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PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS IMPERATIVES: FUTURE TEACHER VISION THROUGH QUALITY WATCH

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Abstract

UNICEF (2000) has identified five major components of quality education that include quality learner, quality learning environment, quality content, quality process and quality outcome. Quality teaching is included in the aspects of quality process and quality teaching rests with the quality of teachers. For quality teaching, we must have knowledgeable, skilled teachers in every classroom. There are some professional standards for teachers and teaching which we follow to ensure quality of teaching. This conceptual and theoretical paper is aiming to identify these professional standards for teachers and to explore that how these professional standards play an important role in producing quality teaching. The following core research questions were addressed in this paper: What are the professional standards for teachers; how these standards are developed and why these standards are important for quality teaching. The professional standards for teachers and teaching include the broad range of skills and knowledge that a teacher needs: deep content knowledge with varied instructional strategies; the establishment of a creative learning environment; the use of varied assessment techniques; the understanding of human growth; the ability to work with diverse learners; strong communication skills; instructional planning; and the ability to create strong partnerships with parents, colleagues, and the community. The Professional Standards for Teachers offer a platform for teachers to reflect on their professional practices. The standards are intended to help teachers to be familiar with their professional strengths, recognize learning and development goals and develop plans to meet those goals.

Keywords: Professional Standards, Professional development, Quality Teacher, Quality Teaching

1. INTRODUCTION

Improving quality of education has become a concern of paramount importance in discussions on education. The concern is shared equally by all the stakeholders at all levels of education. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) declared primary education as the basic human right of all people. Consequently, all nations prioritized universal access to education. Now the focus is on the quality of students' learning. The concern is valid not only for countries who have attained the quantitative targets; it is also valid for countries still striving for expansion of educational access. It has been established that access and quality are not sequential elements (Government of Pakistan & UNESCO, 2003). Quality is a universal construct and applicable to all the stakeholders without any prejudice and discrimination. As Hoy, et al (2002) has delineated the quality as a means for achieving the universal access and equity of education regardless of gender, location, race, religion, and social class.

The quality of education can only be achieved by improving the all aspects of education system. We can not achieve this goal by only concentrating on any single or few elements of system. It is a holistic approach to improve the whole system. The World Education Forum, Dakar Framework of Action (2000) emphasis on quality of education is included as one of the six goals:

Improving all aspects of the quality of education, and ensuring their excellence of all so that recognized and measurable learning outcomes are achieved by all especially in literacy, numeracy and essential life skills

Every country has its own education system with multi-levels for meeting the goals of efficient management of system. This tier of levels based on each other and so interwoven that you can not achieve excellence in one tier without simultaneously tendering efforts at all levels. Higher Education Commission (2007) has also emphasised this notion by stating in its documents that "Quality education at all levels is the most desired goal of education system of all countries. The key factors influencing the quality of education is the quality of faculty, curriculum standards, technological infrastructure available, research environment, accreditation regime and the administrative polices and procedures implemented in institutions of learning. It is absolutely critical to monitor and regulate growth of sub-standard institutions of learning".

It is assumed that content that is taught and the process of content delivery and teaching methodology being used are the key factors in improving the quality education. Although it is important to improve educational objectives, politics, programs, curricula, textbooks and infrastructure, the teacher remains the backbone of the system. Kirmani, N, Zahid. M. and Naz., R. (2006) state that quality is at the heart of education, and teachers play a crucial role in providing quality education.

The National Education Policy (1998-2010) of Pakistan recognizes the contribution of teachers in the following words: "The teacher is considered the most crucial factor in implementing all educational reforms at the grassroots level (P.7)."

In Pakistan, a large percentage of our teachers are not well trained and as the profession is poorly paid, it does not attract the most suitable candidates.

The ILO/UNESCO (1966) recommended concerning the status of teachers, particularly to the rights and responsibilities of primary and secondary school teachers and recognized that the status of their profession depends to a considerable extent upon teachers themselves, all teachers should seek to achieve the highest possible standards in all their professional work. Professional standards relating to teachers performance should be defined and maintained with the participation of the teachers' organizations. Teachers and teachers' organizations should seek to co-operate fully with authorities in the interests of the pupils, of the education service and of society generally.

