Practitioners' Perception about Professional Learning Practices at Higher Secondary Level in Public and Private Sector

Farkhanda Tabassum	Assistant Professor, Department of Education, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan.
Shazia Zamir	Assistant Professor, Department of Education, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan. Email; szamir@numl.edu.pk
Saira Nudrat	Assistant Professor, Department of Education, National University of Modern Languages, Islamabad, Pakistan.

Abstract

The study analyzed practitioners' perceptions about professional learning practices at higher secondary level in public and private sector. The components of professional learning practices were teaching learning process, students' development, teachers' professional relationship and service, institutional development and personal and professional growth. The objectives of this paper focused on checking practitioners' insights regarding above given components. The sample of the study were 633 practitioners. Major findings were that there was no major difference in perceptions of both sector teachers about teaching learning and students' development. The practitioners of private schools showed more interest in professional relationship, institutional development, personal and professional growth. It is recommended that institutional administration may make it mandatory for practitioners to prepare professional teaching portfolio and may design professional development courses about building their competency in classroom management. The administration of public schools may plan professional learning communities and knowledge sharing societies through launching collaborative campaigns.

Introduction

Professional learning is related to the practices of the teachers in the classroom. It has relation with the development of new knowledge and understanding. Professional learning gets the professional goals of the education (Parson & Stephenson, 2005). It is the fact that the professional learning leads to the modern means of the education. Traditional ways of teaching are decreased with the professional learning proficiencies. Bulman (2008) has stated that when the teachers start the process of thinking and reflecting upon their own teaching practices, it indicates the way to learning achievement of the students. The reflective aspect of the teaching learning process (TLP) is enhanced due to the professional learning practices (PLP). Hardy (2012) has illustrated that professional learning practice of the teachers influence the classroom situation. Teachers' particular way of teaching discussion and relation with the students is included in their practices which are integrated with the academic achievements of the students. Grow (2011) refers professional learning practices (PLP) as the foundation of teachers' professionalism. The practices of practitioners are related with students' achievements. Professional qualities of teachers are enhanced due to the academic activities and experience in educational setting. Schatzki (2010) argues that professional learning practices (PLP) of the teachers are the activities which are followed in teaching learning process in academic environment. The teachers follow these practices for attainment of particular educational aims and objectives in specific time-space. Deem (2006) describes that variety of learning practices help the teachers in their professional development. It is mentioned in UNESCO report (2008) about teaching environment of Pakistan that private sector teachers perform the teaching practices with professional competency and extend their role as a teacher with proficiency but the teaching practices of public sector teachers are below average in Pakistan. Parson and Stephenson (2005) have stated that practitioners must work to learn the skills and practices which can be integrated with the existing situation of educational environment. They should evaluate their teaching behaviors and response of the students. Hegarty (2011) has mentioned in research that practitioners' knowledge and practices are not affected by the alteration in educational environment. Opposite to that the practices are improved and they do decision making in teaching learning process according to the circumstances. As Tabassum (2014) has indicated in her study that learning of new teaching skills is essential for teaching learning process which can be

occurred through reflective practice. She has further included that stagnant and traditional teaching methods are not adequate for effective learning of the students. The quality of professional learning practices is considered the professional growth of the teachers.

Frans (2015) revealed in his study that teachers should reflect about the standard in education for quality in teaching learning process. Bana (2014) indicated that confidence level of teachers must be raised to involve them in teaching learning process. The teachers should be provided constructive feedback in teaching learning process and administration should envision with them about how the teaching learning process can be enhanced more in future. According to Yoruk (2013) teachers should get training for development of the academic domain. All teaching process should be according to the modern teaching techniques. It will be beneficial for the students to get effective knowledge through qualified teachers. Tozmaz (2011) has described that student to student and student to teacher interactions are essential part of students' encouraging outcomes. When students get opportunity to participate freely in classroom activities and share the information with the teachers than they become able to show all their abilities. Amjad (2012) stated that students' level of learning is significantly enhanced in private sector colleges than public sector colleges in Pakistan due to practitioners' thinking about their professional development for students' academic progress.The traditional classroom environment has been converted in to modern setting within the application of the professional practices of the teachers (Isik &Yagci, 2011). The educational institutions can be improved through the research based techniques which lead to the quality education. For this purpose, the professional practices of the teachers contribute in the achievement of institutional goals (Coburn & Woulfin, 2011).

