A Framework for the Professional Development of in-Service Teachers in Kuwait

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ABSTRACT

One of the common challenges encountered in the field of education is the incompetency of in-service teachers. Particularly in the Gulf Region, teachers' transition from classroom education to professional work environments has not yielded much success. The study begins by first identifying the existing initiatives for teachers' professional development and evaluating their importance in Kuwait, from the perspectives of supervisors and in-service teachers. Obstacles facing in-service teachers and supervisors are evaluated in the case of Kuwait. A qualitative methodology is applied to a randomized sample of 18 supervisors and 36 in-service teachers. The research instrument of in-depth interviews reveals the critical need to further enhance teachers' professional development initiatives in Kuwait. Data analyses highlighted major weaknesses in teachers' current professional development initiatives, of which include a limited number of training centers, redundant training program curriculum content, uneven ratios of supervisors to teachers, lack of strategy to improve teachers' professional development, unqualified trainers, and shortages in the numbers of existing training programs. The purpose of this research is to propose an interactive framework for teachers' professional training programs that integrates analytical research results, literary findings, and country experiences in the field of teachers' professional development. The framework, along with a list of practical recommendations, is expected to provide proactive solutions that can be made generalizable for educational environments beyond classrooms in Kuwait and for international, professional workshop series.

Keywords: Professional development, training, in-service teachers, supervision, education.

INTRODUCTION

Countries around the world are experiencing rapid developments in the information and technology industries. Alongside such developments are challenges that governments attempt to counteract with policies in the economic, social, political and education sectors. However, policy itself is insufficient, unless paired with effective measures for implementation. Of recent interest to researchers in the field of education, are initiatives that cater to the

professional development of in-service teachers and education professionals (Mette, 2015; Mahmoud, 2001). The directive of such initiatives is to aid education personnel in coping with the rapidly changing society and the new education requirements. A reoccurring demand in the education field is the need to improve the quality of teachers, with regards to their specialized knowledge and teaching professions (Rahabav, 2016). The working theory is that teachers with adequate knowledge (academic and practical) in an identified area of specialty are more likely to positively enhance students' experiences, knowledge retention, skills, and attitudes (Sabbah et al., 2016; Hill et al., 2005; Piasta et al., 2009). In the long term, these students would be better equipped to contribute to the development of their respective societies (Al-Ghunaimeen, 2004; Al-Sanea, 2002).

Moreover, the World Economic Forum's Global Competitiveness Report (WEF, 2018) reflects declining trends for the education indicators of quality and training in Kuwait. Out of a total of 137 countries, Kuwait ranked 94 in the year 2016/2017 and 95 in 2017/2018. Amongst the Gulf Arab States, Kuwait ranked the lowest. A closer study of these rankings indicates that the weakest contributing figures are within the fields of mathematics and sciences, across the different education stages. Country rankings of 104 and 106 in 2017 and 2018, respectively, are an area of particular concern if the government intends to maintain its education mandate.

In response to growing concerns for quality control of teachers' professional development, this research is conducted to shed light on the reality of teachers' professional development initiatives in the case of Kuwait. The research identifies the main obstacles facing teachers' professional development, from the perspectives of supervisors and in-service teachers. Benefits from experiences of some developed countries and contemporary trends in teachers' professional development are integrated. This research recognizes the critical need to develop a framework for in-service teachers' professional development training in Kuwait.

Problem Statement

In-service teachers' professional development in Kuwait is overlooked by the School Districts Supervisory (SDS) sector. This sector, spearheaded by the Ministry of Education, monitors all professional teacher development initiatives. Al-Barrak et al. (2012) summarize a supervisor's duties, which include evaluating teachers' classroom performances and identifying their strengths and weaknesses. Such identification measures are applied for the purpose of treating weakness areas and training teachers on how to improve their academic competencies and professional skills, all the while fulfilling their long-term professional education goals.

In the case of Kuwait, Karam (2007) discusses how weaknesses in the training content has resulted in the inability of teacher training programs to meet worldwide standards for professional developmental success. In spite of the importance of teachers' professional development programs, Al-Ajmi et al. (2016) further elaborate how the programs offered by the Ministry of Education fail to meet essential learning and development criteria. Moreover, findings of data reviewed from the Ministry of Education indicate that the budget allocated for local and external training is insufficient. In the year 2018, $220,000 was allocated to the training of only 5% of the entire in-service teachers' workforce (Ministry of Education, 2018).

This research sheds light on the actual reality of professional development initiatives in Kuwait and the obstacles that in-service teachers and supervisors encounter during the course of their duties. The quality of school teaching is under-researched in Kuwait. This has resulted in old practices that are still in effect and an overall climate of dissatisfaction for the quality of education delivered (Al-Mi'a, 2017; Al-Otaibi, 2015). The three research questions that

guide this study revolve around, (1) existing initiatives and their importance for teachers' professional development, across all school education stages in Kuwait, (2) challenges and obstacles facing teachers' professional development, and (3) suggestions for strengthening teachers' professional development. Data is collected and analyzed directly from the perspectives of in-service teachers and supervisors in the education field. By integrating data results, literary findings, and lessons learnt from developed countries, an interactive framework for teachers' professional training programs is developed alongside a list of practical recommendations. This research provides proactive solutions to enhance teachers' professional development initiatives across various geographical, school settings.

Through means of data collection and analyses, the research concludes with a list of practical recommendations that education professionals in the Gulf Region could benefit from via immediate application. Takeaways are especially helpful for comparative literature and international, professional workshop series.

Theoretical & Conceptual Framework

Strategic and performance benchmarking is a technique widely used in the performance management discipline to gain independent perspectives of successful experiences in other countries (Hatry, 2006; Poister, 2003). A study of some developed countries' education sectors, with regards to how they tailored teachers' professional development initiatives, could provide beneficial takeaways for the case of Kuwait.

Professional development of teachers in Malaysia

Training programs in Malaysia have yielded much success in up-skilling teachers professionally (Al-Qasim, 2013; Al-Zahrani, 2013; Al-Ahmed, 2005). The Malaysian Ministry of Education supervises all of the teachers' training programs. In addition to the Institute of Teacher Education, there are off-campus training centers that offer programs to improve teachers' educational experiences. Malaysia's interest in the growth and development of teachers has led to the mobilization of on-site workplace training that offers workshops and technical education courses, covering an array of teaching specializations. Further, teachers are encouraged to visit other schools, beyond their workplace district, to broaden their experiences. The Malaysian education policy has made in-service training compulsory for teachers, every five years.