Thus, quality teaching is at the centre of schooling systems and school effectiveness, and recognition of the critical relationship between teachers and learners highlights the need to better define and communicate what constitutes good teaching. Articulating professional standards for teaching helps make the knowledge and capabilities of teachers explicit for those within and outside the profession, and provides means by which good teaching can be identified, rewarded and celebrated (National Reference Group for Teacher Standards Quality and Professionalism, 2003).

In the changing world of knowledge and skills it seems that professional standards may help to smooth the activities of any profession to get the optimal outcomes within a limited time and cost frame. In teaching profession teacher and teaching are the main elements of system through which the objective of quality can be achieved. In Pakistan there is need to develop professional standards for teaching in schools and other levels for attaining and maintaining the quality. In future the dream of quality acquisition will not be fulfilled without going through the bridge of professional standards.

2. QUALITY EDUCATION

It is not easy to strictly define "quality" as it is a relative term. Education quality is a rather vague and controversial concept as (Aspin & Chapman, 1994), argues that quality is a "notoriously ambiguous term". As a result of the difficulty in defining quality, the measurement of quality has also proved to be contentious. It is a complex concept which covers all aspects of an activity, a programme etc. It is a social recognition which has great concern with the values and norms of the society. It is linked with the aims and objectives of a certain programme or activity, a system or an organization. The crystallized definition of quality of education is somewhat difficult due to a wide array of stakeholders and consumers along with the complexities of teaching-learning process which need to be unfolded

continuously. Terms like effectiveness, efficiency, equity, equality and quality are often used interchangeably (Adams, 1993).

Most of the people view quality of education as the learning outcomes of students which are the primary concern of all stakeholders. But to achieve the desired quality the antecedents, that is the input and process should also have quality in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, excellence, and social justice. The quality education output can be achieved only if quality is ensured at each level of the educational process from standard setting, learning environment, teacher training, teacher-learning process, assessment and monitoring. Saeed (2003) states that, the extent of quality is associated with the extent of the achievement of the objectives'. According to a document of UNICEF (2000) basic dimensions of quality education are: Quality learner, quality learning environment, quality content, quality process and quality outcome.

Lockheed and Verspoor (1991) in a study of developing countries have identified various input and process determinants of educational output. These include orderly school environment, academic emphasis in the form of clearly defined learning outcomes and standards, curriculum, particularly the "implemented curriculum" (textbooks, other learning materials), time for learning, and effective use of school time, qualified teachers and healthy children. The developed countries show the similar results with a varying level of quality inputs. For example literature on Educational Reforms in the United States describes that standards of education can be improved through redefining basic curricula, and setting performance standards required from students at the completion of the program (Paliakoff and Schwartzbeck, 2001).

3. QUALITY TEACHER, TEACHING AND STUDENT LEARNING

Education is the compilation and product of many and varied resources. Among these, teachers stand out as a key to realizing the high standards that are increasingly emphasized in schools and school systems. Researchers and policy makers agree that teacher quality is a pivotal policy issue in education reform, that teachers are the most important school-related factor affecting student achievement.

Internationally, a growing body of research confirms teacher quality as one of the most important school factors influencing student achievement (e.g. Darling-Hammond, 2003; Santiago, 2002). Based on reviews of studies of student achievement in the United States, Darling-Hammond, LaFors, & Snyder (2001) concluded that teachers' qualifications based on measures of knowledge and expertise, education, and experience account for a larger share of the variance in students' achievement than any other single factor, including poverty, race, and parent education (p.10). In Australia, a number of studies have similarly concluded that the quality of teaching and learning is an important factor accounting for variations in school students' achievements (e.g. Cuttance, 2001; Rowe, Turner, & Lane, 2002).

In 1994 the OECD published its survey of teacher quality in its member states. It concentrated on the characteristics of teachers of high quality in relation to:

- Knowledge of substantive curriculum areas and content;
- Pedagogical skill including the acquisition of knowledge and ability to use a repertoire of teaching strategies;
- Reflection and the ability to be self-critical;
- Empathy and commitment to the acknowledgment of the dignity of others;
- Managerial competence in a range of responsibilities within and outside the classroom;

Observing that teacher commitment was the quality that made all other qualities possible, the report noted that high quality teachers:

- demonstrate commitment;
- have subject specific knowledge and know their craft;
- love children;
- set an example of moral conduct;
- manage groups effectively;
- incorporate new technology;

- master multiple models of teaching and learning;
- adjust and improvise their practice;
- know their students as individuals;
- exchange ideas with other teachers;
- reflect on their practice;
- collaborate with other teachers;
- advance the profession of teaching; and
- contribute to society at large.

