



Research Article

TEACHER EDUCATORS' PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT: LITERATURE REVIEW

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Received: December 03, 2024; Revised: January 08, 2025; Accepted: March 28, 2025

ABSTRACT

This systematic review investigates the nature and ways of teacher educators' professional learning and development. By analyzing 26 research articles, three primary content areas of learning: knowledge base, pedagogy of teacher education, and research were identified. Additionally, it was found that teacher educators engage in a diverse range of learning activities, including action research, collaboration with colleagues, community of practice, courses and workshops, and mentoring and coaching. This study contributes to a understanding of contents and types of teacher educators' professional learning and has the potential to inform strategies to support their ongoing development.

Keywords: professional learning; professional development; teacher educators

1. Introduction

The quality of education is fundamentally limited by the quality of its teaching staff (OECD, 2009). This emphasizes the importance of teacher quality to the quality of any country's education system. The trajectory of teacher training in the 21st century remains unpredictable and its future depends on the capacity of educators and pedagogical lecturers to demonstrate innovative teaching practices and foster enhanced learning (Cochran-Smith, 2000). A key factor in this endeavor is the professionalization of teaching.

Professional competency involves a deep understanding of information sources, technology, and library services and it also includes the ability to critically evaluate information, select relevant resources, and apply knowledge effectively to achieve specific goals (Unesco, 2007). Professional competency comprises a diverse set of skills, encompassing teaching, research, curriculum development, assessment, and stakeholder engagement. Professional capacity-building initiatives are designed to elevate the professional practices and competencies of teacher educators. A comprehensive analysis of professional development activities for teacher educators can shed light on emerging research directions in this field.

Cite this article as: Le, T. T. L., Nguyen, T. T. H., Pham, T. H. (2025). Teacher educators' professional learning and development: Literature review. *Ho Chi Minh City University of Education Journal of Science*, 22(3), 524-533. [https://doi.org/10.54607/hcmue.js.22.3.4629\(2025\)](https://doi.org/10.54607/hcmue.js.22.3.4629(2025))

2. Methods

A literature search was conducted by consulting the database of Scimago which includes journals in the field of teacher education and professional development. Hand-searching was also applied with the keywords “teacher educators AND professional development OR professional learning” to find suitable papers in all journals related to teacher education and professional development in the Scimago database. All of the research articles found were written in English and published in these journals in the period from 2010 to 2021.

2.1. Literature search

The literature search resulted in a total of 748 abstracts in several journals, namely: (1) Journal of Teaching and Teacher Education; (2) Journal of Teacher Education; (3) European Journal of Teacher Education; (4) Asia Pacific Journal of Teacher Education; (5) Australian Journal of Teacher Education; (6) Action in Teacher Education; and (7) Professional Development in Education. Two criteria were used to select relevant abstracts for the review: (1) the focus had to be on teacher educators working in higher education institutions, and (2) the abstract had to pertain to at least one of the two aspects of professional development or professional learning of teacher educators, namely: activities of professional development/professional learning and contents of professional development/professional learning.

2.2. Selection of abstract and analysis of the articles

These criteria resulted in 93 abstracts. Second, three authors (of the articles) read and discussed the abstracts with each other until a consensus was reached. This resulted in 18 relevant abstracts and 3 abstracts that required further examination. Thirdly, two other researchers (co-authors of this article) used the same criteria to submit the three abstracts to a renewed selection. However, these three abstracts did not meet the criteria of the search. In the next step, three authors (of the articles) continued to search for more papers in the reference lists of these 18 research papers and found 8 additional research papers for the review. Finally, 26 research papers were put in the MaxQDA version 2020 to sort and code the data. Table 1 below shows the search results from these steps.

Table 1. Results of searching research articles for the review

No.	Name of journals	First time	Second time	Third time
1	Journal of Teaching and Teacher	36	34	5
2	Education	24	21	2
3	Journal of Teacher Education	21	21	4
4	European Journal of Teacher	9	9	3
5	Education	400	3	1
6	Asia Pacific Journal of Teacher	231	2	0
7	Education	27	3	3
8	Australian Journal of Teacher			8
	Education	748	93	26
	Action in Teacher Education			
	Professional Development in			
	Education			
	Additional research papers			
	Total of research papers			

In line with the research questions mentioned, two themes were identified, namely “professional development and learning contents” and “professional development and learning activities.” For the theme “professional development and learning contents,” three codes, namely “knowledge base,” “pedagogy for teacher education” and “research” were developed, while for the theme “professional development and learning activities”, codes were identified as “action research,” “collaboration with colleagues,” “community of practice,” “courses and workshops,” “mentoring and coaching,” “self-study and reflection” and “transformative learning.” Within these codes, several sub-codes will be categorized in detail.

