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**EFL High School Teachers' Attitudes towards
Professional Development**

**Case study: English teachers at five high schools in Mostaganem,
Algeria.**

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Didactics and Foreign Languages.**

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Abstract

Professional development has been the focal point of many researches recently, teachers, managers, syllabus designers...etc. Their main aim is to make this process a means to enhance the teaching- learning and achieve the intended learning outcomes. The present research studied and analyzed teachers' attitudes and views regarding professional development, the case of EFL teachers at Mostaghanem high schools in Algeria. The study was established to determine to what extent is professional development appreciated by EFL teachers and its impact on their teaching practices and their students' achievement. To investigate this issue, a questionnaire and semi-structured interview were administered to high school EFL teachers (Hamdi Cherif Abdelkader, El-ikhwaBelkacem, Bachir Bey Adda, BekhtiBelkacem, and Cherief Yahya high schools of Mostaghanem, Algeria). The participants were more popular with formal professional development, i.e., seminars, training, and the pedagogical accompaniment. This does not mean that the informal one was unknown for them, but the minority did mention it. To understand the impact of such professional development activities, the questionnaire and interview was also sought to reveal the participants' views regarding the professional development courses or programmes they have been attending, how such courses affect their teaching practices and attitudes and how they would perform the lessons more effectively in the future. The results indicated that attending professional development (formal or informal) had a positive wash back effect on the teachers' performance and teaching practices and on the students' achievement.

Key words:

EFL teachers

professional development

teachers' attitude

Teachers' performance

students' achievement

Dedications

This work is dedicated to my family, my parents who instilled in me the passion for learning and searching, the spirit of living happy and make others happy, the strong desire to chase and realize my dreams, the importance of hard work, and the need to keep confident and never broke down .My sister Hayat who never felt tired to provide me with the needed means and give meendless helping instructions. To my husband, Mourad, your patience, guidance, understanding, and great support in all aspects of our life are not forgettable. With his sense of humor the ability to make me always smiling, he taught me how to see the bright side of things and keep the stress away and be always optimistic.

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List of abbreviations

PD: Professional Development

TPD: Teachers' Professional Development

INST: In-service Training

EFL: English as Foreign Language

CBA: Competency Based Approach

General introduction

Effective teaching requires teachers who have high quality package of knowledge and can make a fruitful connection between real life situations and teaching. True teacher should never stop learning, especially in the modern educational systems which require the teachers to keep on learning, the teacher is expected to be learning and leading at the same time in order to improve the learning process. Specifically, teaching English as a foreign language can be considered much more difficult than the mother tongue since the teacher needs to make extra efforts to learn as much as possible about the language and its culture, in order to avoid obstacles and deliver the lessons effectively. This makes the EFL teachers really in need for continuing professional development.

It has been observed that EFL teachers at high school in Mostaghanem, Algeria are in need for professional development. In order to see if EFL teachers in Mostaghanem high schools are attending professional development courses or programme, the present research was administrated, asking this question: to what extent is professional development appreciated by EFL teachers in Mostaghanem high schools? As the main question that guides this research. This question was supported by other sub-questions: How does professional development affect EFL teachers' practices at Mostaghanem high schools? How were the participants improving their teaching skills in the few last years? What effects did professional development on their students' achievement? It has been premising that EFL teachers in Mostaghanem high schools are not that familiar with professional development activities. PD may affect positively both EFL teachers and learners.

The aim of this study was to unveil EFL high schools teachers' views regarding professional development and highlight its impact on both of them and their students. To achieve this aim one main question was guiding this research which was: to what extent is professional development appreciated by EFL teachers of Mostaganem high schools in Algeria? This question was supported by three other questions: how does professional development affect EFL teachers' practices? How were they improving their teaching competencies during the last few years? What effects did professional development on students' achievements?

This study was divided into two chapters, the first chapter presented a literature review about professional development, in which professional development was defined and its types and models were discussed, its importance was highlighted in relation with the INST in Algeria since it is a type of professional development. While the second chapter described the methodology used in this research and analyzed the data gathered from the participants.

1.1. Introduction

Teaching is the world's largest profession that means a process of attending to people's needs, experiences, feelings, and intervening so that they learn particular things. The teacher who is able to continuously acquire new and better forms of knowledge that would be applied in the classroom to enhance the learning process in best of the possible ways, is a true teacher.

Therefore, this chapter attempts to provide an overview of teachers' professional development. It presents various scholars definitions of teachers' professional development, gives some of its models and types, and highlights its importance and how it affects both teachers and students. It finally provides an overview of in-service teacher training in Algeria.

1.2. Definitions

According to Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richard, and Orphanos (2009), the term professional development means: "a comprehensive, sustained, and intensive approach to improving teachers and principals effectiveness in raising student achievement, and maybe supported by activities such as courses, workshops, institutes, networks, and conferences". Borko and Putnam, (1995) add also that it has been identified as one of the most productive ways to improve teachers' skills and attitudes, and create better schools. Professional development is a process of improving teachers' performance and facilitating learning. It is an ongoing process that should keep on growing with teachers, and it serves a longer-term goal and aims at facilitating the growth of teachers.

According to Richard and Farrel (2005), it involves documenting different special types of teaching practices, reflective analysis of teaching practices, interplay among experiences, and solutions to common issues which enhance their teaching competencies. The teacher performance is not the only thing that is supposed to be developed, but rather the institution as a whole. In addition, it has been said that professional development is designed to fulfill the needs and goals of experienced teachers that have the ability to guide these teachers into new and challenging roles, reveal them to new information in the field and lead them to fruitful self-reflection, collaboration with colleagues, and investigations within their own classrooms. Means that professional development gives the chance to the

experienced teachers even to improve their self inside and outside the classroom. They improve their performance during teaching and also their attitude with other teachers and so on.