Teachers need to have appropriate intellectual mastery of the subjects and be able to keep abreast of evolving knowledge and teaching methods. They need to be reflective learners themselves and continually attempt to increase their knowledge and practice expertise.

4. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: THEIR NEED

Before to explore the nature and significance of standards it will be helpful to plunge into their terminology for deep understanding. Standards are nothing more, and nothing less, than doing things a consistent way. These are the demands and targets of our society. National Disability Authority of Dublin (2006) has stated that “standards are statements that outline what level of service you can expect to be provided, and how it will be provided”.

Teachers are functioning as authors of standards. A majority of the members of the NBPTS standards committees are highly accomplished teachers.

The development of professional standards has been informed by a number of recent studies that focused on teacher quality, the changing nature of teachers’ work and the new demands being placed on teachers by students, their families and the broader society. Central to a consideration of the future needs of students is acknowledgement of a society faced with rapid social, economic, technological and cultural change. Globalisation, the explosion in the use of ICT, diverse family structures and changing workforce patterns, including a growing tendency towards ‘portfolio’ careers, is impacting on society and the way we prepare young people to be effective citizens. As professionals, teachers themselves possess and need to articulate and model the same knowledge worker skills that they seek to develop in students. Such standards will help to ensure teacher quality, enhance the relevance of both pre-service and continuing professional development for teachers, and provide a way of addressing the need for teachers to develop the new skills required for equipping themselves and their students for working and living in the emerging knowledge based society.

Teachers’ work is increasingly becoming embedded in communities, both inside and outside the school. Being a teacher in the 21st century goes beyond work in the classroom; it requires an understanding of the multiple contexts of teaching, the multiple players in education, and the diverse roles of the teacher. It also involves ongoing professional learning in the form of further study, participation in professional development programs, and engagement in professional school-based learning communities (Board of Teacher Registration Queensland, 2002

The idea of standards for the teaching profession has been circulating in education policy discourses and debates for much of the latter part of the 1990s. The development of standards have been part of a two pronged initiative by governments and bureaucracies in Australia, the UK, the US and elsewhere with the aim to improve educational performance of educational systems and to improve the practices of teachers in classrooms (Sachs, 2003). In some settings, professional standards have been imposed by governments and are used as regulatory frameworks and bureaucratic controls over teachers, particularly as they relate to licensing and certification procedures. In other instances, they are used as an initiative for teachers to gain professional control over what constitutes professional work; as Darling-Hammond (1999) argues, ‘recently developed professional standards for teaching hold promise for mobilizing reforms of the teaching career and helping to structure the learning opportunities that reflect the complex, reciprocal nature of teaching work’ (p. 39).

The term ‘professional teaching standards’ is widely and uncritically used in educational policy documents and popular discourses. Andrew (1997) states that:

In this era of standards, writers use the term in many different ways, seldom bothering to unpack the differences in meaning; standards become the answer to all questions. They are thought to provide the magic ingredient to restructuring all education. (p. 168).

5. BENEFITS OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

The professional standards for teachers celebrate, articulate and support the complex and varied nature of a teacher's work. They describe what teachers need to know and do to provide relevant and worthwhile learning experiences for individuals and groups of students in schools, and so 'equip young people for the future to enable them to contribute to a socially, economically and culturally vibrant society. As such, the standards provide a platform for teachers to identify their professional development needs and drive their continuing learning and development and represent the aspirations of the teaching profession (The State of Queensland, Department of Education, 2005).

The standards also serve as an important guide for those seeking to enter the teaching service. Providers of pre-service teacher education are therefore encouraged to establish programs that enable their graduates to demonstrate the skills and professional capabilities outlined in the standards (The State of Queensland, Department of Education, 2005).

The standards provide a framework and a common language to support teachers to identify, assess and strengthen their professional commitment, professional relationships and understandings about teaching and learning. Professional teaching standards improve the performance of teachers (Ingvarson, 1998c); standards will improve the standing of teachers (Chadbourne, 1999); and, finally, standards contribute to the on-going professional learning of teachers (Ingvarson, 1998c, 1999). They have significant potential to provide the necessary provocation for teachers to think about their work, classroom activities and professional identity in quite fundamentally different and generative ways. What is required is a variety of opportunities for teachers to do this collectively and individually. Discussing and debating the form, content and effects of professional teaching standards may well provide opportunities for this to happen. Furthermore, if this is done then it will certainly be in the best interests of all of those involved in the provision of quality education through a profession that is internally regulated rather than externally controlled.

