Teachers' Beliefs on Professional Learning[*]

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ABSTRACT: There has recently been an increasing interest in teacher learning, opportunities available for professional development of teachers, and teachers' beliefs regarding professional learning. This study aims to review the literature on what and how language teachers learn through professional learning experiences, what beliefs they hold about the learning experiences they are involved in, and the contribution of professional learning experiences to classroom practice. Following the thematic review of studies on the acquisition of professional knowledge, the scope of professional knowledge, beliefs on professional learning experiences and the impact of learning experiences on classroom practice, the study reveals the results of the exploratory case study carried out with four English language teachers at a public university in Turkey. The results point to the settings for teacher learning, types of learning experiences in the early and recent years in the profession, beliefs on teacher learning and the contribution of that learning to practice.

Keywords: professional knowledge development, teacher beliefs, teacher learning, professional learning experiences

1. INTRODUCTION

In the past 20 years, there has been an increasing interest in teacher learning. One of the reasons for this interest is to increase the professionalization of teaching. As stated by Wilson and Berne (1999), groups such as the National Council of Teachers of English and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards authored mission statements and subsequent standards for professional teachers and teaching in the 1990s, thus making it clear that professional teachers require professional development. This emphasis on professional development was in fact a call for more research on teacher learning. Today, as far as teacher learning is concerned, it is known that there are various opportunities and experiences through which language teachers may improve their knowledge, and that teacher learning may occur in formal and informal, mandatory and voluntary, incidental and planned settings (Ball & Cohen, 1999). Whatever the setting for learning is, as Little (1993) explores, not much attention is paid to the questions of what and how teachers learn from their professional learning experiences. It is necessary to know how teachers learn from their experiences and what they feel about these experiences to further improve their teaching.

In line with these perspectives, through an exploratory case study carried out at a public university in Turkey with four English language instructors, this research paper aims to explore the development of professional knowledge, what knowledge language teachers acquire across their experiences, what beliefs they hold regarding their professional learning experiences, and how professional learning experiences improve their practice. The study also aims to make a thematic review of studies on teacher learning trends and directions in the last three decades.

1.1. How teachers learn

Each and every professional development opportunity needs to take into account how teachers acquire professional knowledge, and ways in which teachers develop or improve are varied. Teachers can learn both in formal and informal ways, which may include conscious, planned learning strategies such as self-monitoring, action research, and reflective journals, or unconscious strategies resulting from everyday experiences (Bransford et al., 1999; Richards & Farrell, 2005). Learning may also occur through interactions among teachers. This may include formal mentoring schemes, informal conversations in the staffroom, peer collaborations, and team teaching. Teachers also learn through formal teacher development programs including teacher support and study groups, working with a mentor teacher, and workshops organized by educational institutions. Many practicing teachers also engage in learning through graduate programs at universities (Mohamed, 2006).

Teachers' own classrooms are particularly powerful contexts for teacher learning (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Putnam & Borko, 2000). Indeed, instructional plans and assignments, videotapes of lessons, and samples of student work may turn classrooms into professional development settings. Such records of practice enable teachers to examine one another's instructional strategies and student learning and to discuss ideas for improvement, which facilitate teacher learning (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Little, Gearhart, Curry, & Kafka, 2003). Singh and Richards (2009) also maintain that courseroom can be designed as a learning environment. Courserooms are described as places where teacher learning occurs as a result of social practice which involves dialogic mediation and collaborative work. As Golombek (2009) puts forward, teacher learning is a socially mediated activity, where teacher learners collaborate with teacher educator, mentors and other colleagues.

In his study, Smylie (1989) asked teachers to evaluate the effectiveness of fourteen sources of learning to teach. His findings indicate that, by far, teachers perceived direct experience in classrooms as their most effective source of learning. A group of second highly rated sources were consultation with other teachers, individual study and research, and teachers' observations of their colleagues. This group was followed by graduate courses in the fields of specialization and consultation with grade-level or subject matter specialists. The group of fourth highly rated sources of learning was undergraduate courses in subject matter areas and professional conferences and workshops.