Mizell, (2010) said: “professional development refers to many types of educational experiences related to an individual’s work” (p. 03). He added: “Doctors, lawyers, educators, accountants, engineers, and people in a wide variety of professionals and business participate in professional development to learn and apply new knowledge and skills that will improve their performance on the job” (p. 03). This Mean that professional development is a personal desire of the teacher or person of specific professional to learn new information concerning his field in order to use it in his performance.

Professional development is also defined by Hassel (1999) as a process of enhancing competences and skills for better educational results for students. According to him, professional development improves the performance of the teacher which positively affects the learning process. In additions, many researchers have been agreed that professional development is increasingly seen as a systematic process that includes the development of all individuals involved with students’ achievement from the superintendent to the teaching assistants.

1.3. Types of teachers’ professional development

It has been said that people when using the term «professional development», they usually mean a formal process such as a conference, seminar or workshop, collaborative learning among members of a work team, or a course at a college or university .However, professional development can also occur in informal context such as discussions among work colleagues, independent reading and research, observation of colleagues’ work, or learning from a peer. Dabbagh and Kitsanstas (2012 defined formal learning as:” institutionally sponsored or highly structured, i.e.; learning that happens in courses, classrooms, and resulting in learners receiving grades, degrees, diplomas, and certificates“. It is academically designed and serves academic results such as diplomas. It can be planned at different levels .i.e., administrators can plan courses offered at the district level or principals and teachers can plan workshop at the school level. Schools and district may also reach out to independent educational organizations to conduct specially trainings as many of these organizations serve as experts on a particular instructional strategy or

teaching philosophy (Magestro & Stanford-Blair, 2000). Kelly Elizabeth McCarthy in her PHD dissertation (2016,p.20) restated what(Akiba,2012 ; Cavallini ,1998 ;Desimone et al., 2002a; Desimone et al., 2002b , Young , 1998) have mentioned saying that :” teachers who are part of professional organization or seek National certifications can also take part in the formal professional development offering from these organizations. Regardless of how and where the training is developed, they serve to improve teacher quality and support teacher certification». Studying for certain national certification is considered as formal professional development since it support and improve teacher’s quality.

Besides attending in courses and workshops, teachers also may participate in informal learning activities that depend on the learners’ themselves, it includes “observation”, trial and errors ,asking for help ,conversing with others ,listening to stories ,or reflecting on a day’s events (Dabbagh & Kitsantas ,2012,p.4). Observing others colleagues work, asking someone to correct mistakes, add or omit things, or assess one’s work, knowing and reflecting on stories and daily events can also considered as professional development, its help teachers to develop themselves in their own and personal way. Akiba (2012) defined informal professional development as informal activities that are planned by an individual such as reading, researching, and examining students’ work. In addition, Liebrman and Pointer Mace (2009) presented Professional Learning Community (PLC) as one example of informal learning that has results from the professionalizational of the educational field. Although there no definite and globally accepted definition for PLC’s , they can be described as groups share and critique each other practices , aim at improving learning and developing schools. (Stoll, Bolam, McMahan, Wallace, & Thomas, 2006).

1.4. Models of TPD

According to Mizell (2010), these are some of the countless models of teachers’ professional development:

- 1- Individual reading / study / research
- 2- Study groups among peers focused on shared need or peed.
- 3- Observation: teacher observing other teachers.
- 4- Coaching: an expert teacher coaching one or more colleagues.
- 5- Mentoring of new educators by more experienced colleagues.

- 6- Team meeting to plan lessons, problem solve, improve performance, and/or learn a new strategy.
- 7- Faculty; grade-level or departmental meetings.
- 8- Online courses.
- 9- Whole school improvement programs.
- 10- Proprietary programs by private vendors (p 09).

While McCarthy said that:” (2016) Hall (2007) succinctly classifies all teachers’ professional development in only three distinct categories: district-wide, site-based, and individual –improvement” (p.17).

- **District-wide professional development:** According to Hall (2007), programmatic choices in district-wide professional development are often based on past attendance or needs assessments developed by school district personnel; workshops are created to fill the identified gaps. In other words, special days are designed for in-service teachers to learn from each other during their contracted work hours.
- **Site-based professional development:** According to Hell this is a new model of professional development, shaped as activities that address the unique challenges of school, such as action research, coaching, monitoring, analysis of students work, and self-directed learning projects. It aims at meeting the individual needs by focusing on the student achievement and creating collaborative culture where teachers negotiate their issues and learn from each other (Garet et al., 2001) .
- **Individual-improvement professional development:** it is self-directed developing activities by the teacher, by which he reflects on practices in the classroom to plan learning needs list. According to Fishman ,Marx ,Best , and Tall (2003),that kind of professional development should be about the teacher learning and the changes that happens at the level of his knowledge ,beliefs ,and attitudes which make him able to acquire new skills ,new concepts ,and new processes related to teaching. In other words, individual-improvement professional development is a personal desire of the teacher to

develop his performance in the classroom and provide his students with the best and new possible knowledge that facilitates learning.

1.5. The importance of TPD

Professional development serves an important function for both teachers and students since improving the teaching skills makes the learning process easier; learners are receiving new better instructional strategies, adopting new programs, administering new assessments ,and learning to use data to make instructional decisions.” Researchers have shown that teacher who participate in well-designed professional development activities get better results from their students”. (Guidance for the Reading First Program, 2002).

1.5.1. For teachers

The main and famous goal of professional development is to learn and become better teacher, but countless other benefits are possible through participating in development opportunities. These advantages often go unrecognized and lead to more engaged learning.