Although, the importance of professional standards has been acknowledged worldwide due to its usability in all the sphere of education system; starting from framing the objectives to the ultimate evaluation, however, it can be ascertain that professional standards set a milestone for the target chaser. Professional standards are statements of a teacher's professional attributes, professional knowledge and understanding, and professional skills. The standards provide the framework for a teacher's career and clarify what progression looks like. The standards support teachers in identifying their professional development needs. Where teachers wish to progress to the next career stage, the next level of the framework provides a reference point for all teachers when considering future development.

6. GENERIC VS PROFESSIONAL (SPECIFIED) STANDARDS AND THE QUALITY OF TEACHING

Thrupp (2006) explored that professional standards for teachers and teacher education can be 'generic' or 'specified'. Generic standards are broad descriptors of teachers' skills and knowledge. Specified standards attempt to define more precisely what is to be taught, what would count as evidence of the quality of that teaching and what would count as meeting the standard. Specified standards are explicitly intended to allow an assessor to make judgments about teacher performance. New Zealand has a history of favoring generic professional standards but there has been some recent interest amongst academics and policymakers in specified standards

The advocates of specified standards make numerous claims about their practice value to teachers and teacher education. Kleinhenz and Ingvarson (2005) claim that 'standards-guided teacher education systems...are rated significantly more highly by graduate teachers' (p. 7), that they 'support the development of professional community in schools' and 'serve as a powerful vehicle for teachers' learning' (p. 7) and provide clearer, long-term goals for professional development (p.2). Hattie (2004) argues that [specified] standards will enhance teachers' self-esteem. Professional standards are even thought to 'give teachers something about which to be collegial' (Kleinhenz & Ingvarson, 2005, p. 2).

Nevertheless proponents of specified standards claim they will be politically empowering for teachers and their organisations. For instance:

Kleinhenz and Ingvarson further argue: "Profession-wide standards provide a more valid basis for teacher accountability than performance management schemes and standardised tests of student outcomes (p. ii)."

Gronn (2003) argues that professional standards are 'solutions in search of problems' in that 'they prescribe anticipated, legitimated and programmed responses to societal and organisational possibilities yet to be realised'

(p.10). However as solutions in search of problems, standards carry a number of presumptions, for instance the presumption that standard setters rather than practitioners know better or know best, and the presumption that it is better to have uniformity of conduct amongst teachers rather than differences and variations in performance.

7. DEVELOPMENT OF PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

It is pertinent to mention that the development of professional standards is not an easy and short task. There are many stages after which the development process is accomplished. The Australian Taskforce acknowledged that the development of a National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching would not succeed without the active engagement of teachers themselves and key education stakeholders through broadly based consultation. To do this, the Taskforce prepared an initial Consultation Paper outlining a rationale and key issues for the development and implementation of a national framework for professional standards. This document was considered at a National Conference of key stakeholders. After conference this paper was distributed nationally for extensive consultation. Written submissions were invited on the architecture from every jurisdiction and a wide range of teacher representative organizations, professional associations and teacher educators and got good response. Additionally, international and national research was drawn upon as the Framework was developed, as was the professional standards work occurring at both State and Commonwealth levels by professional associations, employing authorities and established and emerging teacher registration authorities. (MCEETYA). (2003).

Almost in the same way professional standards development was carried out in Vietnam. In developing the primary teacher standards for Vietnam, some background studies were taken into account in the development of the prototype standards developed in Teacher standards Vietnam 2000. It was decided that it should be a standards or competency based approach in which the focus was on what teachers were required to know or do in the school rather than on time served. After reviewing the international scene in standards and teacher evaluation, a committee established by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) set the parameters for the development of standards and for profiling teacher development. The study sought to develop a set of professional standards for defining the skills and knowledge required of teaching at each of these levels in Vietnam. There were three main purposes of this procedure. To empirically validate and refine the standards; Do determine efficient and standardized scoring procedures for making professional judgments of the competence level of the teacher; and, To determine the most appropriate way in which to gather evidence of teacher competence in school settings. (Griffin.,2000)