1.2. The scope of professional knowledge

Ball (1996) notes that teachers' prior experience, knowledge, personal and professional histories, and beliefs play a role in teacher learning. In other words, what teachers bring to the process of learning affects what they learn from professional development opportunities. Shulman (1986) and Wilson, Shulman and Richert (1987) identify several domains of teachers' knowledge, and what teachers learn in these domains. According to their categorization, subject matter knowledge involves the knowledge of subject being taught, while general pedagogical knowledge is related to the knowledge of new areas of teaching, pedagogical principles and skills, including aspects of classroom management and discipline, and the ability to teach learners of different ages and backgrounds. Pedagogical content knowledge, on the other hand, includes specific knowledge of how to teach a particular topic or content area in a particular subject domain.

Moreover, during the learning process, teachers may gain knowledge of educational aims, goals and purposes; knowledge of learners including their learning strategies, problems and needs in order to learn how to cater for all learners' individual differences and how to make content more accessible to learners; and knowledge of learning which involves an understanding of the physical, social, psychological and cognitive development of students.

1.3. Beliefs regarding professional learning experiences

Although their formal training is over, some teachers are willingly involved in professional learning through several alternatives. They see themselves as learners, working continuously to develop new understanding and improve their practice, and they consider professional development as a need. For instance, a study conducted in Turkey by Korkmazgil and Seferoğlu (2013) revealed that among 98 teachers, 42 teachers stated that they had a moderate personal need for professional development, while 37 teachers indicated a high need and 15 indicated a very high need for professional development. Only 4 participants indicated a low need for such activities.

For teachers who take advantage of professional learning opportunities, teaching is an ongoing development process throughout the teaching career and is not limited to student teachers' learning in teacher education programs. Since it is a lifelong development, it helps teachers examine and discover their best teaching style through inquiry and reflection. A teacher who considers teaching as a lifelong learning process sees oneself reflecting and trying out new theories constantly (Zheng, 2009).

On the other hand, a teacher who does not realize the importance of professional development considers teaching as merely a task. They do not involve themselves in any professional learning as they believe there is no need to engage in professional learning activities and their teaching experiences are sufficient for them to deal with teaching and learning issues (Huang, 2010). The main reason that is put forward for not taking part in professional learning activities is heavy workload. Most teachers assert that they have little time to examine their practice with the aim of improving their teaching and student learning. Another reason is that some teachers regard professional growth as an additional rather than integral part of their work. Teaching is a routine job for them. A number of researchers (Dewey, 1964; Feiman-Nemser, 1983; Kennedy, 1991; Wasley, 1991; Whitford, 1994) have argued that some teachers continue teaching as they were taught without critically examining their practice; they want to maintain the comfortable but not necessarily the successful practices throughout their careers.

1.4. The impact of professional learning experience on classroom practice

For teachers, a central reward associated with the profession is promoting student learning (Feiman-Nemser & Floden, 1986; Rosenholtz, 1985). Therefore, it is likely that teachers will adopt learning experiences which have direct application to practice and which promote student learning in their specific classroom contexts. In fact, teachers seem reluctant to participate in or change their practice as a result of professional development activities unless they see clear implications of those activities for improving instruction in their particular classrooms (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978). As stated by Timperley (2008), teachers who are engaged in cycles of effective professional learning take greater responsibility for the learning of all students. As they take more responsibility and as they discover that their new professional knowledge and practice are having a positive impact on their students, they begin to feel more effective as teachers.

2. METHOD

In this study, a qualitative exploratory case study methodology was used to gather data as to teachers' beliefs regarding their professional learning experiences. Specifically, this inquiry examined what beliefs the small group of teachers participating in the study hold regarding their professional learning experiences which influence their approach to teaching, and how professional learning experiences influence their classroom practice and long-held beliefs.

The following research questions guided the study:

1) What and how do four English language teachers at a public university in Turkey learn from their professional development experiences?

2) What beliefs do they express concerning their professional learning experiences?

3) How do they relate the contribution of professional learning experiences to their classroom practice?

2.1. Participants

In the selection of the participants, purposive sampling was employed because the four teachers selected were most likely to contribute appropriate data both in terms of relevance and depth (Oliver, 2011). They had minimum seven years of experience, completed their master's degree, attended many national or international conferences, and completed their in-service training program, meaning that they have had considerable number of professional learning experiences and that they can provide in-depth data to answer the research questions.