Turker and Yaylak (2011) have mentioned that the implementation of modern pedagogy in teaching at all levels has improved the students' academic achievement level. Thus they have stressed that new teaching skills should improve the educational standard. Annette (2015) describes that learning of the students should be incorporated with the assessment of the outcomes. Ferlazzo (2015) has investigated about the hiring, promotion and attainment of the high ranks in the organizational environment for the individual. It is worth mentioning here the report of UNESCO –USAID (2008) regarding the condition of public sector institutions in Pakistan that weak structure of educational organizations in Pakistan is considered as the "poor quality education" and failure of system which is challenge to educational modification in the light of new academic developments in the world. The researchers from Harvard University, Pomona College and World Bank presented the findings in "The Learning and Educational Achievement in Punjab Schools" (LEAPS) report (2008). The researchers evaluated the data set of Punjab Pakistan (2003 to 2007) for their research. According to LEAPS report, comparatively private institutions students were better than the learners of government schools. In report it was described that private school teachers were putting more efforts for students learning than their counterparts in government schools for learning outcomes of the student. Aslam (2006) described that mostly private sector educational institutions are established in competition for quality education. James (2015) describes that the teacher can get the personal and professional development through the professional developing programs at local, national and international level. In this global world, the approach towards the professional training programs is accessible through different means of communication. Jennifer and Pooma (2012) have mentioned that professional training programs provide the guidance about teaching experiences and how to work with colleagues in teamwork. The teachers become proficient to reform the institutional policies. They become the reflective practitioners. All these components of professional training programs bring out the positive outcomes.

The Statement of Problem

The professional learning practices (PLP) of teachers help them to use effective strategies in classroom environment. These practices develop the clear understanding in daily routine of teachers' professional life. Therefore the study aims to explore practitioners' perceptions about professional learning practices at higher secondary level in public and private Sector.

Objectives of Study

The current study has been designed to achieve the following objectives:

- To compare practitioners' professional learning practices (PLP) at higher secondary level in public and private sector.
- To determine practitioners' professional learning practices (PLP) regarding teaching learning domain at higher secondary level in public and private sector;
- To examine practitioners' perceptions about professional learning practices (PLP) regarding students' development domain at higher secondary level in both public and private sector;

- To investigate practitioners' professional learning practices (PLP) regarding professional relationships and service development domain.
- To explore practitioners' professional learning practices regarding institutional development domain at higher secondary level in public and private sector.
- To compare discrepancies in practitioners' learning practices (PLP) regarding personal growth and development domain at higher secondary level in public and private sector.

Hypotheses of Study

Ho1. : There is no significant difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of practitioners at higher secondary level in public and private sector.

Ho1.1 There is no significant difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of pubic and private sector practitioners regarding their views about teaching learning domain.

Ho1.2 There is no significant difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of public and private sector practitioners regarding students' development domain.

Ho 1.3 There is no significant difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of public and private sector practitioners regarding professional relationships and service development domain.

Ho 1.4 There is no significant difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of public and private sector practitioners regarding institutional development domain.

Ho 1.5 There is no significant difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of public and private sector practitioners regarding personal growth and development domain.

Research Methodology

Descriptive research methodology is used in this study to explore practitioners' perceptions about practitioners' professional identity (PPI) and professional learning practices (PLP) at higher secondary level in public and private sector.

Population and Sample

All practitioners of higher secondary level in public and private sector colleges located in district Jhelum (Jhelum, Dina, Sohawa and Pind Daden Khan) were target population of the study. The total sample of study was 633 teachers. This sample was selected through disproportionate stratified sampling technique. The teachers of 11 public sector and 22 private sector colleges teaching only higher secondary classes were chosen as the sample.