8. PRINCIPLES FOR DEVELOPING PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

National Reference Group for Teacher Standards Quality and Professionalism (2003) developed a National Statement from the Teaching Profession on Teacher Standards, Quality and Professionalism indicating the basic principles for guiding in developing the standards for teaching. These standards should:

- Be the responsibility of, and be owned by, the teaching profession in collaboration with key stakeholders;
- Be applied in the interests of learners, the profession and the public;
- Be firmly grounded in an accurate and comprehensive understanding of teachers' work;
- Provide a framework for teacher qualifications and registration;
- Recognize the value of both generic and subject-specific standards;
- Be clear to the profession and the wider community;
- Enhance the public perception of and esteem for teachers and their work;
- Promote teaching as a desirable career, thus contributing to recruitment;
- Focus on high-level capabilities and be described in terms of professional knowledge, understanding, skills and values;
- Promote engagement in professional learning throughout a teacher's career, allowing for different points of entry and re-entry to the profession;
- Acknowledge that context and resourcing will have an impact on implementation and sustainability; and,
- Acknowledge the responsibility of employers and the profession to establish conditions conducive to developing and maintaining profession-defined standards.

9. FRAMEWORK FOR PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS: A HOLISTIC APPROACH

MCEETYA (2003) of Australia has developed professional standards for teacher and has emphasized the need for the framework of professional standards. A Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching provides the basis for

agreement on and consistency around what constitutes quality teaching and facilitates the articulation of the knowledge, understandings, skills and values for effective teaching through development of standards at the local level. The nature and content of standards developed and implemented at the local level will vary according to the purpose for which they are being developed, and the context in which they will be utilized. In achieving all these intentions, the National Framework provides a powerful mechanism for raising the status and standing of teachers, and a common reference point for engagement within the profession and the community.

Articulating professional standards for teaching helps make the knowledge and capabilities of teachers explicit for those within and outside the profession, and provides means by which good teaching can be identified, rewarded and celebrated (National Reference Group for Teacher Standards Quality and Professionalism, 2003; Ramsey, 2000).

Therefore, deciding how to capture what it is that effective teachers know, do and value, is central to the development of any national framework for standards for teaching.

A professional framework for teachers can provide clear benefits, not only to the teaching profession, but also to students, parents, the community and governments. Benefits relate, inter alia, to: student learning outcomes; the status and standing of teachers; and, professional support for teachers. To realise such benefits, a Framework must be capable of reflecting, supporting and recognizing teachers professional growth throughout their careers. The National Framework for Professional Standards for Teaching aims to:

- Provide common national understandings of what teachers need to know and be able to do to support and improve student learning;
- Describe levels of teaching quality to which teachers might aspire and ensure teacher development opportunities are available nationally to achieve these levels;
- Provide a basis for national recognition of the quality of teaching;
- Provide the basis for national alignment of standards for graduates of teacher education programs;
- Strengthen initial teacher preparation and ensure national commitment to effective and adequate teacher preparation; and,
- Provide a basis for ongoing commitment by Commonwealth and State and Territory governments to support teacher's professional learning. (MCEETYA, 2003).

Therefore, recognizing the importance and benefits of a national approach, there is need to contribute to ongoing discussions about the status of the profession and teaching quality. It acknowledges the importance of building and sustaining quality teaching in a global context characterized by ever-changing and challenging social, economic and political environments with an increasingly diverse group of students framework aims to capture professional elements of teachers work across career dimensions which profile teachers.

The standards provide a framework and a common language to support teachers to identify, assess and strengthen their professional commitment, professional relationships and understandings about teaching and learning. They cluster around three key facets of teachers' work – teaching and learning, professional relationships and professional growth. One cluster focuses on teaching and learning, and the teacher's role in designing and managing individual and group learning experiences. A second cluster highlights the way in which effective teachers build relationships, both within and beyond the school. A third dimension underlines the commitment of the professional to reflective practice, professional renewal and ongoing contribution to a vibrant profession.

While each standard highlights a distinct aspect of professional practice, it is important to recognize that the standards are interdependent and interconnected. For example, in order for teachers to work effectively with diverse groups of learners, it is critical that they are able to create safe and supportive learning environments and gain the support of and are supportive of other members of the team. The standards are a total package of integrated components to be applied holistically, not used as a checklist of competencies.