2.2. Data Sources

Semi-structured individual interviews of the selected teachers were the primary source of data collection in this study. The questions in teacher interviews were probing questions designed to provide an opportunity for the participants to reflect on and disclose their personal views and feelings about their understanding of their learning and development processes. The questions focused on the ways teachers develop their professional knowledge, types of learning experiences contributing to professional learning, beliefs regarding professional learning experiences, and beliefs concerning the contribution of learning experiences to current teaching practices. The interviews were conducted in Turkish at the locations that teachers chose for their convenience. They were recorded, transcribed and then translated into English.

2.3. Data Analysis

The study is a qualitative case study, which sought to explore teachers' beliefs regarding their professional learning experiences. The researcher also attempts to explore the relationship between teachers' beliefs regarding their professional learning experiences and their teaching practice. In the final section of the study, the researcher develops some generalizations about the case study in terms of the patterns and how the results overlap with other studies in literature.

3. FINDINGS

In this part of the paper, findings concerning what and how English language teachers learn from their professional learning experiences, their beliefs on professional learning and on the contribution of learning experiences to teaching practices are presented to provide answers to the research questions listed above.

3.1. What and how English language teachers learn from professional development experiences

As far as how English language teachers learn from their professional learning experiences is concerned, the participants were asked to give specific examples about the settings in which they learn professionally, Teacher A reported that she learns in such settings as conferences, training courses, and in-service training programs, but she thinks the best way to learn is learning when you are teaching. When she is teaching in class, as she encounters some difficulties, as she needs to handle those difficulties, and as she tries to come up with solutions, she examines the studies and applications in related fields. Or, in the conferences she attends, she pays more attention to those problematic areas. In short, the challenges she faces in her profession initiate her learning experience.

As to Teacher B, she believes in-service training sessions and pre and post conferences in those sessions are very beneficial. She thinks that trainers or mentors help teachers realize the things that a teacher cannot. She also finds short term training courses and conferences very useful. She implements what she learns in those seminars or conferences in class, and better understands herself as a teacher as she makes self-evaluation. She says she contemplates on whether the things she does in class really work thanks to the insight she gains from those seminars and conferences. Furthermore, she learns through informal talk with colleagues during the breaks as well.

Teacher C believes the classroom practice itself is the best learning setting. She says that although teachers learn theory in their undergraduate or graduate studies, they encounter different situations in class. What a teacher encounters and experiences in class is the best learning method for Teacher C. However, she maintains that in terms of scaffolding and evaluating her own experience, in-service training is another important learning setting. She says, "In in-service training, we have the chance to understand why things we do in class work or do not work. We know that something is missing but we do not know what is missing. In-service training last year taught me this". For Teacher C, conferences are another setting for learning. In the conferences she attends, she chooses the sessions which may help her solve the problems she faces in class. Moreover, Teacher C learns by reading articles, which is a habit she got during her MA studies. She says, 'Sometimes I wonder how people do things differently, so I read articles. This may sound boring or utopian but I question if certain methods in those articles may work in my setting'. For instance, in one of the articles she read, she learned about corpus study, and now she uses corpus, especially the British National Corpus. In short, she believes teachers may learn a great deal from published research studies. Another setting for professional learning for Teacher C is staffroom. She says interaction in staffrooms are particularly valuable in that it provides institution specific information as teachers warn or give suggestions to each other about the problems they faced in the past and the issues to be paid attention to in the future. Lastly, as a teacher who completed her in-service training last year, Teacher C finds mentorship beneficial as she says she is offered some practical ideas by both staffroom and classroom mentors and the mentors of her friends.

For Teacher D, conferences, and in-service training and meetings in the institution are the settings for professional learning. She particularly likes the meetings in her department. She explains that these meetings are actually sharing sessions in which teachers sometimes discuss a problem, or a unit in a book. She believes these discussions improve knowledge.

The teachers in the study were also asked to make a comparison between their professional learning experiences in their early years and those in their recent years in the profession. The results revealed that Teacher A was in pursuit of every learning opportunity in her early years. However, in her recent years, she says she is more selective. Instead of focusing on solving the problems that she encounters, she focuses on what is already good. She says, "In my recent years, I did not learn much but I go in depth in the areas which I choose to learn. I am in a more abstract dimension now".