3. Results

3.1. Professional development and learning contents

Out of the 26 research articles on teacher educators’ professional development and learning, 20 discussed contents of professional development and learning of teacher educators. Table 2 shows three main codes of professional development and learning contents.

Table 2. Professional development and learning content.

Code ^a	Sub-code ^b	A brief description of the sub-codes	Research articles
Knowledge base (10)		The understanding of the teacher education profession	Ben-Peretz (2010), Javis et al. (2015), Silova et al. (2010), Van der Klink et al. (2017), Ping et al. (2020)
Pedagogy of teacher education (60)	Teaching strategies (33)	Applying pedagogical ideas and theories into new practice; managing class; empowering students; reflecting on their development	Ben-Peretz et al. (2010), Brody & Hadar (2011), Czerniawski et al. (2016), Patton (2016), Hadar & Brody (2010), Meijer et al. (2017), Van der Klink et al. (2017), Van Velzen et al. (2010)
	Curriculum development (7)	Developing teaching materials	Ben-Peretz et al. (2010), Javis et al. (2015), Ping et al. (2020), Shagrir (2010), Silova et al. (2010)
	Mentoring and supervision (16)	The understanding of ways to guide and mentor future teachers; assess students; manage diverse students; and supervise student teachers practicing teaching and doing research	Ben-Peretz et al. (2010), Czerniawski et al. (2016), Ping et al. (2020), Shagrir (2010), Sim (2010)
	ICT in teaching (4)	Applying ICT in teaching	Guberman et al. (2020), Kabakci et al. (2010), Van der Klink et al. (2017)
Research (24)	Research skills	Understanding of research methodology and methods, academic writing, and research ethics and data analysis	Ben-Peretz et al. (2010), Czerniawski et al. (2016), Guberman et al. (2020)

Note: ^{a&b} Numbers in parentheses represent the frequencies of the summaries for each code and sub-code, respectively

3.1.1. Knowledge base

The knowledge base is one of the contents in professional development and learning of teacher educators mentioned by many authors also emphasized that the knowledge base is a crucial aspect for teacher educators because this helps them in equipping pre-service teachers with their forthcoming teaching career. Teacher educators should also develop their knowledge about the field of subject matter and consistently connect theory with practice (Ben-Peretz et al., 2010).

3.1.2. Pedagogy of teacher education

The ways of helping teacher educators with teaching well are known as the pedagogy of teacher education (Loughran, 2014). The sub-code “teaching strategies” refers to the pedagogy of teacher education which involves understanding and addressing the learning needs and concerns of student teachers, explaining the theoretical foundations of teaching, and employing effective teaching strategies (Ping et al., 2020). Another essential aspect of teacher education pedagogy is the sub-code “curriculum development,” which teacher educators should master (Ben-Peretz et al., 2010). This concerns the methods of designing instructional materials for teacher educators (Vander Klink et al., 2017). The sub-code “mentoring and supervision” focuses on the ability to mentor and support student teachers by modeling and facilitating the use of effective and current pedagogical approaches (Ping, et al., 2020). The sub-code “ICT in teaching” emphasizes the role of information and communication technology in modern teaching. Teacher educators need to be skilled in using ICT tools to adapt to the evolving technological landscape (Kabakci, 2010).

3.1.3. Research

Research is seen as a crucial professional development content for teacher educators, especially mid-career ones because these teacher educators frequently dedicate themselves to research and writing to further their careers (Ben-Peretz et al., 2010). Therefore, their professional development emphasizes research methodologies, academic writing, and collaborative research endeavors for their careers (Ben-Peretz et al., 2010). Czerniawski et al. (2016) highlighted the need for support in two areas. The first area involved helping teacher educators with research skills, and the second area focused on supporting those seeking to extend their research influence internationally and contribute to national research frameworks.

3.2. Professional development and learning activities

Table 3 below shows six main codes of professional development and learning activities.