Professional development paves the way to the teacher to be more confident and credible, since the continuous learning provides the teacher with new better perspectives and makes him more experts in their field which increase his self confidence. It also makes him efficient, Professional development activities give him the chance to broaden his knowledge and learn how to teach in the best of the possible ways by mastering new skills. He would be able to influence and lead by using the knowledge learned with the confidence and credibility gained, the ability to influence others and lead them less subjective and more about the facts and figures brought to the tale. These opportunities provide a tool for more meaningful contribution to the teacher; this helps him to achieve his career goals. For many individuals, professional development is just a part of moving up the career ladder. Whether necessary for advancement or not, encourage it as a motivator for own team. Professional development as well makes the teacher the best he can be for his job. Better compensation is achieved, flexibility, perks advancement and more. The more professional the approach, the better received it will be.

According to Richard and Farrel (2005), teachers’ wish to learn more about their profession and to be up-to-date with the new changes in their field can increase their confidence. It can also increase their gain from professional development activities, and the

improvement of students' learning. In other words, the strong desire of the teacher to become more knowledgeable in his profession and keep on being aware of the developments in his field, develops his self esteem and make him more confident. Which therefore lead to better students' achievement. Teachers' commitment to provide their students with better instructions and teaching can help in their development as education professionals. (Pettis, 2002; Ur, 2002). In addition to commitment, Head and Taylor (1997) stated that teachers' development depends mainly on their awareness and belief in change. This means that a Professional development activity will not have an effect on teachers unless they themselves are convinced and aware of its importance. Teachers' performance cannot be improved unless he believes in developing himself. In this case, Day (1999) added that the teacher is the first decision maker to professional development plans and activities.

1.5.2. For students:

All of Block (2000), Darling-Hammond (2000), Haycock, Jerald, and Huang (2001) agree on the point that the most important reason behind a good or bad students achievement is the quality of the teacher in the classroom. A teacher who provides his students with high quality of knowledge and well managed classroom, his students' results would be better. In other words, the improvement of the teacher's quality is the improvement of student's achievement. Wolf (2009) said that:" as a former teacher I know firsthand how important it is to have the ability to stay current and utilize the most up to date information»(n.d). She said also:

"teachers report that students are becoming increasingly proficient in acquiring the scientific knowledge based needed to master course content , and science teachers reports that students are better prepared for and more attentive in class. Additionally, student attendance has improved and grades are improving".(n.d)

According to her, any teacher needs to keep up to date with the changes that happen in the educational world, since that increases his proficiency in his teaching which makes students well prepared and more attentive in the class .as a result, their achievement is improving. A good teacher is not an accident, is not by keep on giving and receiving the same knowledge in the class, an effective teaching is the result of a hard work, a continuing study, reflection, practice, and a strong desire to learn as more as possible about

the profession .However the students' level is, they will learn more if the teacher regularly engage in high-quality professional development. Similarly, I the same year Marcelo (2009) said:

“There is currently a considerable amount of research indicating that the quality of teachers and the way they teach is the most important factor in explaining students' results. There is also considerable evidence that the teacher vary in their efficacy .The differences in the results of students are often greater within the same school among different schools" (p 06).

Marcelo in his report considers professional development as the most important factor in students' achievement; he relates students' results with the teacher's quality, since he has found that differences in students' achievement are greater within the same school among different schools.

According to Marcelo (2009), being a teacher in the 21h century is based on the assumption that knowledge and students are being transformed at a far greater speed to what we were formerly used to. Therefore, the teacher will have to make an extra effort to continue to learn in order to suitably foster students' right to learn. In other words, teaching in the 21h century demands extra efforts and hard work in order to continue learning new forms of knowledge and develop their attitudes and teaching skills, so that they use them to facilitate learning. Rahman, Jumani, Akhtar, Christhi, and Ajmal (2011) found significant relationship between teacher training and students testing”, Kingdon (2006) also proved the impact of individual and school characteristics on students' achievement. Akiri and Ugborugbo (2009) in a study in Nigeria found that effective teachers produce better students. All these scholars agree on same point which is professional development prepare student for better level of educations and so it provides them with better results.

In the opposite opinion, Aaronson, Barrow and Sander (2007) found no significant relationship between teacher experience and student achievement. They tend to relate the absence of a positive relationship to the less favorable student outcomes, saying that:”the absence of significant relationship with student achievement may be due to less favorable students outcomes” (p 72).

1.6. In-service training

Training is a process of acquiring specific skills to perform a job better (Jucious, 1963). It helps people to become qualified and proficient in doing some jobs (Dahama, 1979). In other words, it is an organized process of learning and acquiring specific knowledge and skills concerning a specific job in order to become expert and qualified.

According to the Professor Abdul Halim (1997), training may be categorized into two types: pre-service and in-service training. Pre-service training is more academic and offered by formal institutions following definite curricula and syllabus for a certain period of time and offers a formal degree or a diploma at the end, it is according to him, a process in which individuals are made ready to enter a certain kind professional job such as agriculture, medicine. It also offers a formal degree or diploma. While in-service training is offered by the organization from time to time for the development of skills and knowledge of the incumbents.

1.6.1. Definitions of INST

In-service training has been defined from several sides. Craft's definition (1996) was restated by saying that: "... a term used to cover a set of activities aiming at developing teaching competencies" (p . While Wallace (2002) compares INST with learning saying that both of them are activities that can be presented and managed by others. In other words, INST is some managed activities aims at better understanding to teaching and developing teacher's competence. That means, INST gives the chance for teachers to acquire new and better forms of knowledge and develop their teaching skills and attitudes. In the same flew, Saiti & Saitis (2006) agree that INST is a required process for teachers' development and qualification. As a result, all these scholars claim that in-service training is an ongoing organized process to make the teacher expert and qualified.

1.6.2. INST models:

According to Cheraira and Bouguelmouna (2017), in-service training can be shaped in several models. Researchers find out some of them such as workshops, classroom visits, lectures, and micro teaching (p 09)

According to Cheraira and Bouguelmouna (2017), workshops are educational programme based on practical work. Certain experiences are shared among its members

and personal points of view about specific matters are exchanged in order to answer questions and solve problems in the educational world. Wallas comes after to add that "workshops include practical and interactive activities such as the preparation of teaching materials and lesson planning" (p 09).