When Teacher B makes a comparison between her early and recent years, she also states that she was trying to attend each and every seminar or conference she had heard of with a group of friends in her early years. By attending conferences and the training courses organized by the EU and some other institutions, she was trying to accumulate as much knowledge as possible about her profession during her early years as she did not feel confident as a novice teacher. However, now, in her recent years, like Teacher A, she is also more selective. She started choosing the events whose content is relevant to her needs.

For Teacher C, on the other hand, in her early years, there were limited opportunities. She learned new things, but she did not know where to make use of those things exactly. However,

in her recent years, she knows how she can use what she learns. She says she is more selective, more conscious and more professional now. She knows what she looks for, and when she finds what she looks for, she can better adapt it. She started searching for the things that can solve her problems.

When Teacher D makes a comparison between her early learning experiences and the recent ones, she says that in her early years, she used to read some journals line by line and that she tried to make use of every learning opportunity like Teacher A and B. She states that in her early years, she used to look everything from the perspective of the theory she learned in courses and believe in everything that she read without synthesizing what she read and what she did in the classroom. In her subsequent years, on the other hand, Teacher D was in higher levels of Maslow's triangle as she developed her own style. Now she does not read the journals in her field any longer. In the last 5 years, she has developed an interest in interdisciplinary activities. For instance, she synthesizes social psychology, sociology, and the courses she took in the education faculty, which, she believes, contributes to her teaching. In brief, in her recent years, she has been focusing on building on what she has learned so far and synthesizing from various other disciplines.

3.2. Beliefs on professional learning

Teachers who took part in the current study have similar views regarding professional learning. They all believe that teaching profession should in fact involve learning on the part of the teachers as well because everything in life changes, and teachers have to keep up with those changes by changing or by trying to improve themselves professionally. To illustrate, Teacher A thinks that what she already knows is in fact enough for her until she retires, but she loves learning, so she always asks herself 'What else can I learn? What else can I add to the things I know?'. She does not think that ELT domain is finite as the conditions, cultural context, even *we* are changing. She never says, 'What else can I learn beyond this point? What I know is enough'.

Teacher B has also reported similar patterns of ideas. She says she becomes unhappy when she thinks she is not efficient in class or she cannot teach the way she wants to, or when she cannot transfer what she knows to her students. She says, 'It is my job and I want to do it well. If I believe that I cannot transfer what I know to my students, I do my best until I achieve it'. Teacher B is against the idea that teachers do the same thing through the years as she believes teachers encounter different groups of students each year, and so they have to teach differently each year. Thus, for Teacher B, teaching is lifelong learning; it is not a monotonous job; it is dynamic, and so she believes teachers need to attend some activities which may help them improve professionally.

Teacher C agrees with her colleagues that a teacher can never stop learning. She says she never uses the same material over the years, and she never teaches in the same way. She believes teaching is a cyclical process. She comments that, "You can go back in time and say 'I did it this way in the past', but you have to adapt it later on. I go back and forth; I recycle what I do, but I am constantly learning. And, as I learn, things get better, so every teacher should do the same".

For Teacher D, willingness to learn is something inborn. It is not something teachers gain later in life. She states that there are teachers who are very open to learning and those who do nothing to learn for years, but who are very happy that way. She believes being open to learning is inborn and it is continuous. Additionally, Teacher D draws attention to the fact that professional learning should be open to other fields of study. She says, 'We are teaching but context, culture, and psychology are very important. Every institution, every class, and every

lesson has a culture, so we need to be open to cultural studies as well. In short, I believe we should not have a limited perspective regarding professional learning'.

3.3. Beliefs on the contribution of learning experiences to teaching practices

All the teachers interviewed believe that what they learn through their professional learning experiences have had an impact on what they actually do in classroom. The teachers gave various examples of those effects and contributions. For instance, Teacher A explains that both the professional talk and small talk that she had in conferences have contributed to her language proficiency. She uses the language she hears in conferences in her classes. In addition, according to Teacher A, to be in contact with other people in conferences improves one's flexibility. She says her approach and attitude toward students change, and she starts teaching everything she has taught before differently in different time frames. For instance, she has been teaching 'synthesizing' topic differently for the last two years because thanks to the conferences she attended, she understood the rationale behind the topic better, and thus she started teaching in a way that students can really understand it. When she was teaching the same topic in the past, she used to give the definition and then move on with exercises. But now, as the definition is already in the book, she first asks her students why we need synthesizing and what the rationale behind synthesizing is because she herself knows the answer to this question better now.