Professional development of teachers in Singapore

The strategic goal of Singapore's education policy is to achieve quality education through the professional development of in-service teachers and students during each stage of the educational journey. The Ministry of Education (MOE) requires teachers to complete a minimum of one education training program, related to their specialization, at the National Institute of Education (NIE). Teachers must pass a competency exam prior to embarking on the teaching profession. Compared to other developed countries, the Singaporean government spends large amounts of funds for teachers' training programs (Al-Dakheel, 2015). An estimated 100 hours of training is spent, per teacher, on a continuous basis. The Ministry's mandate is to ensure that every teacher's humanitarian, professional, and financial needs is met. To achieve this, MOE has equipped training halls with state-of-the-art technology and access to an updated database of education materials. Trainers are rigorously selected, as the content delivered depends on the caliber of trainees. Furthermore, Al-Ateek (2015) explains how distinguished in-service teachers are rewarded nationally for professional excellence (e.g. scholarship awards to complete their higher education).

Professional development of teachers in Australia

The approach to in-service teachers' training in Australia is not very different than in Malaysia and Singapore. Programs are tailor-made to schools and teaching classrooms. The intended purpose of this strategy is to link training programs to immediate classroom implementation. Some of the training programs include internships for Diploma/Master degree graduates, in-school training, and field training at an identified group of model schools in Australia. Teachers' training is offered and required for all in-service teachers. The program's content is based on practical applications, field experiments, and applied research. As an incentive, Australia has agreed to count the completion of training programs, as part of a trainee's Masters degree (Al-Dhubyani, 2014). For new teachers, the programs focus on developing a teacher's interpersonal confidence levels, teaching skills, knowledge of students' emotional and social needs, and the management of classroom problems.

Professional development of teachers in Finland

A teacher's employment in Finland is conditional on the completion of a Masters of Science degree in education. Prior to school assignment, a teacher must pass two qualification exams. The first exam tests the candidate's ability to comprehend and disintegrate knowledge from a series of scientific/professional articles, while the second tests the candidate's interpersonal traits and suitability for the teaching profession. A teacher is expected to have a broad understanding of culture, information technology, and disciplinary knowledge. An in-service teacher's common workload is four hours of teaching, per day, yet they are professionally trained for an additional two hours. Teachers' training programs are required on a continuous basis throughout the school year, for the purpose of maintaining teachers' feelings of workplace confidence, respect, and display of appreciation for their service in the field and to the country (Espoo, 2012; Salberg, 2016).

Professional development of teachers in the United States of America (USA)

A license to teach is a mandatory requirement for all teachers in the USA. Teachers that pass new education courses or attain certificates for good performance in schools, receive financial rewards from the government. This strategy is set in motion as a method to incentivize other teachers to follow this developmental course of action. One of the most recent trends in professional development programs for teachers in the USA is work-oriented training that focuses on teaching competencies. Also, unions play an active role in training in-service teachers. A teacher has the liberty to choose which program best fits his/her needs. According to Al-Dhubyani (2014), the government's education budget includes a generous fund for teachers' training programs.

Professional development of teachers in Japan

Continuous education is Japan's slogan for in-service teacher training programs. This is indicative of Japan's commitment to the self-improvement of teachers' performances and their level of academic and cultural awareness that extends beyond the professional field. In the first year after graduation, new teachers must undergo at least 20 days of training. Training programs are structured in a way where in-service teachers are organized in study groups with teachers taking turns in presenting model lessons to fellow colleagues in the group. The colleague spectators evaluate the teacher's performance, whilst providing constructive feedback based on knowledge and experiences. University faculty members, as well, actively participate in teachers' professional development initiatives. Moreover, Nishino & Watanabe (2008) clarify that the use of technology in education in Japan is highly accounted for. Consequently, information and technology is highly disseminated across all training locations in Japan.

Literature Review

In light of the abovementioned contemporary global education trends, it is important that countries develop training programs that effectively target teachers' professional and learning needs (Tambo, 2002; Mutlu, 2014; Willams and Jason, 2010; Lumpe et al., 2010). There are various obstacles encountered by teachers in the field in education. Some of these obstacles include the weak content of training programs, the lack of flexibility in program delivery, lack of innovation in teaching and feedback methods, and the imbalances between academia and practice. Hussein & Al-Hassan (2017) express these obstacles as widely encountered by secondary science teachers in the State of Khartoum, Sudan, negatively impacting teachers' standards for overall quality. Mohammad's (2008) study highlights the importance of teachers' qualifications in secondary schools of Egypt. He argues that an unclear training vision paves way to weak programs that exacerbate the issue of unqualified teaching personnel, rather than resolve it. In-service training programs that span the course of one day only, seldom provide value to teachers, as they are limited in scope and do not provide a wholesome learning experience (Yoon et al., 2007). One of the solutions that Mustafa (2008) proposes, as a means of overcoming such obstacles, is increasing the Ministry's budget for in-service teachers' training needs and providing financial and moral incentives for trainees to attend the training programs offered.

Another contributing factor to the development and training of in-service teachers is the role of a supervisor. In a research that sampled 174 supervisors of elementary schools in Virginia, USA, Johns (2001) concludes that a supervisor's responsibilities include evaluating teachers via classroom visits, designing specific training programs that cater to teachers' deficiencies, and managing education and curriculum development. A passive supervisor is a nominal entity that adds minimal value. Alternatively, an active supervisor could enhance a teacher's development process by providing experienced feedback and moral support. In support of these findings, Al-Ghunaimeen (2004) suggests rehabilitating education supervisors to commensurate with modern methods/concepts of teachers' supervision. For example, Al-Muwaizri (2001) study of teachers' feedback in Saudi Arabian schools, explains the presence of a supervisor more of a surveillance tactic, rather than supportive aid for teachers' personal development. Furthermore, within the Maluku province of Malaysia, Rahabav's (2016) research highlights the invaluable role of supervisors when they lack professional supervisory skills. Failure to fully realize a supervisors' role, could result in a perceived image of failure in duties.

Furthermore, some teachers prefer accessing secondary education materials (e.g. Internet and e-books) as an alternative to attending training programs (Sariyatun et al., 2018; Al-Rsa'i, 2012). Baran & Cagiltay (2006) explain the growing use of the Internet amongst in-service teachers, where knowledge is transferred for classroom application. Baran & Cagiltay's research discusses positive byproducts of this self-education method, such as the promotion of self-discovery and improved cooperation amongst colleagues due to the ease of knowledge sharing and exchange. Although this may substitute as an alternative to teachers' professional development initiatives, some sources may not be credible, reliable, or relevant, as experts in the field of education have not vetted them (David & Glore, 2010).

Technology, indeed, plays a major role in rapidly changing societies around the world. In a study of four schools in the State of Louisiana, USA, Stuhlmann (1998) advocates the need for applying modern technologies to aid education delivery and synthesis. However, teachers must first be equipped with the skills needed for optimal performance (Martin-Gamez et al., 2016). The use of modern technology in classroom settings has not been fully realized around the world. Many teachers find it difficult to cope with these externally imposed changes (Hargreaves and Fullan, 2012). In order to accept such changes, Fullan

(2016) argues that teachers must first be aware of technology's potential educational benefits, thereafter be trained for its responsible use.