Development of the Instrument

The questionnaire is self-developed to explore practitioners' perceptions about practitioners' professional learning practices (PLP) at higher secondary level in public and private sector. It is based on five domains of professional learning practices (PLP).

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient of Research Instrument Professional Learning Practices

Variables	No of items	Reliability Coefficient
Teaching Learning Domain	6	.798
Students' Development Domain	6	.814
Personal Relationship and Service Domain	6	.760
Institutional Development Domain	3	.708
Personal Growth and Development	4	.807
Total	25	.913

The table 1 shows the Alpha reliability coefficient of total scale of Professional Learning Practices. The total scale (Professional Learning Practices) Alpha coefficient is 0.913. The questionnaire is divided into five subscales. There are total 25 items in research instrument. Alpha coefficient of subscales ranges from 0.708 to 0.814. A total sample of higher secondary level teacher is 633.

Table 2. Inter Scale Correlation of Research Instrument about Professional Learning Practice**s**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	Total
Teaching learning Domain	1					
Students' development domain	0.516	1				
Professional relationships and service development	0.511	0.53	1			
Institutional development domain	0.443	0.407	0.614	1		
Personal growth Domain	0.421	0.482	0.590	0.634	1	
Professional learning practices (Total)	0.395	0.797	0.841	0.741	0.778	1

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Table 2 describes inter-scale correlation of research instrument about professional learning practices with five subscales. The internal reliability of variables is significant at 0.01 level of significance. The result depicts that all subscales have positively correlated with each other and with total scale. It is found that highest correlations (0.634) exists between Institutional development domain and Personal growth Domain and lowest inter-scale correlations (0.407) exists between Students' development domain and Institutional development domain.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data is collected through questionnaire. The researcher has personally visited higher secondary institutions of district Jhelum for data collection. The collected data is analyzed by applying SPSS. Data is analyzed and interpreted by using Independent T-test.
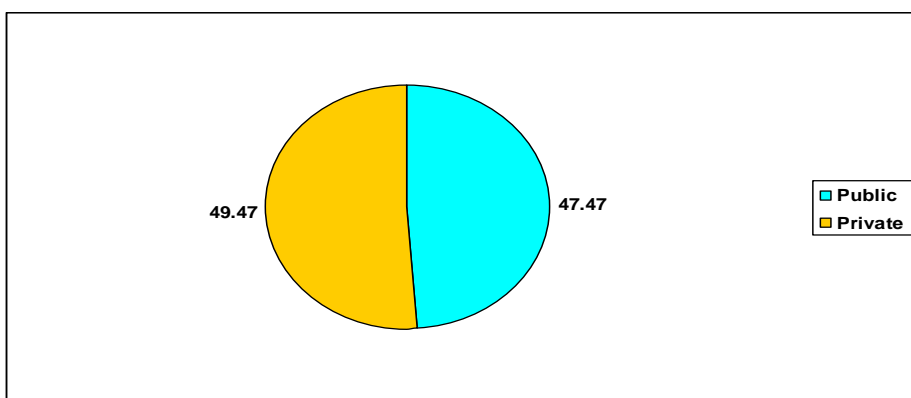
Ho2: There is no Significant Difference in Professional Learning Practices (Plp) of Practitioners In Public and Private Sector.

Table 3. Mean and t-value on Score of Professional learning Practices

Sector	N	Mean	S.D	t-Value	df	p-value
Public	277	47.47	9.544	2.579	631	.010
Private	356	49.47	9.803			

