for the course instructors was to increase the confidence level of participants to effect change in each of the primary themes. In order to consider whether this vision was achieved, participants were asked in the pre and post-test to describe their level of confidence to effect change related to the themes of the course on a scale of 1 to 5 (1=none; 2=limited; 3=adequate; 4=very good; 5=extensive). A paired t-test was then conducted to determine if there were significant differences between the reported confidence levels before and after the short course. The findings are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Paired t-tests of Growth in Confidence Related to Short Course Themes

Theme	Pre Mean Score	Post Mean Score	t	Significance
Global Trends in Teacher Education	3.17	3.67	-1.000	p=.363
Critical Review of Current Teacher Education Programmes in Pakistan and Role of PITE's	3.17	3.83	-2.000	p=.101
Design and Development of Teacher Education Programmes	3.50	4.00	-1.464	p=.203
Notion of Distributed/teacher Leadership for Effect Management of Change	2.67	3.83	-7.000	*p=.001
Monitoring, Evaluation and Research Practices	3.17	4.33	-7.000	*p=.001
Information and Communication Technology for Professional Development	2.83	3.50	-1.581	p=.175

* indicates significance at p=.05

Participants acknowledged confidence growth in all six themes of the course, and this growth was statistically significant for two of the six themes. In each case, prior to taking

the course, participant mean scores indicated at most a limited to adequate knowledge base. After the short course, participant knowledge ranged between adequate to very good.

In the post-test, participants were encouraged to demonstrate responsiveness by suggesting how they might incorporate some of the processes used in the short course in their own work. Responses included themes related to developing action plans; developing cultures of sharing, increasing publications of educational experiences and success; incorporating ICT (MS Word, Power-point presentations, MS Excel, internet); incorporating a variety of teaching/learning strategies into their own work; and changing the structure of existing courses that are designed for principals along leadership models discussed in class.

Finally, participants were encouraged to demonstrate the building of their capacity by providing an indication of their first steps of action planning. They were asked to share their first professional priority upon return to their local work context that they would act upon as a consequence of participating in the short course. Participant responses centered on building relationships with local teachers, with IED and foreign faculty for professional support, with PITE and District Government Education Department, and with other PITE team members. Other action steps included visiting nearby schools; action planning for PITE faculty development; integrating ICT in the Educational Manager's training program; coordinating with the district education department for follow-up; selecting teaching materials in consultation with literature and expert opinion; writing and encouraging others to write and publish; and initiating action research at laboratory schools.

Although we remain in contact with some of the participants of the course and have informally heard that many have attempted to implement the strategies of their plans, there is no formal evaluation underway to determine whether or not any of these strategies have actually taken place. That of course limits any evaluation of the fifth level, that of student learning outcomes. Of course, given the fact that structural change of this nature would take years to accomplish.

DISCUSSION

Based on the initial design of the course, and participants' reflections on the pedagogy from the post-test, it appears that the intent, and implementation of constructivist pedagogy and strategies, and the role modeling of process was useful for facilitating participant learning. In addition, participants came to recognize, understand, and articulate that this framework and way of leading was something they could model in their own work in the future.

The analysis of scores from the pre-test and post-tests, as well as the comments from participants, indicate that the nature and understandings of the content, and the goals in designing the course in strategic ways were fulfilled as they were intended. By the end of the short course, participants were able to articulate a more sophisticated understanding

of the course content, as well as demonstrate in their assignments an ability to apply those understandings to their local context. In addition, the content appears to have been presented in manner that respects scholarly knowledge and research, as well as experiential learning. This bodes well for the intent of knowledge mobilization that was part of the design of the course. In addition, participants focused on many aspects of process and considered the three levels of analysis (personal, local and international) when they clarified the nature of their learning.

Based on the statistical analysis of pre-test and post-test scores, as well as the reflections of participants, it is suggested that there has been some growth in the perceived sense of capacity participants developed as agents for change. Although the confidence findings were insignificant for all but two themes, the findings never-the-less suggest a more hopeful attitude towards change than what had existed at the outset of the course. Participants often discussed the organizational, political and contextual constraints they faced at the local level, and no doubt these factors, which are external to the content and processes of the course, have some bearing on the findings. However, the fact that the confidence levels for themes four and five (leadership for change, and evaluation and monitoring) were statistically significant, bodes well for those who lead the design, implementation, and evaluation of professional development opportunities in PITE, particularly since it is these elements which remain at the core of the PITE mandate. The participant reflections from the post-test also reinforce this reinvigorated sense of capacity, as participants suggested multiple ways they could incorporate facilitative processes and practical action steps into their own contexts. The responses reinforced the most common elements of capacity building efforts: relationship building and networking; facilitative and collaborative processes; accessing expertise; developing action plans; marketing; monitoring, evaluation, and research; and accessing ICT.