METHODS

This empirical research identifies existing initiatives for teachers' professional development and evaluates their importance in Kuwait, from the perspectives of supervisors and in-service teachers. Obstacles facing in-service teachers and supervisors are evaluated in the case of Kuwait. The co-gender, randomly selected research sample consists of supervisors and teachers working across different public education stages of the Ministry of Education in Kuwait. The first group of research participants includes 18 supervisors in the field of professional development and education supervision of in-service teachers. The supervisor's duty is to evaluate, direct, and assist teachers to improve their learning situations and instructional methods. The second group of participants is 36 in-service teachers, selected randomly across all public schools in Kuwait at different education stages during the academic year of 2018-2019. Education stages, herein, refers to primary, intermediate, and secondary public school education. The research sample was limited to supervisors that are currently employed by the Ministry of Education in Kuwait and in-service teachers that have already experienced a minimum of one professional development initiative.

Data was collected via semi-structured interviews, so as to guide the discussion while allowing participants to diverge on their reflections and perceptions. Cohen et al. (2007) explain how the use of such a research instrument allows the interviewer to effectively gather primary data directly from experienced research participants, to better understand the current situation at hand. In-depth interviews provide insights to the reality of teachers' professional development initiatives in Kuwait and the obstacles that supervisors and teachers are facing in the field. Interviews comprised of 45-60 minutes, per participant, and revolved around the three guiding research questions that are listed below.

RQ1: *What is the importance of the current initiatives provided for teachers' professional development, across all school education stages in Kuwait, from the perspectives of supervisors and teachers?*
RQ2: *What are the challenges and obstacles facing teachers' professional development in Kuwait, from the perspectives of supervisors and teachers?*
RQ3: *What are the suggestions provided by supervisors and teachers to strengthen teachers' professional development in Kuwait?*

Interviewees were met individually in a comfortable environment of their selection, whilst ensuring their anonymity as research participants. Lincoln and Guba (1994) explain how the naturalistic methods of interviewing and text analyses are most suitable for interpretive approaches.

To ensure soundness of the research design, internal and external verification measures were taken (Creswell, 1998). Interviewees were asked to reflect on their experiences and share their perspectives in a confidential and comfortable environment. Research instruments were first assessed for their validity by conducting a thorough review of literature and field practices. Thereafter, the three interview questions were raised to five university faculty members in the College of Education at Kuwait University. These faculty members are specialized in teachers' professional development programs. The research instruments and methods underwent a critical review process until deemed accurate and valid (Drost, 2011; Chioncel et al., 2003).

The research instruments were then assessed for their reliability. A pilot study was organized for a group of 9 in-service teachers randomly selected from each public school stage across Kuwait. These teachers were asked to read and respond to each of the three questions. Based on the responses generated, the questions were further reviewed to ensure comprehension, clarity, and appropriateness for the co-gender in-service teachers' population in Kuwait. The feasible duration for each interview was also adjusted based on findings of the pilot study. Mauch and Park (2003) discuss the benefits of pilot studies in aiding a researcher when addressing existing bugs in the research design and identifying the respondents' varying perspectives.

Data results were triangulated, transcribed, and interpreted objectively, via a thematic analysis method (Saldaña, 2016; Bush, 2007). Data was first collected, organized, and coded to identify similarities and dissimilarities among the group of interviewees for each research question. Braun & Clarke's (2012) methodology for data analysis was applied to analyze the data using descriptive data coding techniques. Reoccurring interviewee responses were then classified into relatable themes. Percentages were computed to reflect the respective group of interviewees' level of agreement for each reoccurring theme. Themes were then numerically ordered to identify their rankings of importance.

Data was collected and analyzed with an ultimate purpose of proposing an interactive framework for teachers' in-service training in Kuwait. This framework addresses the obstacles and challenges currently faced, in addition to incorporating perspectives of supervisors and teachers on how to enhance teachers' professional development initiatives. The framework builds on the data results, literature findings, and experiences of some developed countries in contemporary teacher training trends.

FINDINGS

Data results, from the perspectives of supervisors and teachers, are presented below for each research interview question. Findings for each question are presented in Tables 1-6 below, with each question reflecting responses organized thematically. Each theme is then weighed (%) to reflect the level of agreement among the respective group of interviewees and ordered to reflect the degree of importance in theme reoccurrence.

RQ1: *What is the importance of the current initiatives provided for teachers' professional development, across all school education stages in Kuwait, from the perspectives of supervisors and teachers?*

Table 1, below, lists supervisors' responses for the current initiatives and their level of significance for teachers' professional development in Kuwait.

Table 1. *Results of supervisors' responses, RQ1*

Item	Themes	Supervisors (n)	Percentage	Order
1	Visiting teachers in the classrooms to evaluate their teaching performances	18	100%	1
2	Meeting with teachers to discuss the curriculum's quality, tests, educational activities, and problems in the classroom	13	72%	2
3	Presenting a model lesson by experienced teachers to other teachers	12	67%	3
4	Teachers' exchange of classroom visits to experience other classroom environments	11	61%	4
5	Establishing workshops for teachers	7	39%	5
6	Providing training programs for teachers	7	39%	5*

7	Encouraging teachers to attend educational conferences, seminars, and workshops	4	22%	7
8	Intensifying meetings with low performing teachers and recent graduates	2	11%	8

The entire population of supervisor research participants' responses (n=18; 100%) expressed the importance of visiting teachers in the classroom settings, in order to evaluate their performances. One of the supervisors expressed, "*The ratio of one supervisor per teachers' population is unreasonably high and therefore it is difficult for us to manage more than 2-3 visits currently per year.*" All the supervisors agreed that the ideal frequency of 5-6 visits per academic year would be sufficient to identify teachers' weakness and strength areas, after which evaluation reports would be generated and raised to the Ministry of Education. Four of the supervisors mentioned that,

> "There is not enough time to actively address each weakness and mistake that a teacher experiences." (…) "We have limited time during our visit to only verbally make teachers aware of their challenges but no time to help them remedy it." (…) "We are each assigned many tasks and lots of teachers, spread across education stages that are located far from each other." (…) "Our job duties, as they currently are, negatively impact our ability to develop plans and programs tailored to each teacher's needs."

A majority of the supervisor research population's responses (72%) discussed the necessity of meeting with teachers to discuss the curriculum, teaching methods, and obstacles faced on duty. However, 5 supervisors did not signify this need as part of teachers' professional development initiatives. The theme of experienced teachers presenting model lessons to less-experienced teachers, as part of their professional development, reoccurred amongst 67% of the supervisor interviewees. 12 supervisors out of a total of 18 discussed the importance of this activity, while 11 supervisors (61%) instead preferred teachers to exchange classroom visits. Although more than half of this interviewee group agreed on the need for both of these initiatives, there still remain approximately 6-7 supervisors whose responses prioritized other initiatives for teachers' professional development. The alternative two prioritized themes are establishing workshops and a variety of training programs for teachers. This reflects that 7 interviewees, at a 39% agreement rate, responded that teachers' professional development initiatives should extend beyond classroom environment. Moreover, 22% of the supervisors discussed the theme of encouraging in-service teachers to attend conferences and seminars within their area(s) of specialty. However, only 11% of the majority of responses revolved around the theme of intensifying meetings with less experienced and newer teachers across all education stages, as part of teachers' professional development initiatives.