Cheraira and Bouguelmouna (2017) claim that classroom visits is one of the most famous models, it is organized by the inspector. The good thing in classroom visits is the immediate, direct, and concert feedback which is given to the teacher. Almasry and Mohammed (2012) said that classroom visits is the inspector's observation and evaluation to the teaching methods and approaches adopted by the teacher in the classroom. Besides, classroom visits allow the inspector to explore the challenges that teachers may face in teaching English as a foreign language in real situations". (Cheraira and Bouguelmouna, 2017, p.11). In other words, classroom visits open the door to see the teacher's weakness points, errors, difficulties, wrong ideas, or miss understanding of certain things.

Lecture as Wallace (2002) said is a method of INST in which the teacher is considered as the primary source of knowledge. It is the traditional method in INST history; although it is trainer-centered and unidirectional, is seen as the most appropriate way for transmitting information. (Cheraira and Bouguelmouna, 2017,p.09).

Micro-teaching is seen as an effective technique in INST for learning and teaching. Allen (1967) said that this technique gives teachers the chance to apply teaching theories into carefully prepared lessons of five to ten minutes encounters with groups of real students, with the chance to observe the result on videotape. He adds that:" It provides the teacher for immediate and individual diagnostic evaluation of teacher performance by colleagues, supervisors, and participating students and for measuring progress in specific teaching technique" (p.01). Or, it is to apply what the teacher has been told before about teaching to a real carefully prepared lesson for small group of student, which can be immediately evaluated by others. To conclude with, Remesh (2013) declares that micro-teaching is employing real teaching situations.

1.6.3. The relation between TPD and INST:

Craft's statement (1996) is restated in the US-China Educational Review (2011) mentioning that both of in-service training and teacher professional development are

interchangeably used to cover series of activities designed to contribute to the learning of practicing teachers. In other words, Both of TPD and INST work on contributing the learning of practicing teachers. It is mentioned there also that “INST can take different forms in attempting knowledge and skills throughout the education process. And professional development activities through INST are grouped under the following titles:

- 1-Professional education, which means according to them a widening and deepening of a teacher’s theoretical perspectives by means of advanced study.
- 2-Professional training, the development of knowledge and skills which are of direct applicability to daily work.
- 3-Professional support, activities aimed at developing on the-job experience and performance”. (US- China Educational review, 2011; as cited in Altun et al., 2007).then, they declare:” Above classifications seems that INST is only related to development». That means, there is a partial relationship between them. In addition, it has been said that:” professional development is the enrichment training provided to teachers over a period of time to promote... it is conceptually divided into pre-service and in-service teacher training”. In-service is considered as one part of the professional development (p.848).

From the classifications above we can say that in-service training is related to teachers’ development, since the ultimate goal of in-service training activities in schools is to help teachers in learning and improving personal and professional skills (US-China Education Review, (2011).

Zafar (2016) has restated Eurydice’s quotation (1995) saying that:”it (in-service training) enables teachers to meet their personal as well as their professional needs and encourages the development of autonomy”. He defines autonomy here as "another salient criterion for a successful in-service training to meet the teacher’s need within all its dimensions” (p. 59).

1.6.4. INST programmes in Algeria:

According to British Council, an on-going programme of cascade training began in October 2012. Training has been provided in the UK at the Norwich Institute of Language Education (NILE) and here in Algeria, because of the success of this project, a similar

programme is set to be followed to secondary schools inspectors by the end of 2014. In Algeria, around 40,000 new teachers are being recruited into the school system every day. Deemed a particularly urgent issue, school pedagogical inspectors alone are responsible for their in-service training and professional development. The main goal is to improve their quality of teaching and support better learner outcomes.

“British Council Algeria has an agreement with the Ministry of National Education and Anadarko Algeria Company LLC, to provide inspector and teacher trainer training to assist in developing and improving the teaching and learning of English in middle schools across Algeria”.(n.d)

Theoretically, training programmes should show minimum of criteria that include:

1. Learning something new and beneficial. According to Arnold (1999), learning is showing the changes while reacting to what we are living.
2. “Wide range of topics” (Euydive, 1995, p.2). According to Safir (2007, p.21), it is something that has never occurred in Algeria if we assume that inspectors follow a national programme to be implemented everywhere. In other words, we can say that things in the Algerian educational training programmes are not really going well, since Safir confirmed that the topics are limited and not that wide, and Arnold suggested bringing something new and beneficial, at the same time he define learning as showing the changes and developments when reflecting what we are living. This means that in-service training programmes in Algeria have problems with the quality and quantity of topics.

According to Safir (2007),” in-service training in Algeria is a top-down type. It is provided by the Ministry of Education which stills the unique provider till now. The same content still organized in the same way since “policy reforms are directing the kind of in-service to be pursued by teachers” (OECD:18)” (p 42).He gave the example of centrally-resourced, and the weight of traditions in spite of the changing context and new complex challenges which still dictate what happening in training. According to him, it includes a series of seminars programmes held from the period of 2000 to 2005 in some secondary schools of the west of Algeria.

Safir (2007) then gave a list that shows plenty of shortcomings instead of the usefulness of the Algerian in-service training content pedagogically speaking: he said that from 2000 to 2001 teachers' roles and functions were more important and lessons were in four types, from 2001 to 2002 errors analysis and remedial work were spread, from 2003 to 2004 writing sequences (writing activities) and learning through games were common, and from 2004 to 2005 the competency based approach (CBA) was adopted and new reforms happened.