As part of the constructivist framework, participants were encouraged to share their suggestions for future professional development sessions. There existed a strong desire to continue to use external research and literature as well as emerging global trends as a basis for content design in order to provide information on potentials for change. In addition, participants appeared to desire more work on the “how-to” details of marketing/writing and conducting action research. There also appears to be a desire to maintain or increase the content related to leadership and management. The support by foreign faculty was met with approval, and participants suggested that this kind of collaboration should continue in the future. In terms of design elements, participants advocated for longer course duration, a stronger field component, more time for accessing library services, and increasing the amount of written feedback on daily reflections. All of these confirm the importance of the three characteristics of effective professional development: strong content, effective processes, and contextualization (local and international).

The results of our quantitative and qualitative data analysis, based within the limitations that were listed previously, suggest that our roles as support faculty, the constructivist design of the project, the content themes, and the focus on participant responses seem to have been met with approval. However, as researchers and scholars, we must also question what *more* could be done to authentically evaluate the outcomes of such a

project. Because this short course is part of a larger systematic development project, this larger project could have designed an evaluative framework within which we could have aligned our own evaluation. In this way, the primary objectives of the systemic project could have also been embedded within our evaluation. It would also make sense to have project designers become an integral part of the collaborative network for the short course, so that support faculty would have a link to the “umbrella project” under which the short course fell. It may be a good idea if these projects paid a director to oversee and work with volunteers of each project to build connection to the overall project objectives. If at all possible, it would be a good idea to have certain volunteers work on multiple projects so that the consistency of vision, nuances of understanding, and evaluative techniques could align throughout the entire project. We might suggest that at the culmination of any short course, the volunteers themselves might complete a questionnaire or interview to obtain some evaluation of their experiences as facilitators of the courses, to understand more fully the nature of processes, content and context issues that arise within each smaller project. This could be information used to inform future designs of projects. Certainly, the importance of the participants’ responses to each short course should be gathered and utilized for the design of future projects, since these projects should be designed according to local needs. In addition, participant input can help future projects address the local contextual variables that facilitate or hinder any changes to practice that are advocated within the projects. Finally, of course, we recommend that levels four and five of Guskey’s evaluative framework be part and parcel of the funding and design of each project. These processes would not have to be onerous—simple questionnaires or interviews regarding changes in practice and resultant examination of student learning variables would accomplish some of this. More effective evaluative projects could include action research projects designed within the schools themselves to be carried out over the course of three to five years after the initial short course “training” to work with participants to facilitate change at the local level. We realize these ideas would entail a much longer time frame for final project evaluation, which we understand is not politically expedient in most instances. However, to not do these things begs the question of why millions of dollars are spent on these projects without any meaningful measure of whether or not the projects were efficacious.

CONCLUSION

A project such as this cannot be successful without the hard work and dedication of a number of individuals and groups. The collegial and supportive relationships that developed between faculty members and organizational representatives are to be highly commended. The project organized for PITE representatives was built on a constructivist ideology and underpinned by collaborative processes. The course focused on personal, local and global levels of analysis and aimed not only to increase the content knowledge of participants, but also to increase their meta-cognitive understandings of how to design and deliver effective professional development. All indications from participants suggest that the goals of the course design and implementation have been met. Perhaps the best commendation of the work that went into the design and delivery of the short course was made by a participant who suggested the following:

The course was designed excellently. The areas chosen were according to my own professional needs.... I appreciated how the program was structured. The discussion, faculty input, field visits, case studies, and examples from real contexts (including Canadian examples) were very useful.

It *appears* that the design and delivery model of the short course for PITE representatives worked very well. In addition to the apparent success of the course itself, the international collaboration and knowledge sharing was very valuable, and it is hoped that this successful venture will lead to opportunities for collaboration in the future. The evidence that exists suggests that the initial planning and implementation of the course met with favor by both facilitators and participants.

However, in the final analysis, the effectiveness of this session for helping participants to develop and manage effective innovative pre/in-service teacher education programs in Sindh and Balochistan must be questioned because it could not be evaluated at all five levels of Guskey's (2003) professional development evaluation model. Levels one, two and three were at least partially evaluated, and level four was evaluated in terms of its potential possibilities. But the reality is that the actual effectiveness of this short course will never be known. Perhaps this is due to the constraints involved in the design and implementation of international development projects, which include a lack of time, a focus on limited and immediate outcomes, the reliance on volunteers for delivery, and politics (governmental politics and the politics linked to the mandates of the donor organizations). Possibly the problem stems from a limited understanding of effective evaluation techniques for professional development projects. Whatever the reason, this project ultimately is open to the same criticisms related to its effectiveness as others that have come before it. In the final analysis, what is illuminated in a professional development activity such as this is that, even with the best of intentions, and with the best of designs, development projects that do not incorporate evaluation strategies that go beyond knowledge mobilization will never be able to determine whether or not the content they have provided has *actually* made a difference to the children in the schools they are intended to benefit.

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