A review of the second group of research participants, in regards to the current situation of teachers' professional development initiatives across all school education stages in Kuwait, is also important. Table 2, below, thematically lists the in-service teachers' responses.

Table 2. *Results of teachers' responses, RQ1*

Item	Themes	Teachers (n)	Percentage	Order
1	Presenting model lessons by experienced teachers to fellow colleagues	32	89%	1
2	Meeting with supervisors to discuss the curriculum's quality, tests, educational activities, and problems in the classroom	29	81%	2
3	Exchanging classroom visits with other teachers to	25	69%	3

	develop new experiences			
4	Presenting training programs	13	36%	4
5	Presenting teachers' workshops	8	22%	5

As with a majority of supervisors' responses, 89% of in-service teacher interviewees' responses revolved around the theme of 'experienced teachers presenting model lessons' as a critical component of the current professional development initiatives offered. Responses of 29 teachers, out of the total in-service teachers' population interviewed (81%), agreed to the importance of meetings with supervisors to discuss curriculum and educational matters in the classroom. Additionally, a majority of teachers (69%) viewed the need to exchange classroom visits as a critical component of their professional development. A total of 23 teachers interviewed expressed responses that did not signify the theme of presenting training programs, while 28 of the teachers' responses did not stress the importance of teachers' workshops as part of the current professional development initiatives offered in Kuwait.

RQ2: *What are the challenges and obstacles facing teachers' professional development in Kuwait, from the perspectives of supervisors and teachers?*

Table 3 below responds to this second research question from the perspectives of supervisors interviewed.

Table 3. *Results of supervisors' responses, RQ2*

Item	Themes	Supervisors (n)	Percentage	Order
1	Uneven ratio of supervisors to teachers – each supervisor has a large number of teachers that they are responsible for	16	89%	1
2	Shortage in the number of training programs	16	89%	1*
3	Supervisors are burdened with administrative tasks and other duties, little time is left to focus on teachers' individual development	13	72%	3
4	Lack of a strategy and clear plan to improve teachers' performances	11	61%	4
5	Supervising teachers across different education stages	10	56%	5
6	Teachers have no desire to improve their teaching performances	9	50%	6
7	Limited number of training centers	9	50%	6*
8	Content of training programs is very limited	8	44%	8
9	Supervisors need to improve their training skills and deepen their knowledge in the field of teachers' professional development	6	33%	9
10	Lack of rewards/incentives for teachers that successfully pass the training programs	5	28%	10

Out of a total of 18 supervisors, 16 identified that the major challenges facing teachers' professional development initiatives in Kuwait are the uneven ratios of supervisors to teachers and the limited number of training programs offered (89%, respectively). A majority of the supervisors interviewed (72%) shared responses that align with the theme of feeling overly burdened by administrative duties, leaving limited time to address teachers' individual development concerns. 11 supervisors discussed their struggles in trying to perform their duties with no strategy and plan that guides them on how to enhance teachers' performances. One of the interviewees shared, "*Our work is limited to our field experience; we, ourselves, need training courses on how to supervise teachers' professional development.*" Almost half of this interviewee population shared feelings of being challenged when supervising teachers

across different education stages (56%) and dealing with teachers that lack a desire to improve themselves (50%). One of the supervisors responded, "*Some teachers do not show a desire for learning and development because the training centers are located very far from their workplaces*."

Out of a total population of 18 supervisors, 9 aligned with the theme of there being a limitation in the number of teachers' training centers in Kuwait and 8 complemented these responses by mentioning how the content of training programs is, "*Weak; unappealing; limited; demotivating; outdated*." Moreover, 33% of the supervisors' responses indicated the need to improve their knowledge and skills as they relate to teachers' professional development. The least reoccurring theme (n= 5; 28%) during these interviews was the need for rewards to incentivize teachers to complete the professional development training programs.

Moreover, in-service teachers' responses to the challenges and obstacles facing teachers' professional development in Kuwait are reflected in Table 4 that follows.

Table 4. *Results of teachers' responses, RQ2*

Item	Themes	Teachers (n)	Percentage	Order
1	Training programs take place during the evening, instead of morning working hours	32	89%	1
2	Training programs have nothing to do with our developmental needs	28	78%	2
3	Training programs do not implement modern technology and education tools	24	67%	3
4	The training programs are redundant and add minimal learning value	23	64%	4
5	Training sessions are presented by unqualified trainers	23	64%	4*
6	The training environment is inappropriate and uncomfortable	6	17%	6

A majority of the in-service teachers' interviewee population shared responses that aligned with 5 out of the total 6 themes that arose during discussions of this interview question. 32 out of 36 teachers interviewed discussed the difficulty of attending training programs, as they take place during the evening hours. One of the respondents exclaimed, *"I have no one to drive me at night, plus even if I did, I cannot leave my kids and family.*"

Furthermore, more than half of the interviewees had dissatisfactory feelings towards the current training programs offered. Responses shared revolved around the themes of training programs being misaligned to teachers' developmental needs (78%), outdated learning tools (67%), and redundancy/lack of added value (64%). 23 of the teachers' statements reflected the challenges of programs presented by unqualified trainers, while only 6 of the teachers' responses referred to the inappropriateness and discomfort of the training environment. Some of the teachers' remarks include, "*The training programs offered are limited in scope; the programs do not appeal to my interests and needs; it is such a burden to go and it is especially uninteresting."*

RQ3: *What are the suggestions provided by supervisors and teachers to strengthen teachers' professional development in Kuwait?*

Table 5 that follows thematically summarizes the supervisors' responses to the third interview question of how to strengthen teachers' professional development in Kuwait.