1.6.5. The Competency-Based Approach (CBA) to INST in Algeria:

CBA is an educational approach to English language teaching which gives more importance to knowledge, skills, and abilities that qualify learners to solve problems of real world. The Learner is the central figure in the teaching-learning process in CBA since it makes him linguistically and pedagogically competent when dealing with real life situations. (Boualeg, 2004).

“CBA to training seems to be paramount important in the teaching-learning process, it helps teachers to perform their job effectively particularly in planning executing performance objectives, and specifying the various skills. Besides, by adopting CBA helps to equip them with core teaching competencies and thus enable them to develop professionally”. (Cheraira and Bouguelmouna, 2017, p.16).

According to them, CBA helps teachers in teaching effectively, improve their performance in the job, and figure out the various objectives and skills. Besides, it leads them to professional development and prepares them with the necessary teaching skills and competencies.

1.6.6. Deficiencies in CBA to INST in Algeria:

Cheraira and Bouguelmouna (2017) argue that although the authentic materials of CBA help autonomous and active learners, it may lead to the opposite if it is misused by the teacher. In addition, they point out these following difficult teaching situations of CBA to in-service training in Algeria:

- 1.No clear curriculum goals.
- 2.Lack of training about setting SMART objectives.

3. Lack of clear criteria of content and material selection.
4. Training is not done all the time by specialist in multidisciplinary field, i.e. the trainer should have background knowledge in several domains such as education, psychology, technology, and sociology.
5. CBA as an educational reform in Algeria has faced some resistance and reluctance by the majority of teachers. Such resistance has even grown more due to the lack of competent supervisors who did not define the goals of textbooks in crystal way.
6. Sometimes the training sessions are held in the mother tongue and they tackle issues of regulations and laws rather than teaching practices (p. 37-38).

To warm up, it has been noticeable that in-service teachers in Algeria are suffering with the core competencies because of these conditions below:

- In-service training programmes are theories that still not applied yet.
- Teachers in Algeria -under CBA reforms –are asked to perform too many tasks: lesson planning, testing, correcting and examinations, invigilating, and teaching large lessons with loaded programmes and busy schedules (up to 18 hours per week).
- Training programmes are stereotyped and static; they are not authentic and updated. (Cheraïra and Bouguelmouna, 2017,38).

1.7. The role of INST in the PD:

According to Zafar (2016), the role of INST is highlighting the development of thinking and pedagogical skills of the teacher. It gives several chances that encourage teachers to meet learning objectives effectively; it also improves the management and leadership techniques of the teacher. That is why every teacher should be participated in such programmes. He adds: “school should concern to the lifelong development of all teachers in order to achieve society aims. Continuous development programs have a great importance in teacher education and also in the life of the teacher”. In other words, the lifelong development or the continuous development should be present in all schools since it does not enhance the teacher’s competencies and performance only, but rather the teacher’s life.

1.8. Conclusion:

Professional development plays an important role in enhancing the educational process, it has a clear effect on both teachers and learning. It makes the teacher expert and competent and improves the learner's achievements. It is noticeable also that there is a strong correlation between teacher professional development and in-service training development in the sense that INST opens up the chances for teachers to improve and develop their competencies and performance.

2.1 Introduction

The present chapter presents a description of research design and methodology. It presents, analyses, discusses, and interprets the findings of data collected from both teachers' questionnaire and interview in relation to what has been founded in the theoretical part. This data offer information that help in understanding EFL teachers' views and attitudes regarding professional development, and reveal professional development effect on EFL teachers and learners. Finally, the chapter closes up with further recommendations to the benefit of EFL high school teachers and learners.

2.2 Research design

In order to check how EFL teachers' attitudes towards professional development would improve their core teaching competencies and affect their learners' outcomes, a descriptive and analytical case is adopted. It describes the results developing both qualitative and quantitative point of view.

The main research question that guides this study was: To what extent is professional development appreciated by EF teachers at Mostaghanem high schools? The main question was supported by these sub-questions: How does professional development affect EFL teachers' practices at Mostaghanem high schools? How were the participants improving their teaching skills during the last few years? What effects did professional development on their students' achievement?

2.3 Data collection tools

In order to answer the research questions that was stated previously, a questionnaire was administrated to a sample of EFL high school teachers (all levels); they were 08 males and 12 females whose ages ranged from 24 to 45 years old. The present research was done at high schools since I used to have difficulties with English teacher during my educational career at high school. Most of the teacher I have met were teaching only for the sake of teaching, they were only reformulating what is mentioned in the text book using the same terms and phrases that make us feel like the lesson is learnt by hard by them. I have visited 05 high schools in Mostaghanem where I have been strongly welcome by both the managers and teachers who were very helpful with me. I have visited Hamdi Cherif Abdelkader, and El-ikhwa Belkacem high schools in Achaacha, Bachir Bey Adda, and

Bekhiti Belkasem in Khadra, and Cherief Yahya in Chreifia. There are four English teachers in each high school except for Bachir Bey Adda high school where there are five English teachers. I spent one week in doing my research, since I could not find the all teachers in one high school on the same day because of the differentiations in their working times.

2.3.1 Questionnaire

This questionnaire (see the appendix) was handed to the teachers during their rest time while having the third semester exams towards the end of the academic year in order to reveal their attitudes and views towards professional development and improving their personal teaching skills. Instead of lecturing and presenting lessons in a traditional ways and following blindly the text book, they should better try to search for new information, methods, and terms to add to lessons.

The questionnaire consists of 05 questions (one open, three structured, and one semi- structured) which can be divided into two sections. The first section is planned to get personal information about the participants' gender, age, and the teaching experience. The second section aims at uncovering their views concerning professional development. This is through asking them about professional development experiences, they were asked to describe the kinds of professional development activities they have been taking in case they used to, and further to describe the changes noticed inside the classroom after applying the knowledge gained from such activities; if it affects themselves , their students, or both.