Teacher B also exemplifies the contribution of her learning experiences to her current teaching practices. She says she learned how to teach listening after years of experience thanks to the in-service training program she attended last year. She used to show the tape script on the OHP previously, and show the responses there. However, thanks to the in-service training, she understood that this practice is something that *she* does as a teacher. The students are not involved in such a method of teaching.

Teacher C maintains that there are many things she learned in in-service training and then implemented in class. To illustrate, she learned that she needs to have interaction in class as students cannot listen only to her for forty minutes. 'I learned to put myself in students' shoes. Whatever I teach, I learned to employ some interaction patterns. I directly implement it in class now'.

Teacher D also agrees that learning experiences contribute to her teaching practices. For instance, when she first heard about self-regulation learning or metacognitive skills in the departmental inset sessions, she thought that she could adapt these to her class, so she searched for self-regularity activities and used them in class so that her students would become self-sufficient learners. She even videotaped those practices, and her students and she explored these two notions together.

4. DISCUSSION and CONCLUSION

One of the purposes of the current study was to gain more insight into what and how English language teachers learn from their professional development experiences. It seems that teachers' learning experiences contribute to all domains of teacher knowledge as specified by Shulman (1986) and Wilson et al. (1987). These experiences particularly improve knowledge of general pedagogy, knowledge of self, subject matter knowledge, and pedagogical content knowledge. Teachers learn through their learning experiences as they reflect on their practices in their specific institutions and they become more open to change.

As proposed by Wilson and Berne (1999), teachers indeed learn through several opportunities such as undergraduate and graduate courses in their departments, mandatory or voluntary part-day or day-long workshops, summer and weekend workshops, conversations with colleagues, or daily experience in the classroom. However, among all these professional

learning opportunities, the teachers participating in the current study find direct classroom experience as the most important site for learning parallel to what Smylie (1989) found in his study. The problems teachers face in their classroom practice and the desire to handle those difficulties to better serve students' needs lead the teachers to improve their professional knowledge by engaging in learning activities.

Furthermore, as Borko (2004) and Little (2002) point out, professional development communities and collaborative interactions that occur in in-service training and mentorship programs help teachers work together to improve their professional knowledge and practice. The teachers in the current study have also attached great importance to such professional development communities by stating that in-service training is invaluable in shaping and evaluating their experiences as teachers. They also hold the view that mentorship and discussions in a friends' circle are beneficial in combining theory with practice - with more emphasis on practicality perspective due to the suggestions given to one another with the aim of solving problems. In this way, they can reflect critically on their practice and create new knowledge and beliefs about content, pedagogy, and learners (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995).

Based on Richards and Farrell's (2005) categorizations of teacher learning as skill learning, as a cognitive process, as personal construction and as reflective practice, it can be concluded that in the current study teacher learning involves pieces from all these categorizations. To illustrate, teachers participating in the study try to develop their teaching skills by changing their long-held practices or trying out some new methods, which signals that they see teacher learning as skill learning. The teachers participating in the present study are also open to learning as they believe teaching profession entails lifelong learning and effort on the part of teachers. This view of teachers underlines the fact that teachers in the current study also see teacher learning as personal construction. They emphasize individual and personal contributions to learning and to understanding of their classrooms, and the importance of being involved in activities that focus on the professional development. Although not mentioned by the teachers in the study, the professional learning experiences that teachers are involved in imply reflective practice as well. In other words, teachers participating in the present study see teacher learning as a reflective practice since they critically examine their experiences. For instance, upon attending a conference or a workshop, they reflect on what they learn in such professional learning settings and try to implement what they have learned in their classes by making the necessary adaptations in order to improve their classroom practice and to improve student learning.

With regard to the beliefs of English language teachers on their professional learning experiences, the results revealed that being open to learning and perceiving teaching profession as a lifelong learning process are shared views among the teachers. They are open to innovation and they try new techniques in their classes in line with what they learn in conferences, in-service training sessions, workshops, or sharing sessions with their colleagues. Moreover, parallel to what Karaaslan (2003) found in her study on teachers' perceptions of self-initiated professional development, teachers in the current study also give importance to evaluating their own teaching to improve as a teacher and working on the problems they face in class. They also hold the view that language teachers cannot maintain their old long-held practices as life and everything related to life is changing. Although teachers in the present study have experience in different professional learning experiences, they all share the idea that becoming a good teacher entails improving oneself as a teacher all the time. They are of the opinion that teaching is not merely a task, and that teacher learning is an essential and a never-ending process of trying to do the best to improve teaching and student learning.