Table 5. *Results of supervisors' responses, RQ3*

Item	Themes	Supervisors (n)	Percentage	Order
1	Improving the ratio of teachers to supervisors – reducing the number of teachers per supervisor	17	94%	1
2	Increasing training hours for new and low performing teachers	15	83%	2
3	Designing a clear strategy and unified plans for use by all supervisors	12	67%	3
4	Training programs must take place during morning hours and not in the evenings	11	61%	4
5	Training programs should be based on the teachers' developmental needs	10	56%	5
6	Each supervisor should be responsible for one education stage	10	56%	5*
7	Increasing the number of training centers	9	50%	7
8	Increasing the model lessons presented by distinguished teachers	8	44%	8
9	University faculty should participate in teachers' professional development	8	44%	8*
10	Encouraging teachers to do research	7	39%	10
11	Providing modern technology equipment in training programs	6	33%	11

Almost the entire supervisor interviewee population (n=17) suggested ideas for improving teachers' professional development in Kuwait that relate to decreasing the ratio of teachers per supervisor. A majority of the remaining suggestions revolved around the themes of increasing the mandatory number of training hours for new teachers (83%), clarifying the supervisors' action plans (67%), and rescheduling training programs to the morning hours (61%). Two of the interviewees expressed, "*A very vague guide for training programs is given to us by the Ministry years ago; we have minimal freedom to modify the plan based on what our findings are from field visits.*" Additionally, 10 supervisors shared statements related to the need for training programs to target teachers' developmental needs and how each supervisor would perform better if tasked with one education stage, rather than being spread across the 3 school education stages (56%, respectively). One of the supervisors elaborated, "*I supervise primary teachers and can guarantee you that supervising secondary school teachers requires a very different set of skills and knowledge that I do not acquire, but I still must do it because it is part of my duties*."

Exactly half of this interviewee population (50%) agreed on the need to increase training centers, while 44% instead contributed statements that aligned with the themes of increasing model lessons and university faculty participation. Lastly, not many supervisors felt the need to neither encourage teachers' research production (n=7), nor utilize modern technology in training programs (n=6).

Furthermore, in-service teachers' suggestions on how to enhance teachers' professional development initiatives in Kuwait are identified in Table 6 below.

Table 6. *Results of teachers' responses, RQ3*

Item	Themes	Teachers (n)	Percentage	Order
1	Increasing the number of teachers' exchange visits for mutual benefit	36	100%	1
2	Training programs must take place in the mornings and not the evenings	33	92%	2
3	The content of training programs and workshops must address teachers' needs	32	89%	3
4	University faculty should be involved in teachers'	25	69%	4

	professional development			
5	Establishing workshops in schools	19	53%	5
6	Using educational technology in training centers	17	47%	6
7	Providing a suitable, effective and relaxed training environment	14	39%	7
8	Teachers' meetings with supervisors should focus on curriculum, classroom issues, and new educational issues	14	39%	8

Contributions from the entire in-service teachers' interviewee population (100%) showed agreement to the theme of increasing the number of classroom exchange visits, as part of strengthening their professional development. Two of the responses mentioned, "*Visiting other classrooms that we do not teach in is exciting; this new experience encourages us to learn from other teachers about new educational methods and classroom activities*." Almost 90% of the responses expressed the need for programs to take place during the morning working hours (n=33; 92%) and for the content to align with teachers' developmental needs (n=32, 89%).

Further, a majority of the teachers' suggestions aligned with the themes of involving faculty members that have advanced knowledge and experiences (69%) and scheduling training workshops in schools (53%). The teacher interviewees that suggested organizing school workshops also mentioned varying time frames for the time elapsed since they have last experienced an initiative that helped them develop professionally. Additionally, out of the total 36 teachers interviewed, 17 shared suggestions for equipping training centers with modern education technology. They expressed how the lack of technology use hinders their optimal learning experiences. Suggestions for an effective and comfortable learning environment reoccurred amongst interviewees at a rate of 39%. Moreover, 22 teacher interviewees felt that the current nature of meetings with supervisors was not beneficial. One of the teachers suggested, "*Our meetings with supervisors should focus on classrooms problems, teaching methods, and brainstorming solutions, rather than discussing administrative matters.*"

DISCUSSION

Results of this study indicate that there are several perceived weaknesses in the current in-service teachers' professional development initiatives in Kuwait. As mentioned from the perspectives of the 18 supervisors and 36 in-service teachers interviewed, findings reveal 6 overarching critical weakness areas. The weaknesses are summarized, in the list that proceeds, and elaborated further in the discussions by building on the research data results, literary findings, and country experiences.

1. Margins in the costs spent on teachers' professional development and shortages in the numbers of existing training programs and/or hours,
2. Appropriateness and accessibility of professional development initiatives,
3. Relatively weak supervisor's role,
4. Irrelevance of training programs' content,
5. Lack of use for modern education technology and a limited variety of professional development initiatives,
6. Lack of motivational incentives, rewards, and teachers' recognition.

Although very few countries are short of these weaknesses in teachers' professional development initiatives, Kuwait is a petroleum wealthy country with a relatively smaller population of public school in-service teachers when (for example) compared to Malaysia,

Australia, and the USA. In 2018, the total population of public school teachers in Kuwait was 112,629 (Central Statistical Bureau, 2018), compared to Malaysia with a population of 416,800 teachers (Department of Statistics Malaysia, 2018), 169,199 teachers in Australia (Australian government, 2018), and 3.2 million teachers in the USA (NCES, 2018). The total populations of these countries, as of 2019, are 4.14 million in Kuwait, 31.53 million in Malaysia, 25 million in Australia, and 328.2 million in the USA (World Bank, 2020).

However, a view of the Kuwait government's budget for public school education, in relation to the population's size, reflects the government's financial ability to expend even greater funds that could further enhance the quality of public school teaching. The Kuwait government's total education budget for 2018 was approximately $6.7 billion (Ministry of Finance, 2018), whereas the budgets for the aforementioned snapshot group of countries was $3.2 billion in Malaysia (World Bank, 2018), $9.2 billion in Australia (Australian government, 2018), and $706 billion in the USA (NCES, 2018).

Documents reviewed from the Ministry of Education (2018) indicate that the budget for local and external teachers' training is insufficient. Approximately $220,000 out of the total $6.7 billion education budget is allocated to professional development initiatives of 5,610 in-service teachers. This implies that the Ministry of Education selects, yearly on average, only 5% of the total public school teachers' population for professional development initiatives. This reality was reaffirmed during the interviews with a number of teachers mentioning varying time frames for the time elapsed since they have last experienced an initiative that helped them develop professionally. Some teachers interviewed, in fact, have been employed for years and yet have still not experienced a single development initiative. Additionally, the costs of training programs are included within this budget, thereby amounting to about $40 per teacher, per year.

In the USA, the government education budget already includes a generous fund for teachers' training programs (Al-Dhubyani, 2014). In Singapore, as well, the government spends large amount of funds for teachers' training programs (Al-Dakheel, 2015). Furthermore, the frequency of training offered in Malaysia is compulsory for each teacher every five years (Al-Ahmed, 2005). Teachers in Singapore not only must complete a minimum of one education training program and pass a competency exam prior to teaching professionally, but also an estimated 100 hours of training is spent per teacher during each stage of their educational journey (Al-Ateek, 2015). A teacher's workload in Finland is a maximum of 4 teaching hours, to allow an extra 2 hours per day for professional training development (Salberg, 2016). Additionally, teachers working in Finland are expected to complete more than one training program per year. Moreover, Nishino & Watanabe (2008) describe how continuous education and development is Japan's slogan for in-service teachers' training programs. In fact, teachers' training journey in Japan begins immediately upon graduation with the mandatory completion of 20 training days, prior to joining the workforce.