Also they were asked about their opinion towards attending professional development activities and its importance and necessity for the teaching and learning process, and its effects on them and their students. Moreover, to know their opinion about professional development, if they support the idea of being a learning teacher or they prefer only keep on repeating the same structured lesson for years and years.

2.3.2 Semi-structured interview

Besides the questionnaire a semi-structured interview was administrated to the same sample of participants in order to study their attitudes towards professional development and dig deeper. According to Bernard (1988), semi-structured interview

scheduled activity; it includes open ended questions but follows a general script and covers a list of topics. Semi-structured interviews are seen as the best means of collecting data since they are flexible and they are suitable in answering “why” questions. (Miles & Gilbert, 2005). For such reason, a semi-structured interview is addressed. The interview encompasses 10 questions (Three structured, two semi-structured, and five open). The questions aim at giving the teachers a second chance to express their views deeper about professional development and say freely what they could not say in the questionnaire.

They were asked the same question as the ones in the questionnaire but in a deep and detailed way that can help us to obtain exact and honest answers. They were asked about their own understandings of experienced teacher since experience is the result of professional development so the question was designed in order to pave the way to know how teachers would define experience. Then to check if they are familiar with the term “professional development”, they were asked to give their own suggestions for possible ways that make them experienced teachers to see whether they would mention the term or not. They were asked if they attend professional development courses indirectly through asking them to name any continuing classes they have completed recently, the skills they have gained in the last five years, and how do they stay up to day with the changes in the field. Their attitude toward team working was asked for since it is considered as a kind of professional development. Finally, they were asked to describe the effect of professional development on their teaching.

2.4 Results

2.4.1 Questionnaire

When the participants were asked about attending professional development courses or programmes, the majority (75%) said yes, whereas only (25%) said no. As a consequence, it is noticeable that professional development is common among EFL teachers in Mostaghanem.

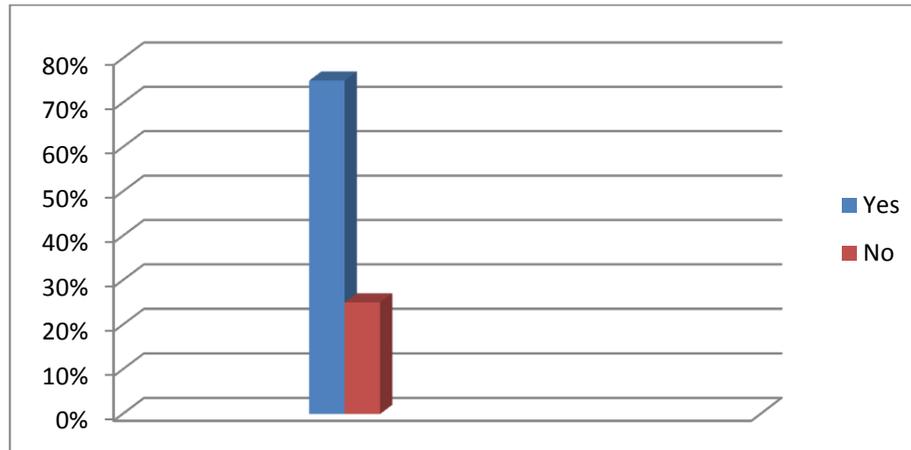


Figure 2.1: teachers' background about professional development

The (45%) of the participants who have answered with yes have similarly mentioned their training experiences as a kind of professional development they have taken, (10%) have mentioned CBA, (65%) have mentioned seminars, (35%) said that they have attended multiple workshops, and (05%) have attended a course about ICTs which deals with the integration of telecommunication in the learning process.

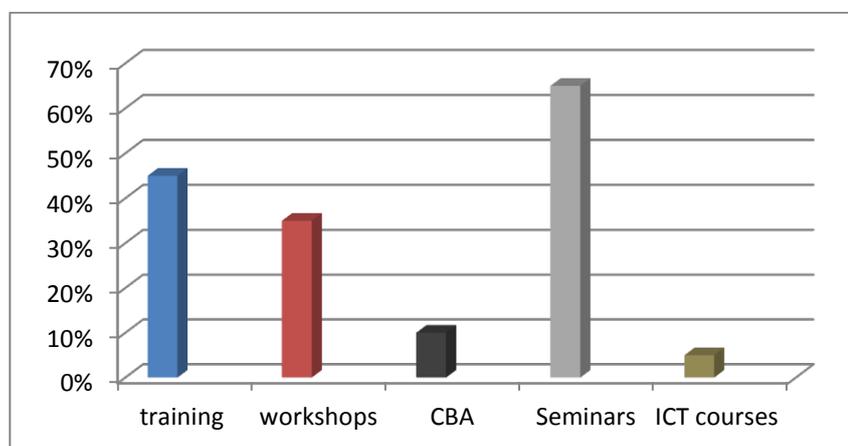


Figure 2.2: kinds of professional developments

Concerning the question of applying the knowledge gained from professional development inside the classroom, all of the participants (75%) who answered with yes to the previous question have also answered that they apply such knowledge, and it is also the same with the changes noticed in classrooms, the answers were the same, all of them said

yes. While the answers differed concerning the last sub-question which is about what have the PD developed in the teacher. (35%) of them said that PD developed their way of thinking, all of them said that it developed their way of teaching, (60%) said it developed their way of dealing with students, and (35%) said it developed their way of collecting information.