10. CROSS CULTURAL COMMONALITY AND DIVERSITY IN PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS OF TEACHING

The development and improvement of professional standards is a continuous effort being made in different countries in trying to achieve the maximum output and meeting the demands of society towards standardizing the system for equity and balance in the society. It also provoke towards the lust for competence and competition. Countries like USA, UK , Australia, Newzealand are have developed standards for teaching profession. These standards are framed in curriculum, teaching and assessment areas and for different levels and stages of teacher education.

The State of Queensland (Department of Education)(2002) has developed Professional Standards for Teachers (which aim to define teachers work in Queensland state schools and provide a framework for individuals, teams and networks of teachers to reflect on teaching practice, and formulate professional learning goals and plans to improve their professional practice.

1. Structure flexible and innovative learning experiences for individuals and groups.
2. Contribute to language, literacy and numeracy development.
3. Construct intellectually challenging learning experiences.
4. Construct relevant learning experiences that connect with the world beyond school.
5. Construct inclusive and participatory learning experiences.
6. Integrate information and communication technologies to enhance student learning.
7. Assess and report on student learning.
8. Support the social development and participation of young people.
9. Create safe and supportive learning environments.
10. Build relationships with the wider community.
11. Contribute to professional teams.
12. Commit to professional practice.

The Department of Education in Western Australia (<http://www.eddept.wa.edu.au/>) has developed standards with explicit links to career paths, professional development expectations and recognition of accomplishment in teaching. The Competency Framework for Teachers articulates competency standards for teachers working within three broad phases. It identifies, and is arranged around, five generic dimensions of teachers' work that are central to the achievement of professional excellence in schools:

- Facilitating student learning;
- Assessing student learning outcomes;
- Engaging in professional learning;
- Participating in curriculum policy and program initiatives; and,
- Forming partnerships within the school community.

NSW Institute of Teachers (<http://www.icit.nsw.edu.au/>) was established to advise on the development of professional teaching standards, the accreditation of teachers against these standards, and the endorsement of teacher education programs. The Draft Professional Teaching Standards Framework incorporates seven Elements of professional practice:

1. Teachers know their subject content and how to teach that content to their students
2. Teachers know their students and how they learn
3. Teachers plan, assess and report for effective learning
4. Teachers communicate effectively with their students
5. Teachers create and maintain safe and challenging learning environments through the use of classroom management skills.
6. Teachers continually improve their professional knowledge and practice

7. Teachers are actively engaged members of their profession and the wider community Specific Aspects are delineated for each Element in each of four Key Stages of teachers careers: 1. Graduate Teacher; 2. Professional Competence; 3. Professional Accomplishment; and, 4. Professional Leadership.

The Standards within each key stage are intended to describe the nature of teachers' work in three domains: They are: Professional Knowledge, Professional Practice, Professional Commitment.

The Ontario College of Teachers (2000) developed some professional standards by beginning research on the standards via literature, bibliographic and Internet searches. Through an examination of standards from Scotland, Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand, England and the United States, themes related to the teaching profession emerged. However, those themes had to be pertinent to the context of teachers in Ontario. It was further strengthened by revisiting and reviewing Ontario policy and legislation, codes of ethics from other teachers' organizations across the province, research articles and discussions with knowledgeable people in the field of ethics. The College paid careful attention to the diversity of experience, expertise and cultural background of teachers, students, parents and members of the public who participated in these groups. As a result of this research a draft version of the standards encompassing the following five domains (concepts) emerged: commitment to students and student learning, professional knowledge, teaching practice, leadership and community, ongoing professional learning.

New Jersey's Department of Education (2004) developed new professional standards for teachers and school leaders and were adopted by the State Board of Education in December 2003 as part of the new licensing regulations. These new professional standards provide a clear vision of the knowledge, performances and dispositions that teachers and school leaders need to support the learning.

Aligned with the Core Curriculum Content Standards, as well as national professional standards, New Jersey's professional standards for educators illustrate the wide range of knowledge and abilities contemporary educators must possess to provide high-quality instruction and support improved student results. While the sets of professional standards are interdependent and interconnected, each distinct standard focuses on a specific aspect of effective practice. Each standard also has a series of indicators comprised of knowledge, dispositions, and performance statements. The knowledge statements describe the body of knowledge critical to effective practice. The disposition statements indicate the behaviors which communicate the traits and qualities valued by educators. The performance statements illustrate the application of that knowledge. Their main theme about standards is that:

"The professional standards serve as the foundation for a more thoughtful certification system, more productive pre-service education and induction programs, and more effective and relevant professional development."