Table 3. Professional development and learning activities

Codes ^a	Sub-codes ^b	A brief description of the sub-codes	Research articles
Action research (32)	Nature (5)	Researching teacher educators' own practice	Erbilgin (2018)
	Values (18)	Helping teacher educators analyze and reflect on their own work, and improve their knowledge and practice of teaching	Ben-Peretz et al. (2010), Erbilgin (2018), Guberman et al. (2019), Meijer et al. (2017)

	Challenges for teacher educators (9)	Teacher educators who do not have adequate research skills or do not have enough time may find it difficult to do action research	Guberman et al. (2019); Ping et al. (2020); Sim (2010), Ben-Peretz et al. (2010); Czerniawski et al. (2016)...
Collaboration with colleagues (75)	Nature (21)	Actively collaborating with other colleagues	Ben-Peretz et al. (2010); Brody & Hadar (2011); Guberman et al. (2020); Jarvis et al. (2015)
	Values (38)	Enhancing their commitment and their engagement with teacher education	Macphail et al. (2018); Jarvis et al. (2015); Shagrir (2010), Silova et al. (2010); Sim (2010), Vanassche et al. (2015); Vanvelzen et al. (2010)
	Challenges for teacher educators (16)	Lacking time; and building trust with colleagues	Guberman et al. (2019); Jarvis et al. (2015); Macphail et al. (2018); Patton & Parker (2017); Shagrir (2010); Sim (2010); Vanassche et al. (2015)
Community of Practice (CoP) (327)	Nature (74)	Communities of practice are groups that teacher educators can join in to learn and develop their work	Ben-Peretz et al. (2010); Brody & Hadar (2011); Erbilgin (2018), Patton & Parker (2016); Hadar & Brody (2013); Jones et al. (2011); Kelchtermans et al. (2018); Macphail et al. (2018), Meeus et al. (2018); Ping et al. (2020); Shagrir (2010); Czerniawski et al. (2016)
	Values (180)	Helping teacher educators with enhancing new ideas and knowledge in teacher education's professional development	Ben-Peretz et al. (2010); Brody & Hadar (2011); Patton & Parker (2016); Hadar & Brody (2013, 2010); Jones et al. (2011); Silova et al. (2010); Sim (2010)
	Factors that impact on the learning process in CoP (3)	The interactions within research groups; the mentoring approach; and the organizational, social, and cultural aspects of the fellows' workplace	Jones (2010); Brody & Hadar (2011)
	Phases of professional development within CoP (34)	Anticipation/curiosity, withdrawal, awareness, and change	Brody & Hadar (2011); Macphail & Hadar (2018); Patton & Parker (2017); Silova & Hadar (2010); Sim (2010)
	Challenges for teacher educators (17)	Commitment of members to save time to join in the community; finding a common focus among members	Guberman & Hadar (2020); Macphail & Hadar (2018); Meeus et al. (2018); Hadar & Brody (2013); Ping (2020); Van Velzen & Hadar (2010)

Courses, workshops (24)	Nature (5)	Taking part in courses, seminars, and workshops to develop their teaching and research capacity	Macphail et al. (2018); Shagrir (2010), Silova et al. (2010); Vanvelzen et al. (2010)
offering	Values (13)	Applying theoretical knowledge to practical situations; engaging in discussions on key professional issues; sharing challenges and successes; and seeking and offering advice to colleagues	Ping et al. (2020); Shagrir (2010)
	Challenges for teacher educators (6)	No established pathways to becoming a teacher educator; little formal support or guidance during the initial stages of a teacher educator's career.	Kabakci et al. (2010); Jones et al. (2010); Meeus et al. (2018); Guberman et al. (2020); Sim (2010); Van Velzen et al. (2010)
Mentoring, coaching (28)	Nature (17)	One-to-one and one-to-many mentoring or coaching models	Guberman et al. (2020); Jones et al. (2011); Macphail et al. (2018); Ping et al. (2020); Shagrir (2010); Sim (2010); Van Velzen et al. (2010)
	Values (11)	Mentors and mentees can learn from each other	Guberman et al. (2020); Jones et al. (2011), Macphail et al. (2018); Ping et al. (2020); Shagrir (2010); Sim (2010); Van velzen (2010)

Note: ^{a&b} Numbers in parentheses represent the frequencies of the summaries for each code and sub-code, respectively

3.2.1. Action research

Action research or practitioner-based research is a common and effective way to advance the profession of teacher educators (Ping et al., 2020). However, even experienced teacher educators may struggle with action research, as it often involves acquiring advanced research skills, writing in English, or applying for funding (Guberman et al., 2019). Also, the constant pressure to publish research papers can hinder teacher educators' opportunities to conduct action research (Ping et al., 2020).