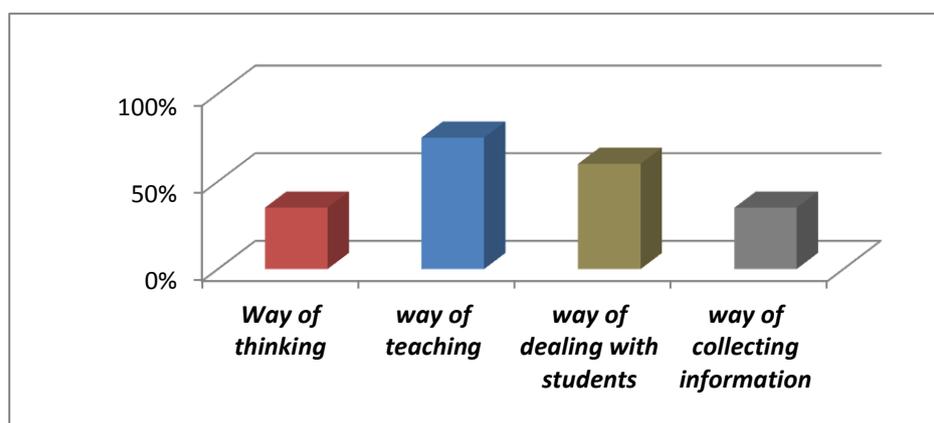


Figure 2.3: EFL teachers' experiences in professional development

In one hand, all the participants agreed on the idea that developing their teaching knowledge and skills does really matter for them. In the other hand, all of them strongly disagree with the idea that developing teaching knowledge is a waste of time. (40%) of them agree that it is important but they have no time to do it while (35%) disagree with this idea, and (25%) choose to stay neutral.

Concerning teachers' interests in their job, (25%) of the participants are interested in completing the syllabus, (95%) are interested in adding new materials that are not included in the syllabus but can help students, and (80%) are interested in preparing their students for exams. while (40%) add their personal choices concerning their extra interests to one mentioned in the questionnaire. (05%) said that they are mainly interested in helping their students becoming good citizens, (10%) are interested in preparing students to deal with real life situations, (25%) said that their main interest in teaching is to develop students' four skills (listening, speaking, listening, and reading), (05%) are interested in transversal competency, and (05%) are interested in using ICTs.

The majority of the participants (90%) agree on that the teacher needs to keep on learning while only (10%) said no for this idea. The majority who are with the idea gives diverse explanations to support their opinions. Some of them said that due to the technological advanced, the teacher has to broaden his knowledge so that he can update occupational skills, while others said that keeping up with changes happened in the field helps a lot in enhancing the teacher's creativity and meet his learners' needs. The majority of them confirm that the teaching process is a circle in which the teacher can never reach an end. Concerning this, teacher has restated a saying: "...who dares to teach never ceases to learn".

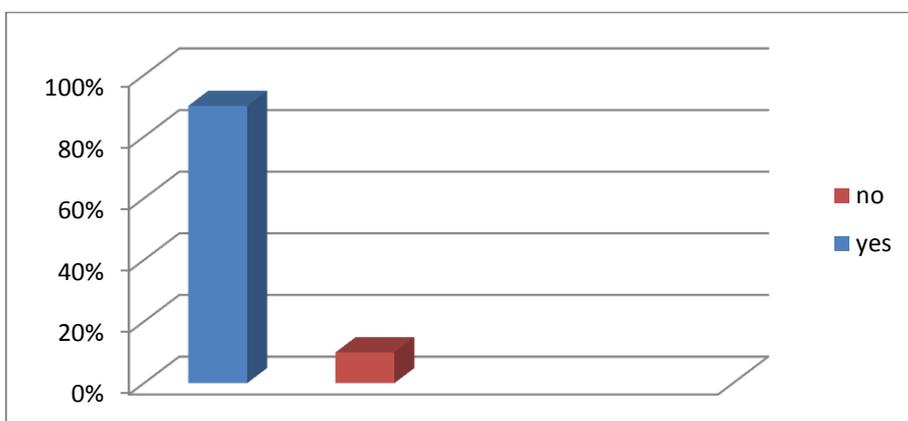


Figure 2.4: EFL teachers' views regarding PD

2.4.2 The interview

Within this interview, the experienced teachers were (70%) while the novice ones were only(30%).They were asked if they were experienced or novice in order to check their answers to the next question which requires their understandings to the meaning of "an experienced teacher". The answers were different; one group (55%) related the experience to the number of years spent in the educational field saying the more years we spend in teaching the more experience we obtain. While the other group (35%) related it to the quality of the teacher, including his language, attitude, culture, the way of dealing with his students, the way of managing his time, and his high quality of knowledge provided to his students. And another group (10%) thinks that experienced teacher does not exist and

experience is a far and unreachable goal since teaching is a field that demands to keep on learning, the teacher cannot say I am experienced teacher, knowledge never ends.

When they were asked about strategies and ways that teachers can try in order to improve their teaching competencies answers were not that much different. The majority of them (75%) agree on the same idea, they have mentioned the need for making researches and considered it as a necessity for any teacher, (15%) of them have mentioned attending seminars and meetings, while (10%) suggested team working as an important and helpful strategy to exchange ideas and thoughts and get benefits from each other in terms of information, methods, attitudes...

The majority of the interviewees (90%) believed in professional development, they see it as an important activity that any teacher should do in order to broaden his knowledge and acquire new and extra knowledge. From their answers, we can say that PD may help in doing job in the best possible way and provide his students with high quality knowledge that paves them the way to better achievements and a bright future.

While (10%) of them said no. They said that professional development does not really exist in Algeria, and they believe in performing lesson in an ordinary way without confusing their selves and students with extra information that could distract them.

They also stated that problem of materials and time saying that neither the inspectors nor timing are helping them. Inspectors dictate on them what to include in each lesson, they are not free to add extra knowledge and they are also limited by time, they are not able to extend the lesson at the required time.