Indeed, the topic of the appropriateness and accessibility of professional development initiatives was raised by a number of the supervisors and in-service teachers interviewed. A majority of the supervisors' responses indicated limitations in the numbers of existing training centers and training hours for in-service teachers. While teachers felt the need to establish workshops in school settings, not many supervisors were in agreement. This contrasts to supervisors' responses that supported rescheduling training programs to the morning working hours, as locations for such programs are limited. The teacher interviewees, as well, preferred the morning working hours as opposed to evening sessions. However, it was expected that supervisors would consider school settings, due to the shortage of centers as they mentioned. Al-Zahrani (2013) discusses how Malaysia has succeeded in organizing teachers' training programs on-site, in school environments. Additionally, Al-Dhubyani (2014) explains how Australia's in-school training and school field training for Diploma/Masters degree graduates

has helped develop some schools as iconic educational institutions. Moreover, Bakkenes et al. (2010) discuss the need to establish a relaxed and respectful learning environment. Singapore's Ministry of Education has early on realized this need by ensuring that every teacher's humanitarian, professional, and financial needs is met (Al-Dakheel, 2015). Although only a limited number of teachers expressed such feelings of overall discomfort, teachers' comfort levels must be taken into consideration as it is directly associated with learning activities and outcomes.

One of the discrepancies found in the data results is that although 89% of the supervisors agreed that there are shortages in the number of training programs offered, only 39% of supervisors interviewed advocated the need to provide teachers with training programs for their professional development. This leads the discussion to the third weakness, which is that of the supervisor's role in Kuwait. A majority of the in-service teachers agreed that meetings with supervisors are especially helpful when addressing curriculum quality, tests, and classroom activities. However, due to the lack of adequate supervision they have experienced since employment, the teachers interviewed felt hopeless in their supervisor's ability to assist their fulfillment of developmental goals. This could be attributed to what a majority of the supervisors' expressed as feeling burdened with administrative duties, so much that they are left with minimal time to attend to teachers' individual developmental needs. In Saudi Arabian public schools, a supervisor's presence is perceived more of a surveillance administrative duty as opposed to moral aid (Al-Muwaizri, 2001).

Supervisors interviewed also expressed struggles when performing their jobs without a strategy or a clear action plan, all the while being overwhelmed with a high number of teachers to manage across different education stages. Data reviewed from the Ministry of Education (2018) indicates that each supervisor is responsible for an average number of 40-60 teachers per academic year. These teachers are spread across different education stages and geographic districts. Johns (2001) stresses the role supervisors play in the development and training of teachers. In a study of elementary schools in Virginia, USA, Johns explains how an active, 'hand on' supervisor is able to provide experienced feedback and moral support where/when needed. A supervisors' responsibilities must not only include evaluating teachers, but also designing specific training programs that cater to teachers' deficiencies and managing education and curriculum development. A majority of the supervisor interviewees agreed to the need for classroom visits and meetings with teachers. However, the theme of intensifying meetings with low performing and recently graduated teachers did not resonate with many of the interviewees. This could indicate the need to raise awareness among supervisors of what their role ideally entails and how it could impact education on a macro level.

Moreover, a majority of the research sample described similar strengths and weaknesses facing current teacher professional development training programs. A number of teachers interviewed agreed on three critical points – redundancy of the training programs' content, outdated curriculum, and minimal learning value added. From the perspectives of in-service teachers, the content is developed and delivered by unqualified trainers. Both Singapore and Japan have focused on the caliber of trainers by implementing a rigorous selection process and involving experienced university faculty members (Nishino & Watanabe, 2008). A majority of the supervisors and teachers interviewed expressed that the training programs offered by the Ministry of Education seldom meets essential learning and development criteria. This indicates that the infrastructure of training programs is weak. Training programs in Malaysia, as Al-Qasim (2013) explains, has yielded much success in up-skilling teachers professionally, as they cover an array of teaching specializations. Australian training programs are tailor-made to schools, allowing teachers to immediately apply what is learnt via classroom methods, field experiments, and applied research (Al-Dhubyani, 2014).

In spite of the importance of in-service teachers' attendance to workshops and training

programs, the teachers interviewed struggled to realize the importance of their attendance. In the USA, an array of training programs are offered and teachers have the liberty to choose which program best matches his/her developmental needs (Freeman et al., 2014). Therefore, reevaluating the content and identifying a clear training and development vision could deescalate the issue of low teaching performance as Mohammad (2008) argues is the solution for in-service teachers in Egypt. In a study of teachers' training programs in Sudan, Hussein & Al-Hassan (2017) also stress the need for training programs' content to balance between academic and practical knowledge. Theorists that conducted similar studies in different contexts share some of these criticisms. Bayar & Kösterelioğlu (2014) discuss how the content of in-service training sessions is largely based on textbook knowledge, rather than daily problems teachers encounter in classrooms. Karip (2018) and Yılmaz & Esen (2015) elaborate on how the methodology of program delivery is mostly lecture-based, thereby eliminating aspects of teachers' active engagement. Weaknesses of the teachers' training programs currently offered in Kuwait is a matter especially important for recent graduates and underperforming teachers that are the most in need of guidance and supervised orientation. Australia combats this issue by incorporating interpersonal development as part of the teachers' training content (Aspland, 2006).

Another important topic that resonated in the data findings is the lack of technological enhancements and the limited variety of professional development initiatives offered for in-service teachers in Kuwait. A majority of the supervisors and teachers interviewed agreed to the need for experienced teachers presenting model lessons to fellow colleagues and the need for teachers to exchange classroom visits. Al-Zahrani (2013) reviews how Malaysian teachers especially enjoy visiting different classrooms to broaden their experiences and develop their confidence levels. During model lessons presented in Japan's school settings, colleague spectators evaluate the teacher's performance, whilst providing constructive feedback that reflects their areas of specialty (Lewis et al, 2009). In-service teachers interviewed shared their feelings of disappointment in how training and development in Kuwait is still book-based, rather than being interactive. Contrastingly, the Singaporean Ministry of Education has ensured that all training halls are equipped with state-of-the-art technology, whereby teachers can access an updated database of education materials (Tang & Ang, 2002). Likewise, the use of technology in education in Japan is highly disseminated across all training locations. Furthermore, a teacher in Finland is expected to not only understand different cultures, but also information technology and disciplinary knowledge (Espoo, 2012). In a study of four schools in Louisiana, USA, Stuhlmann (1998) argues the strong role technology plays in optimizing teachers' performances. However, teachers must first be equipped with the skills needed for optimal performance (Martin-Gamez et al., 2016; Sariyatun et al., 2018). As such, it is likely that revamping teachers' training experiences in Kuwait and expanding the initiatives offered, as practiced in developed countries, could yield favorable results.