3.2.2. Collaboration with colleagues

Collaboration with peers can occur when teacher educators co-teach (Macphail et al., 2018), co-research Ben-Peretz (2010), or co-develop the curriculum (Jarvis et al., 2015). Collaboration with peers also can offer numerous benefits to teacher educators. However, it is acknowledged that cooperation and collaboration can be hindered by issues such as criticism and competition (Macphail et al., 2018).

3.2.3. Community of practice

Sharing experiences within these communities facilitates peer learning, the development of shared knowledge (Ben-Peretz, 2010), and the exchange of research findings (Meeus et al., 2018). However, challenges such as time constraints (Macphail et al., 2018), a shared focus, physical spaces, and commitment (Patton & Parket, 2017) can hinder participation in these communities.

3.2.4. Courses, workshops

Teacher educators noted their participation in the courses or workshops enabled them to update on the latest research, theories, and practices, and helped them clearly understand the unique aspects of the teacher education profession and cultivate their professional identity as teacher educators (Shagrir, 2010). Nonetheless, professional development for teacher educators is challenging, as there are no formal pathways to becoming a teacher educator and often limited support and induction programs (Ping et al., 2020).

3.2.5. Mentoring, coaching

There are various types of mentoring and coaching such as formal and informal mentoring models (Guberman et al., 2020); one-to-one and one-to-many mentoring models (Jones et al., 2011). Both mentored and mentoring teacher educators can benefit from mentoring relationships.

4. Conclusion

The review of research from leading teacher education journals between 2010 and 2021 reveals a growing interest in professional development for teacher educators. This study examines the contents and activities involved in such professional learning and professional development for teacher educators. While the categories of “contents” and “activities” in the review study may seem similar, they have distinct foci. However, the “contents” category emphasizes understanding research methods, writing, ethics, and collaboration. In contrast, the “activities” category highlights as a practical activity within professional learning and development. Lunenberg et al. (2014) identify three core content areas for teacher educator development: knowledge base, pedagogy of teacher education, and research.

Of the various professional development activities examined in the literature review, participation in communities of practice was most frequently discussed. These communities can help teacher educators develop their professional identities (Ben-Peretz et al., 2010) and address their needs at different career stages (Brody & Hadar, 2011). To effectively build communities of practice for teacher educators, it is important to consider factors such as members’ commitment and a shared focus.

The review has some limitations. First, research articles from mainly seven specific teacher education journals on the Scimago database were selected. Future studies could broaden the scope by examining a wider range of journals. Second, the review focused on two main themes: contents and activities of professional development. Other relevant

themes, such as reasons for professional development and the use of AI, could be explored in future research.

In conclusion, over the past two decades, significant research has focused on various aspects of professional learning and development for teacher educators. This study aims to bridge the gap between the content and activities of these programs, ultimately contributing to the development of more effective professional development initiatives for teacher educators.

❖ **Conflict of Interest:** Authors have no conflict of interest to declare.

❖ **Acknowledgments:** This research is funded by Ho Chi Minh City University of Education Foundation for Science and Technology under grant number CS.2023.19.39.

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TỔNG QUAN NGHIÊN CỨU VỀ HỌC TẬP VÀ PHÁT TRIỂN CHUYÊN MÔN CỦA GIÁNG VIÊN SƯ PHẠM

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Ngày nhận bài: 03-12-2024; Ngày sửa bài: 08-01-2025; Ngày chấp nhận đăng: 28-3-2025

TÓM TẮT

Trên cơ sở xem xét, đánh giá một cách có hệ thống các công trình (bài báo), nghiên cứu này phân tích bản chất, cách thức học tập và phát triển chuyên môn của giảng viên sư phạm. Nhóm tác giả đã lựa chọn 26 bài báo để phân tích và xác định ba nội dung học tập chính: Nền tảng kiến thức, phương pháp sư phạm và nghiên cứu. Đồng thời, nhóm tác giả cũng hệ thống các hoạt động học tập khác nhau mà giảng viên sư phạm tham gia, bao gồm: Thực hiện nghiên cứu, hợp tác với đồng nghiệp, các cộng đồng học tập, các khóa học và hội thảo, cố vấn và hướng dẫn. Nghiên cứu này đóng góp các hiểu biết về các nội dung, hình thức học tập và phát triển chuyên môn của giảng viên sư phạm, từ đó, có thể cung cấp các chiến lược hỗ trợ sự phát triển chuyên môn liên tục của giảng viên.

Từ khóa: học tập chuyên môn; phát triển chuyên môn; giảng viên sư phạm