



Teachers' Professional Development for Transformation and Sustainable Development

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Received: 01.11.2025 | Accepted: 20.11.2025 | Published: 01.12.2025

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DOI: [10.5281/zenodo.17769550](https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17769550)

Abstract

Original Research Article

Professional development (TPD) of teachers is critical in change and promotion of sustainable practices in higher education. As problems like climate change, digital advancement and social injustice are increasingly on the agenda, universities should equip teachers to fit their teaching and institutional practices to sustainability and innovativeness. In this paper, TPD is established as a factor of transformative learning and sustainable development. It uses the theory of transformative learning and the Sustainable Development Goals to elaborate how professional development assists educators to facilitate sustainability-oriented teaching, research, and community management. It concludes by offering a model that connects TPD with institutional change and sustainability of education over a long period of time.

Keywords: TPD, transformative learning, sustainable development, SDGs, teacher training, sustainability teaching, innovation, institutional change.

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Introduction

Universities and colleges should address the contemporary international issues. United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 4 - Quality Education- focuses on the fact that education must be used to foster sustainable societies by being inclusive, equitable, and lifelong. Teachers being the agents of change at the centre thus need to undergo the process of continuous professional growth in order to address these changes. TPD provides teachers with the competencies and attitudes to embrace sustainable methods of teaching.

Although TPD has been acknowledged as important, it is still not even and disjointed in most universities. Most programmes will focus

on the technical skill development and ignore the more transformative side of learning. This paper will hold that TPD can be conceptualized using the transformative learning and sustainable development, making it a strategic instrument in revitalizing institutions and promoting the societal objectives. It shows the way TPD can contribute to change and speed up it in higher education organizations and deliver the sustainability results.

Literature Review

2.1 The Idea of Pro Teachers Development.

TPD is used in higher education as continuous, structured and self-guided learning that expands the knowledge, skills and attitudes



of educators (Avalos, 2011). It goes beyond the disciplinary expertise to encompass the areas of teaching innovation, curriculum design, leadership, and reflective practice. Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009) observe that effective professional development ought to be participatory, contextual and ongoing.

The transformation of higher education is also an issue of concern in this paper.

The transformation of higher education implies the restructuring of the institutional culture, pedagogy, and leadership in accordance with the requirements of the contemporary society. The Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) by Mezirow can offer a convenient model of how teachers can transform their ideologies and practices through reflective and dialogical methods. TLT-based TPD programs urge faculty to go beyond assumptions and embrace new ways of thinking and to incorporate sustainability into their teaching and research.

2.3 Education which is Sustainable Development (ESD).

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), which is promoted by UNESCO (2017), is the process of empowering learners to make balanced decisions in the environmental, social, and economic aspects. ESD is more concerned with interdisciplinary learning, experiential teaching and global citizenship in higher education (Barth et al., 2007). TPD plays a significant role in preparing teachers to incorporate sustainability into the curriculum and institutional action.

2.4 TPD, Transformation, and Sustainable Development Correlations.

It has been found that these three concepts, TPD, institutional transformation, and sustainable development, go hand in hand (Boon, 2020; Cebrian and Junyent, 2015). Teachers who are involved in sustainability-oriented professional learning become drivers of innovation in curriculum, research and community involvement. Thus, TPD is a personal and institutional driver of change in education.

Theoretical Framework

The paper relies on the theory of Transformative Learning (TLT) and Sustainability Competence Framework to discuss how TPD can foster sustainable change.

TLT would suggest that transformation takes place when one critically analyses the experience that dismantles their prior assumptions to include wider and more inclusive views of the world (Mezirow, 1997). In TPD, it refers to teachers contemplating their teaching principles and institutionalizations so as to develop professionally and personally.

Sustainability Competence Framework (Wiek et al. 2011) singles out such competencies as systems thinking, anticipation, normative reasoning, strategic planning, and interpersonal collaboration as they will aid in solving sustainability issues. The competencies should be incorporated in TPD to enable universities create educators who are leaders of sustainability both within and beyond the classroom.

Discussion and Analysis

4.1 Rebuilding Professional Development to be Sustainable.

Classical TPD emphasizes primarily on compliance and skills development. As a way of promoting sustainable development, it should be transformed into a reflective, value-based process which should focus on ethics and global responsibility. This should be promoted by the educators incorporating sustainability in their specialties using practical methods like project-based learning, community projects, and interdisciplinary collaboration.

4.2. The institutional transformation via TPD is discussed

The widespread institutional transformation can be instigated by collective action in relation to sustainability-based TPD. This involvement has the ability to transform curriculum design, research agenda, and community partnerships. University leaders are expected to incorporate sustainability-oriented TPD in the policies such that they correspond to the strategic objectives and reward sustainable



practices.

4.3 Obstacles to Transformative Professional Growth.

TPD has a number of challenges, including the lack of funding, policy gaps, time lack, and resistance to change. Professors and lecturers usually have large workloads and teaching innovativeness is not well rewarded in most academic systems. These difficulties need to be overcome with the support of policies, adequate resources, and the understanding of the teaching excellence as the idea of sustainable development.

4.4 A Conceptual Framework of TPD and Sustainable Transformation.

The given paper suggests a 4-dimensional model which demonstrates the TPD facilitation of sustainable transformation:

Personal Change: Educators develop sustainability skill and introspection abilities.

Pedagogical Transformation: Pedagogies incorporate sustainability and student-centred learning.

Institutional Change: Leadership organization and policies facilitate integration of sustainability.

Societal Transformation: Universities collaborate with communities in co-development of sustainable solutions.

The interrelated dimensions make a reinforcing cycle leading to the establishment of continuous improvement and resiliency in universities and colleges.

4.5 The Digitizing and Collaborative Learning.

With the help of digital innovation, professional development is more accommodating and adaptable. Online communities of practice and global learning networks, as well as open educational resources (OERs), enable teachers to disseminate sustainable pedagogies internationally. The idea of digital collaboration creates common bodies of knowledge and promotes SDG 17

(Partnerships for the Goals), expanding the sustainability-oriented professional growth.

Conclusion and Recommendations.

Transformative and sustainable higher education lies on the basis of professional development. It is based on transformative learning and sustainability competencies and is able to reform the institutional culture, improve the teaching process, and reinforce the community involvement. Universities should consider TPD a continuous, thoughtful, and value-based process that is able to prepare educators to be agents of change in the name of sustainability.

Recommendations

- 1) Integrate sustainability into the TPD systems: bring in the principle of sustainability competencies to all professional development programs.
- 2) Foster reflective learning: provide chances of discussion, self-reflect and experience.
- 3) Conform to sustainability: make the institutional missions, rewards and funding conducive to integration of sustainability.
- 4) Support internet cooperation: take advantage of internet networks and alliances to expand the worldwide communities of sustainable practice.
- 5) Measure and record impact: come up with quantifiable measures to measure the contribution of TPD towards teaching innovation and institutional change.

After all, professional development is not only growth on the individual level, but also growth at an institutional level, the growth of transformation and long-term development in higher education.

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