The results of the current study also overlap with those of Munoz's study (2007), which was carried out with five Mexican English language teachers regarding their perceptions of their professional development. As also emphasized in the current study, the teachers in her study value conferences, seminars and short term courses to a great extent in professional learning, and they draw attention to the importance of sharing experiences and knowledge with other colleagues for professional learning to occur.

As to the contribution of professional learning experiences to classroom practice, the results point to teachers' tendency to change their practice as a result of the professional learning activities they engage in. However, as previously mentioned, McLaughlin and Marsh (1978) argue that teachers implement the innovative ideas only if they believe that those innovations are applicable in their particular classrooms. In the current study, the teachers interviewed also maintained that they have learned new things as a result of their learning experiences. Yet, they do not directly implement what they learn in their own settings. They either make the necessary adaptations or eliminate the idea completely if they believe it will not work in their classroom. Similarly, a study conducted by Çelik et al. (2012) with Turkish university-level EFL instructors revealed that although teachers considered professional development to be important, they generally did not view all the available growth opportunities to be applicable to their teaching practice. However, overall, all the teachers in the present study adopted some new approaches or attitudes thanks to their learning experiences, and they changed the way they teach by trying out new methods.

The findings of this study provide three primary implications. First, teachers may be involved in various learning activities of their own choice mostly because they wish to improve their classroom practice and because they believe teaching should involve learning at the same time. No matter what the reason is it seems that such professional learning experiences contribute particularly to the knowledge of learners and leads some teachers to become more flexible and open to change in their conventional teaching practices. As suggested by Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin (1995), teachers learn by doing, reading, and reflecting; by collaborating with other teachers; by looking closely at students and their work; and by sharing what they see. This kind of learning enables them to move one step forward from theory to successful practice. Thus, it may be a good idea for educational institutions and teacher education programs to offer or support learning and development opportunities for all teachers like organizing in-house sharing sessions where teachers could discuss and reflect on their experiences, or workshops where teachers can see theory in action. In this way, they can make the necessary analysis, synthesis and evaluation regarding their own teaching experiences and promote student learning.

Second, teachers' awareness of the value of extending their learning and development beyond teacher training sessions they attend at the beginning of their careers should be raised. The results of a study conducted by Büyükyavuz (2013) revealed that although Turkish teachers of English are sometimes involved in professional development activities and value development per se, they are not fully knowledgeable about such activities and need guidance. Awareness in this respect could be raised through either INSET programs or follow-up support by the institution. It may be expected that teachers will eventually be self-motivated to be involved in professional development activities for continuous and lifelong learning. Moreover, as revealed by the findings, overall the participants in the current study view INSET sessions, conferences, direct classroom experience and interaction as the best milieu for professional learning.

In the current study, one purpose was to make a thematic review of studies on professional learning experiences and teachers' beliefs regarding those experiences in order to find out the current directions in literature. Another purpose was to answer the research

questions through a small-scale exploratory case study. In this respect, the interviews were carried out with four teachers, who are all experienced. However, such factors as age, gender and years of experience may lead to varying views regarding involvement in professional learning activities. For this reason, the fact that the exploratory case study was carried out with only four experienced female teachers seems to be a limitation. Further research may, thus, take such factors into account, and further studies may be carried out with more teachers who differ in age, gender and years of experience.

Another limitation of the study is that all the teachers interviewed are open to professional learning experiences due to purposeful sampling method used. However, there are, undoubtedly, many teachers who view teaching profession as static and who do not engage in any professional development activities. By using the method of random sampling, such teachers may have been included in the study as well for a better analysis and a wider picture of the issue explored in the present research study.

Moreover, the current study does not examine the problems teachers face during their professional development efforts and the reasons behind those problems. In addition, the reasons why some teachers stay away from available professional learning opportunities are not explored in the present study. Thus, further studies may touch upon those problems and the reasons behind, and offer some solutions. This may improve teachers' professional learning experiences and may induce unwilling teachers to get involved in professional development activities.

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