To address the final topic raised in the data results, a majority of the supervisors interviewed did not see the value in neither rewarding teachers for professional excellence, nor providing moral incentives. This contrasts literary findings and practices of developed countries. In Singapore, Al-Ateek (2015) explains how distinguished in-service teachers are rewarded nationally for professional excellence. As an incentive, Su et al. (2003) discusses how Australia has agreed to count the completion of training programs, as part of a trainee's Masters degree. Likewise in the USA, teachers that pass new education courses or attain certificates for good performance receive financial rewards from the government. Furthermore, one of the goals of training in Finland is to help teachers strengthen their feelings of workplace confidence, respect, and appreciation for their service to the country (Salberg, 2016). Nevertheless, the same group of supervisors' that rejected the use of rewards and incentives, for in-service teachers in Kuwait, also expressed that a majority of teachers

lack the desire and motive for self-development. Hanushek & Rivkindraw (2007) and Figlio & Kenny (2007) draw a connection between teachers' motivation for development and the use of incentives. Enhancing the pay structures and working conditions, positively impacts teaching performance and thereby the quality of education delivered.

In recent years, global attention has been directed towards the weaknesses of teaching performances and obstacles faced by in-service teachers. However, in Kuwait, these challenges are still experienced, attributing to an overall climate of dissatisfaction for public school education (Al-Mi'a, 2017). As such, the suggestions that supervisors and in-service teachers contributed on how to enhance teachers' professional development training programs have been applied to develop an interactive framework. The section that proceeds incorporates all of the interviewees' suggestions, along with lessons learnt from developed countries, data findings, and literary takeaways. Based on research results, decision makers in Kuwait still devote minimal attention to in-service teachers' training programs. The purpose of the framework that follows is to provide decision-makers in Kuwait, the Gulf region, and beyond, with an applicable guide on how to up-skill teachers' training to ensure optimal outcomes.

Framework For Teachers' Professional Development Training Programs

Based on data findings, literary insights, and experiences of developed countries in teachers' professional development programs, a framework for in-service teachers' training programs across all school education stages in Kuwait, is presented. The framework proposed is expected to support teachers and supervisors to overcome obstacles in the field of in-service teachers' professional development. The framework addresses teachers' developmental needs and also focuses on methods to resolve real-time classroom problems. Suggestions shared by teachers and supervisors serve as the foundation of this framework. The framework proposed for in-service teachers' training programs in Kuwait is composed of five main pillars.

1. Title & Description of the training program: A clear and informative title that can be circulated among all public schools and used in teacher's performance management pre-training and post-training; a precise description of the learning outcomes for a mutual understanding of expectations.

2. Target groups for the program: It is critical to identify which group(s) the program targets – experienced teachers, recent graduates, and/or low-performing teachers – in order to accurately align the content with the respective group(s) needs. The program's design and plan must only be developed after:

    2.1) *Field visits* to evaluate teachers' strength, weaknesses, and developmental needs,

    2.2) *Data synthesis* of successful and recent advances in the field of curriculum and teaching methods,

    2.3) *Policy reviews* of changes (if any) in the country's national education policy and international standards for overall education quality,

    2.4) *Needs analysis* to identify teachers' levels of performance,

    2.5) *Teacher specializations* – adhering to teachers' specializations and education stages.

3. General objectives of the program:

    3.1) *Program design*: A customized approach for each training program – goals, vision, and objective(s),

    3.2) *Procedural drafting of general objectives*: What do we want to achieve in the training program? How can we further develop teachers professionally?

3.3) *Formulation of behavioral objectives*: What behavioral skills and attitudes must the teacher possess, upon completion of this program?

4. **Training program's content development:** Identifying teachers' strengths and weaknesses; emphasizing practical training as well as theoretical aspects.

4.1) *Curriculum Content*: Understanding elements of relevant school curriculum,

4.2) *Modern teaching strategies*: Modifying teaching methods based on student levels and textbook content,

4.3) *Classroom management and teaching/learning environment*: How to develop a healthy learning experience based on students' different levels of needs/attention,

4.4) *Technological and educational means*: How to use technological teaching aids, education tools, social communication, and information networks,

4.5) *Distance-training*: Developing a virtual platform for distance training, as an opportunity to encourage teachers to participate and actively contribute in the meetings, discussions, conferences, workshops, and training programs.

5. **Preparing, organizing, implementing and evaluating the training program:**

5.1) *Decision-makers analysis*: Identifying the decision-makers currently involved in providing training programs for teachers' professional development,

5.2) *Field-training centers*: Developing a wide network of field-training centers, geographically distributed for easy access of trainers and teachers; ensuring the room's comfort and healthy environment, scheduling sessions during the morning working hours, and incorporating technological aids,

5.3) *Selection of trainers*: Developing a criteria for selecting trainers, based on their professional, technical and personal qualifications; trainers must be specialized in the field of teachers' professional development, with practical and academic knowledge,

5.4) *Incentives and rewards*: Offering moral and financial encouragements for teachers and supervisors; developing government legislation for annual mandatory training and attendance recognition,

5.5) *Program's comprehensive evaluation and feedback*: Continuously reevaluating each of the following – the training content based on teachers' and trainers' feedback, trainers' qualifications, and the learning environment; diversifying tools applied for teachers' performance evaluation.