These standards encompass the broad range of skills and knowledge a teacher needs, including deep content knowledge with varied instructional strategies; the creation of a productive learning environment; the use of assorted assessments; the understanding of human growth; the ability to work with diverse learners; strong communication skills; instructional planning; and the ability to create strong partnerships with parents, colleges, and the community.

Lifelong Learning UK (LLUK)(2005) has conducted an extensive programme of consultation with the sector to develop, and ensure approval and ownership of, the standards. This has included detailed discussion with representatives of SSCs, regulatory authorities, unions, awarding institutions and individual provider organizations. Following this iterative consultation, draft standards were published in March 2006 and made available on the LLUK website. Feedback received, at events and from advisory and development groups, resulted in a reshaping of the presentation of the standards.

Teachers in the lifelong learning sector value all learners individually and equally. They are committed to lifelong learning and professional development and strive for continuous improvement through reflective practice. The key purpose of the teacher is to create effective and stimulating opportunities for learning through high quality teaching that enables the development and progression of all learners.

These are the overarching professional standards for all those who teach in the lifelong learning sector.

Domain A. Professional values and practice,

Domain B. Learning and teaching,

Domain C. Specialist learning and teaching,

- Domain D. Planning for learning,
Domain E. Assessment for learning,
Domain F. Access and progression.

Reeders & Marshall (2007) has identified following Practices Associated with Effective Learning

- Flexibility in approaches to teaching and learning (including assessment)
- Good organisation of subject matter and course, including relevance and coherence of content and planned teaching/learning activities
- Effective communication
- Knowledge and enthusiasm for subject matter and teaching
- Facilitation of learning through student interaction and active experience
- Respect for and positive attitude toward students
- Critically reflective orientation to teaching including effective use of feedback to guide learning and improve teaching
- Appropriateness and fairness in assessment and grading

11. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND TEACHER PROFESSIONALISM

What teachers do in classrooms and schools around the world has been undergoing significant change over the last two decades and therefore, any debate about the meaning of teacher professionalism must take place within the context of changing work practices and educational policies. Researchers (Broudy, 1988; Farr & Middlebrooks, 1990; Willis & Tosti-Vasay, 1990; Eraut, 1994) have also theorized that professional learning is influenced by: 1) the context in which the learning occurs; 2) factors that motivates individual engagement in learning activities; and 3) the use of knowledge in practice.

There exists a large body of literature about the growing nature of professional work (Lieberman, 1992; Sergiovanni, 1994; Shacklock, 1994; Darling-Hammond, 1995; Beck & Murphy, 1996; McLaughlin & Oberman, 1996; Day, 1999; Elliott, 2000). This literature indicates that there are different concepts of teacher professionalism. These tend to focus on commitment, satisfaction, efficacy (Beck & Murphy, 1996) specialized knowledge and expertise, and ethical codes and conduct (Eraut, 1994), discretionary judgement, engagement with curriculum and assessment matters, collaboration with colleagues, sharing power with students and other stakeholders in their education, care for students, continuous learning, autonomy and professional judgement (Hargreaves & Fullan, 1998). These dimensions of professionalism define teachers as:

Professionals, who are committed and efficacious, possess specialized knowledge and expertise, collaborate with colleagues and use professional discretion, and have the potential to develop an active and reflective teaching profession (Rizvi, 2003).

Rizvi and Elliot (2005), after a comprehensive document analysis have pointed out four dimensions of professionalism as being important for an investigation into teacher professionalism, that are: teacher efficacy; teacher practice; teacher collaboration and teacher leadership.

The proponents of specified standards make numerous claims about their practice value to teachers and teacher education. For instance Kleinhenz and Ingvanson (2005) claim that 'standards-guided teacher education systems are rated significantly more highly by graduate teachers' (p. 7), that they 'support the development of professional community in schools' and 'serve as a powerful vehicle for teachers' learning' (p. 7) and provide clearer, long-term goals for professional development. Hattie (2004) argues that [specified] standards will enhance teachers' self-esteem. Professional standards are even thought to 'give teachers something about which to be collegial' (Kleinhenz & Ingvanson, 2005, p. ii).