Significant t-value at .05 level

Table 3 shows mean difference on the scores of professional learning practices of public sector and private sector teachers. The mean score of public sector teachers is 47.47 and the mean score of private sector teachers is 49.47. The mean difference is 2.00. The private sector teachers mean score is greater than public sector teachers. The value of t (2.579) is significant at $p \leq 0.05$ level of significance. Therefore our null hypothesis that there is no significance difference in professional learning practices of practitioners in public and private sector is not accepted. Mean score is shown in figure below;
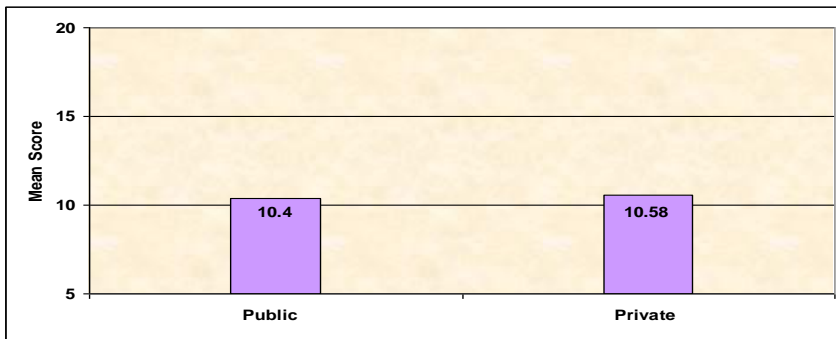

Ho2.1 There is no Significant Difference in Professional Learning Practices (Plp) of Public and Private Sector Practitioners Regarding Their Views About Teaching Learning Domain.

Table 4. Mean And T-Value on Score of Teaching Learning Domain Between Public and Private Sector Teachers

Sector	N	Mean	S.D	t-Value	df	p-value
Public	277	10.40	2.445	0.922	631	.357
Private	356	10.58	2.534			

Significant t-value at .05 level

Table 4 shows mean difference on the scores of teaching learning domain of public sector and private sector teachers. The mean score of public sector teachers is10.40 and the mean score of private sector teachers is10.58. The mean difference is 0.18. The value of t (0.922) is not significant at p≤ 0.05 level of significance. Therefore our null hypothesis that there is no significance difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of public sector practitioners and private sector practitioners regarding their views about teaching learning domain is accepted. Mean score is shown in figure below;
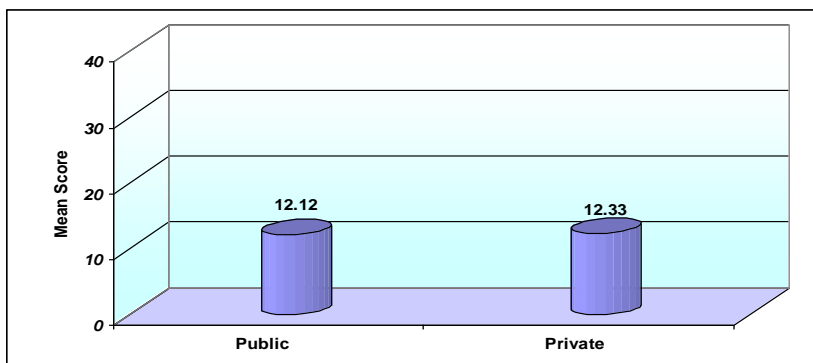

Ho2.2 There is no significant difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of public and private sector practitioners regarding students' development domain.

Table 5. Mean and T-Value on Score of Student Development Domain Between Public and Private Sector Teachers

Sector	N	Mean	S.D	t-Value	df	p-value
Public	277	12.12	2.989	0.871	631	.384
Private	356	12.33	3.240			