Figure 1, that follows, is a visual representation of the framework that is composed of five abovementioned pillars. It is anticipated that this framework proves useful to different teaching disciplines and geographic contexts.
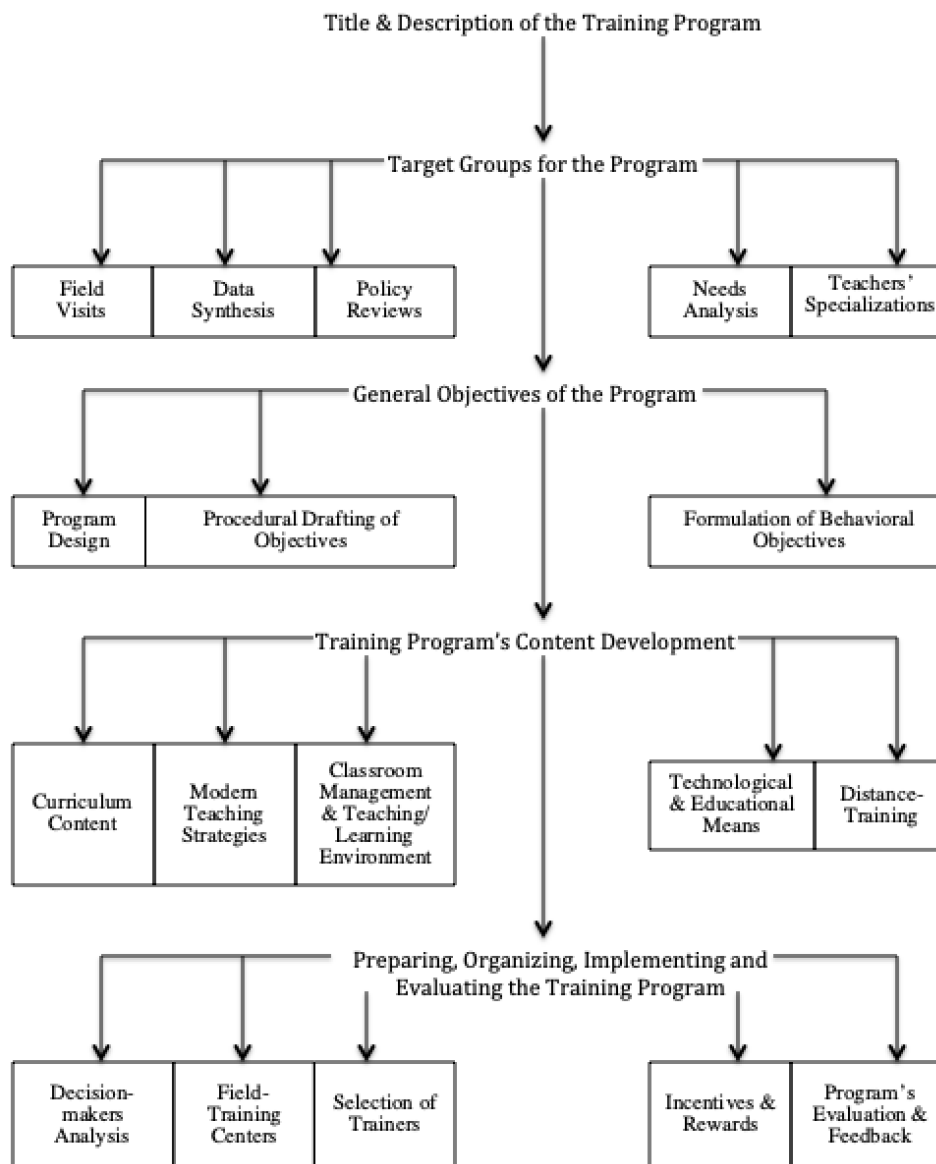
Figure 1. Framework for teachers' professional development training programs

CONCLUSION

From the perspectives of supervisors and in-service teachers, the training programs offered in Kuwait have both strengths and weaknesses. There was a definite agreement among the supervisors and teachers that training programs are essential, as are professional development initiatives such as meetings with supervisors, teachers' classroom exchange visits, and the presentations of model lessons and workshops. These strengths attributed to the success of teachers' professional development in the group of developed countries reviewed. However, there remain a number of critical weaknesses that must be treated to ensure optimal educational outcomes. These weaknesses include the budget allocated to teachers' professional development, frequency and content of training programs, appropriateness of the learning environment, lack of technological implementations, lack of rewards/incentives, and the burdened role of supervisors.

This research paved the way for the development of an interactive framework for teachers' professional training programs that integrates analytical research findings, literary

takeaways, and successful country experiences. The framework, along with a list of practical recommendations, is expected to provide proactive solutions for educational environments that extend beyond classrooms in Kuwait and for international, professional workshop series.

To improve the quality of education delivered across all learning stages, due attention must be given to the development of professional training programs for in-service teachers. Programs must be comprehensive, including elements of applied research, scientific findings, and recent global trends. The design of teachers' training programs must not be a result of unorganized individual efforts. Instead, programs should be designed via collaborative efforts of specialists, academics, professionals, and administrators that are involved in the field of professional teacher development (Popova et al., 2016). In conclusion, the topic of teachers' professional development is critical at all stages of students' learning. Ministries of Education realize this need, however adequate guidance from all relevant decision-makers is critical for countries' foundational success. Education is a fundamental pillar of societies worldwide. Investing in the appropriate methods and strategies for teachers' training and development is one of the major steps towards achieving education that meets international standards.

Suggestions

The following list of recommendations is based on findings from this study. They are proposed for consideration when improving teachers' professional development initiatives.

- Teachers' **professional development initiatives** should be reviewed in light of global professional development trends,
  - Combining the knowledge of policymakers, practitioners, academics, and administrators, to develop a comprehensive vision and action plans for expanding and strengthening teachers' professional development initiatives,
  - Maintaining initiatives such as model lessons, workshops, and seminars presented by distinguished teachers, supervisors, and experienced university faculty members,
  - Requiring all teachers to attend training programs on a yearly basis,
  - Revisiting the government budget allocated to the training and development of in-service teachers, in accordance to global expenditure standards.
- **Training programs' content** should be developed after an assessment of teachers' developmental goals and weakness areas,
  - Ensuring that training programs are delivered by qualified trainers,
  - Developing terms and conditions to guide the selection of trainers and achieve a network of high caliber professionals.
- Expanding teachers' and supervisors' knowledge, skills, and experiences through the use of modern teaching strategies, education tools, and cutting edge **education technology** to deliver effective training and development initiatives.
- **Training centers** should be equipped with a variety of learning tools and facilities that warrant a comfortable, healthy, and interactive environment,
  - Using schools as training centers to ensure higher attendance rates,
  - Diversifying learning methods to provide attractive and effective learning outcomes,
  - Multiplicity of training centers, training hours, and learning methods, so as to expand the percentage of in-service teachers benefitting from professional development initiatives from the current yearly average of 5% to 100% eventually.
- Developing teachers' **interpersonal traits,** in addition to their professional skills,
  - Increasing the number of teachers' classroom exchange visits to benefit from one other,
  - Encouraging teachers to attend seminars, conferences and workshops.
- Offering teachers **financial and moral incentives** to successfully pass the training programs,
  - Rewarding teachers nationally for professional excellence,

- o Rewards could include certificates, scholarships for Masters degree, job promotions, salary bonuses/increases, and financial sponsorships to attend development opportunities abroad.
- Benefitting from the suggested **framework for teachers' professional development training programs,**
  - o Feedback from supervisors, teachers, and trainers must serve as the foundational content of the training programs,
  - o Program's content must also be based on practical applications, field experiences and applied research,
  - o Teachers participating in the training programs must be divided into groups of similar weaknesses and strength areas, to ensure that the program delivered is specifically catered to the respective group's needs,
  - o Understanding teachers' cultural, interpersonal, and professional needs when designing training programs.
- Rehabilitating a **supervisor's role** and ensuring each candidate's competencies and awareness of what his/her role entails,
  - o Allocating one education stage per supervisor, arranging his/her school visitations that are within close proximities, and ensuring that each supervisor's duties align with his/her area of specialty,
  - o Developing a clear strategy and action plan for supervisors to implement when evaluating teachers' performances, addressing their weaknesses, and expanding on their strengths,
  - o Reducing the number of teachers that each supervisor manages, in order to provide supervisors with sufficient time to attend to teachers' individual needs by increasing his/her classroom visits to at least 5-6 times per academic year.

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