The standards are not separate entities but form part of a coherent, interconnected view of the shape and purpose of pre-service teacher education. Many areas overlap, thereby demonstrating the complexity of learning and teaching. They are also generic, and need to be interpreted to take account of the particular teaching context.

Teacher professional development, which is a major focus of systemic reform initiatives in many countries (Fullan, 1997, 2000; Hargreaves, 1997; Hopkins, 1998; Day, 1999; Garet *et al.*, 2001), must also be given due importance in Pakistan if Government schools are to improve. As Saeed (1997) and Farooq (1990) considered a dire need for professionally trained and committed teachers who can meet the challenges of the emerging world.

The value of teachers engaging with professional standards as a strategy for continuing professional learning which is directed and controlled by them, is well supported (e.g. Darling-Hammond, 2001; Ingvarson, 2002a; National Reference Group for Teacher Standards Quality and Professionalism, 2003). In Australia, there is some evidence that teachers' engagement in advanced certification processes built around professional standards, contributes to their professional growth (e.g. Jasman & Barrera, 1998), and that engagement with professional standards can help teachers plan, structure and facilitate their ongoing professional learning (e.g. Mayer, Mitchell, Macdonald, Land, & Luke, 2002). Likewise, in the US, there is some evidence that the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) certification process is linked to improved professional practice for accomplished teachers, and that the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) licensing process is similarly linked for beginning teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2001).

12. PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS AND TEACHER ASSESSMENT

Teachers' performance is one of the key determinants of quality assurance in the classroom teaching learning discourse. In the context of outputs of students, state "outputs are cognitive achievements of the students and affective characteristics such as the positive and negative feelings and attitudes of students develop relating to their activities, interests and values". The ultimate goal of quality assurance is better students. In other words, as Saeed (2003) states 'students' performance is associated with teachers' performance and teachers' performance is said to be effective when teachers teach effectively and students' learning is enhanced'. Mohanan (2005) found that 'the quality of learning outcome is a measure of quality of teaching. The best teacher is one who transmits the best possible body of knowledge in the best possible manner'.

The professional standards are intended to strengthen existing performance management system (PMS). They enable the dimensions of a teacher's performance that must be considered as part of PMS, to be more clearly specified. They help to ensure that employer and management expectations are clear and consistent across each school. They provide a framework for performance appraisal. Performance management provides the context for regular discussions about teachers' career aspirations and their future development, within or beyond their current career stage. The framework of professional standards will provide a backdrop to discussions about how a teacher's performance should be viewed in relation to their current career stage and the career stage they are approaching. The relevant standards should be looked at as a whole in order to help teachers identify areas of strength and areas for further professional development. (School Labour Market Policy Unit, Ministry of Education, Wellington, 1999)

13. RECOMMENDATIONS

Realising the importance of professional standards of teaching in the education system becomes imperatives after going through the propositions and theories about their effectiveness. All over the world they are been widely accepted as vital changing agent for improvement in all the phases of education system. Literature review explicitly shows that professional standards for teaching have raised the level of student learning and changing environment and culture of schools. Standards promote professionalism in teachers which results better concept of self-efficacy, satisfaction and positive attitude. These psychological constructs pave a wider path towards the achievement of quality goal. Quality can only be attained in teaching and learning if we set some predefined values, skills and knowledge to be assessed for measuring improvement. Following recommendations are tendered here for consideration for the improvement of education system of Pakistan.

1. A National Board for Professional Teaching Standards may be set up to develop professional standards and a National Framework of Professional Teaching Standards.
2. Teacher professional development may be based on professional standards of teaching. This will improve the teaching skills and practices of pre-service and in-service teachers.
3. Teacher performance may be assessed on the basis of professional standards to ensure the quality assurance in schools. Learning is directly associated with teacher performance and it should be based on teaching standards.

4. One of the reasons of teacher absenteeism and retention may be teacher's lack of professionalism. Professional standards help to improve professionalism in teachers. Teachers commitment to teaching and efficacy, their knowledge and their behavioural attitudes may be developed through professional standards.
5. Seminars and conferences may be conducted for further considerations of academicians and researcher about the implication of the professional standards usefulness and development of professional standards.

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