Significant t-value at .05 level

Table 5 describes mean difference on the scores about student development domain of public sector and private sector teachers. The mean score of public sector teachers is12.12 and the mean score of private sector teachers is 12.33. The mean difference is 0.21. The value of t (0.871) is not significant at p≤ 0.05 level of significance. Therefore our null hypothesis that there is no significance difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of public sector practitioners and private sector practitioners regarding student development domain is accepted. Mean score is shown in figure below;
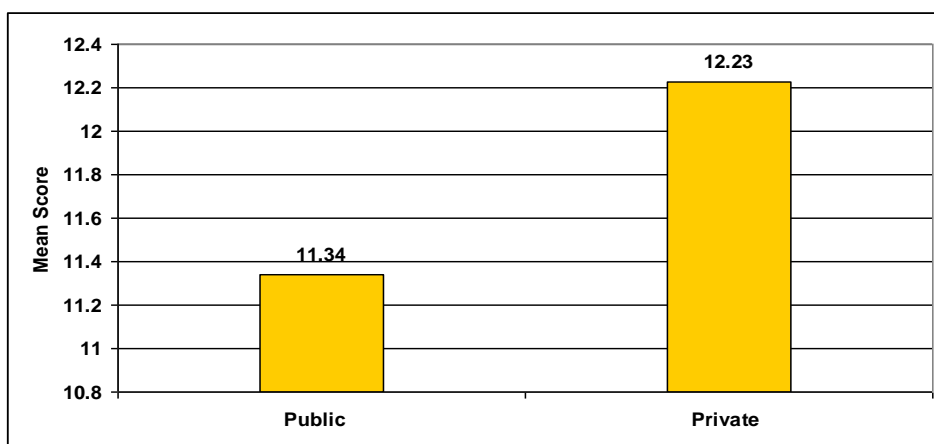
Ho 2.3 There is no significant difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of public and private sector practitioners regarding professional relationships and service development domain.

Table 6. Mean and T-Value on Scores of Professional Relationships and Service Development Domain Between Public and Private Sector Teachers

Sector	N	Mean	S.D	t-Value	df	p-value
Public	277	11.34	2.738	3.994	631	.000
Private	356	12.23	2.815			

Significant t-value at .05 level

Table 6 describes mean difference on the scores of professional relationships and service development domain of public and private sector teachers. The mean score of public sector teachers is11.34 and the mean score of private sector college teachers is 12.23. The mean difference is 0.89. The mean score of private sector teachers is greater than the mean score of public sector teachers. The value of t (3.994) is highly significant at p≤ 0.05 level of significance. Therefore our null hypothesis that there is no significance difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of public sector practitioners and private sector practitioners regarding professional relationships and service development domain is not accepted. Mean score is shown in figure below;
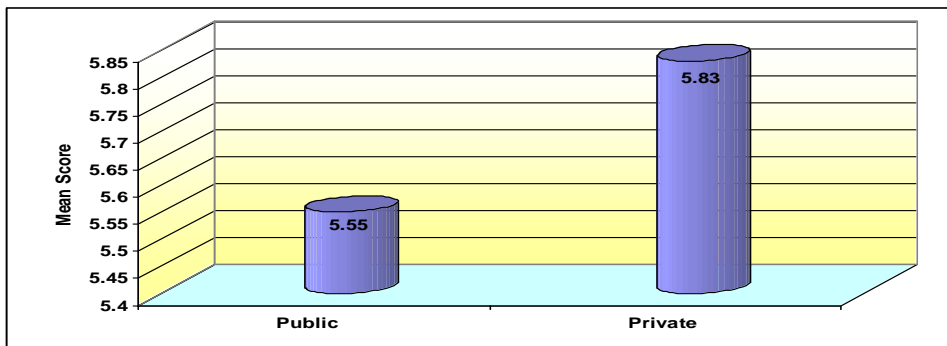

Ho 2.4 There is no Significant Dif6ference In Professional Learning Practices (Plp) of Public and Private Sector Practitioners Regarding Institutional Development Domain.

Table 7. Mean and t-value on score of institutional development domain between public and private sector teachers

Sector	N	Mean	S.D	t-Value	df	p-value
Public	277	5.55	1.598	2.180	631	.030
Private	356	5.83	1.672			

Significant t-value at .05 level

Table 7 indicates mean difference on the scores of institutional development domain of public sector and private sector teachers. The mean of public sector teachers is 5.55 and the mean score of private sector teachers is 5.83. The mean difference is 0.28. The mean score of private sector teachers is greater than the mean score of public sector teachers. The value of t (2.180) is significant at p≤ 0.05 level of significance. Therefore our null hypothesis that there is no significance difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of public sector and private sector practitioners regarding institutional development domain is not accepted. Mean score is shown in figure below;

Ho 2.5 There Is no Significant Difference in Professional Learning Practices (Plp) of Public And Private Sector Practitioners Regarding Personal Growth and Development Domain.

Table 8. Mean and t-value on score of personal growth and development domain between public and private sector teachers

Sector	N	Mean	S.D	t-Value	df	p-value
Public	277	8.07	2.216	2.297	631	.022
Private	356	8.49	2.361			

Significant t-value at .05 level

According to Table 8 the mean score of public sector college teachers is 8.07 and the mean score of private sector teachers is 8.49. The mean difference is 0.42. The value of t (2.297) is significant at p≤ 0.05 level of significance. Therefore our null hypothesis that there is no significance difference in professional learning practices (PLP) of public sector practitioners and private sector practitioners regarding personal growth and development domain is not accepted. Mean score is shown in figure below;
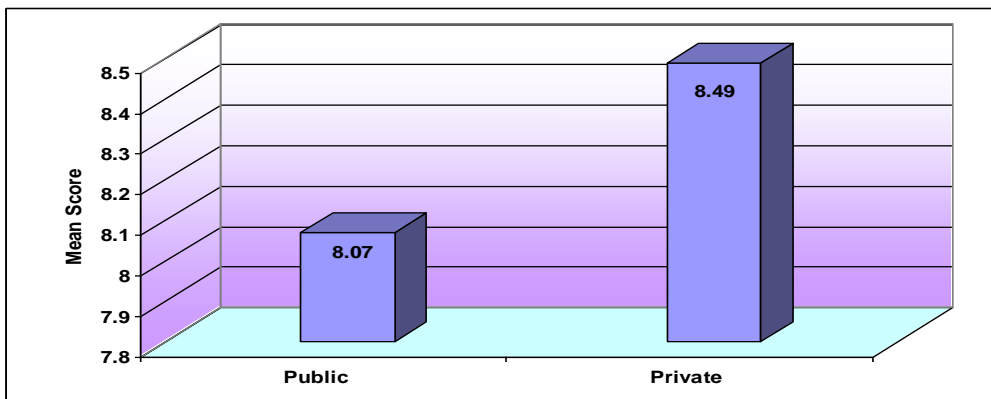
Findings and Conclusion

It was found that both public and private sector practitioners had different views regarding their professional learning practices. The results of this research paper portrayed that private sector teachers were more interested in professional learning practices. Within the domains of professional learning practices, they had almost same opinion about teaching learning and students' development domain but they differ about professional relationship and service domain and institutional development domain. The conclusion of study is that private sector teachers work more to develop themselves personally and professionally for contribution in institutional development. But the teachers of government schools show a smaller amount of interest in institutional development as they feel that institutional development will not affect their job. According to our research paper a big difference was found in views of both public and private school teachers for personal growth and development. The conclusion showed that private school teachers had shown more interest in personal growth and development.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that administration of higher secondary institutions may make it mandatory for practitioners to prepare professional teaching portfolio including all important information about their own personal growth and professional learning practices. It is suggested that administration may design professional development courses for higher secondary teachers about building their competency in classroom management and students' related matters.
- It is recommended that administration in public sector higher secondary institutions may plan to encourage professional learning communities in their respective colleges, peer learning and knowledge sharing societies through launching collaborative campaigns. The institutional policies may be re-evaluated and refined through these communities. The administration may address the different organizational and strategic issues through these communities more productively. The teachers may get opportunity through these communities to discuss their academic and service problems directly with concerned authorities.
- It is recommended that activity based teaching practices, may be promoted during in-service teachers' training because it is essential for the students' learning. School administration may create entice learning environment for both the teachers and the students within their resources so the teachers can utilize their abilities through teamwork with other teachers in their professional learning practices. The administration of the higher secondary institutions may play an assertive function for specifying teachers' role instead of only professional judgment through reflective practice.

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