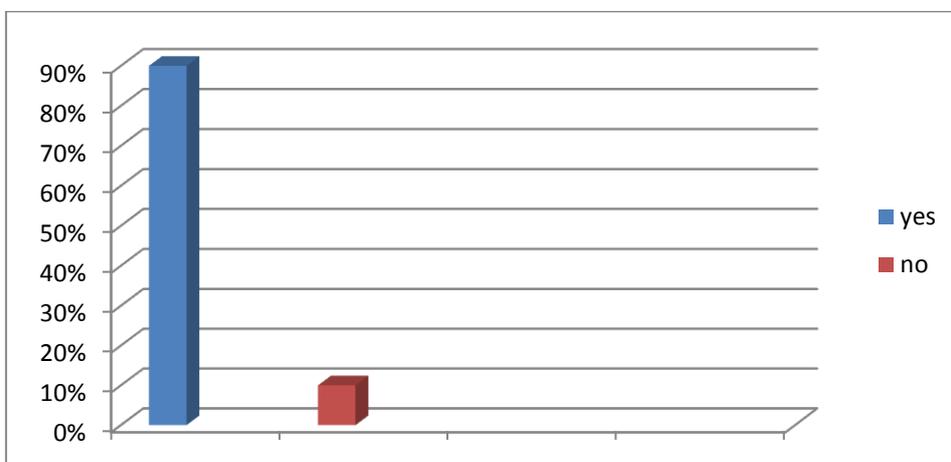


Figure 2.5: EFL teachers' belief in PD

When they were asked about the continuing classes they had recently completed, (50%) of them said yes and mentioned the classes they have completed, and (50%) said none. (30%) of those who have answered with yes mentioned in-service training, those are mostly novice teachers since in Algerian educational system, teachers attend academic training courses during their first year of teaching. while another (30%) of them have mentioned the pre-service training. (25%) of them have mentioned attending other experienced teachers' classes(Pedagogical accompaniment), those who are concerned with such activity are mostly novice teachers, both universities and teachers' high schools' graduates are concerned with the Pedagogical accompaniment but they only differ in the time of having it, teachers' high school graduates attend 15 classes during their second year of teaching while universities graduates attend the same number of classes but during their first year of teaching. (20%) mentioned seminars and other (20%) mentioned workshops (British council) while the rest (05%) mentioned ICT courses.

They were asked also about the new skills they have gained in the last five years In order to check the benefits that teachers have gotten from professional development courses for those who have attended and compare them with those who did not attend. (95%) of them said they have developed their language skills, (90%) mentioned the improvement in classroom management, all of them (100%) said they have improved their way in dealing with students, and (20%) of them said they developed their techniques in performing the lessons including the ICTs.

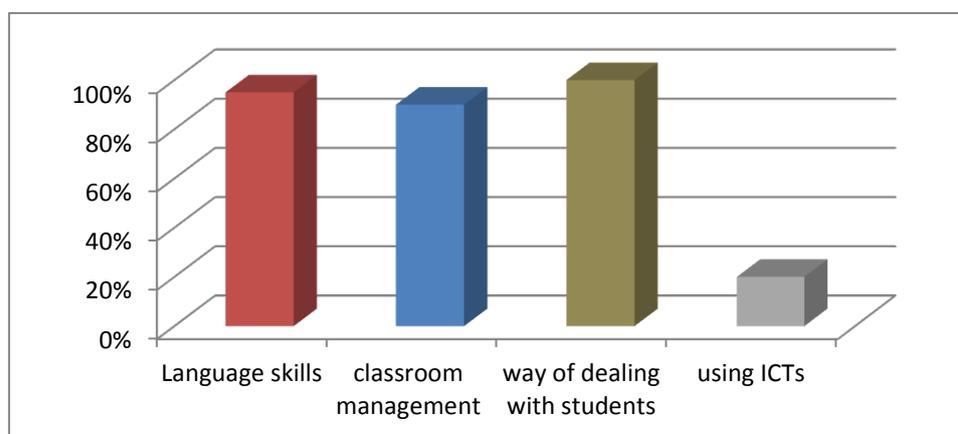


Figure 2.6: Skills gained in the five last years

In question 8, the participants were asked about how they can stay updated on the developments and changes happen in the field. This question was addressed to the teachers who do not believe in professional development to push them to think again about their answer and make them aware that the field is not stable, possible changes and being updated on them is a necessity for any teacher. The majority of the interviewees (95%) have mentioned team work with colleagues as the most helping techniques, (85%) of them suggested making researches, (90%) suggested reading, and (10%) suggested attending courses and programmes on the net.

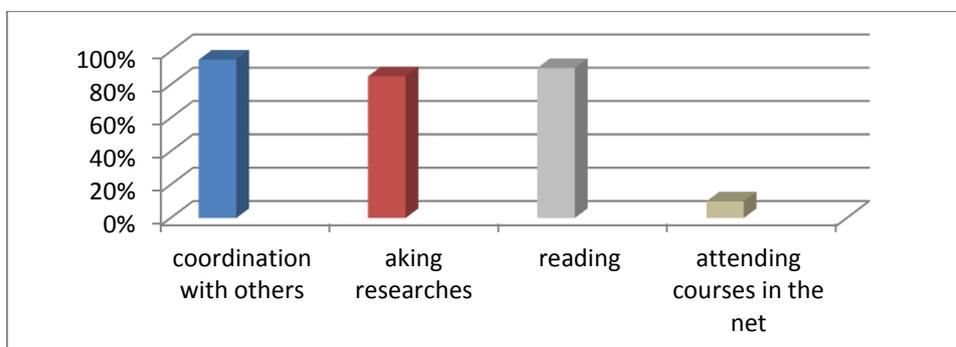


Figure 2.7: Kinds of PD

Question 9 in the interview was designed to unveil teachers' views regarding team working in their schools. The majority of them (85%) strongly agreed with team working while the rest (15%) were agree with it but complaining about its absence in their schools, they said that teachers in their schools generally prefer to work individually and they even refuse to help or guide, specially the experienced ones. No one of the interviewees was against co-teaching.

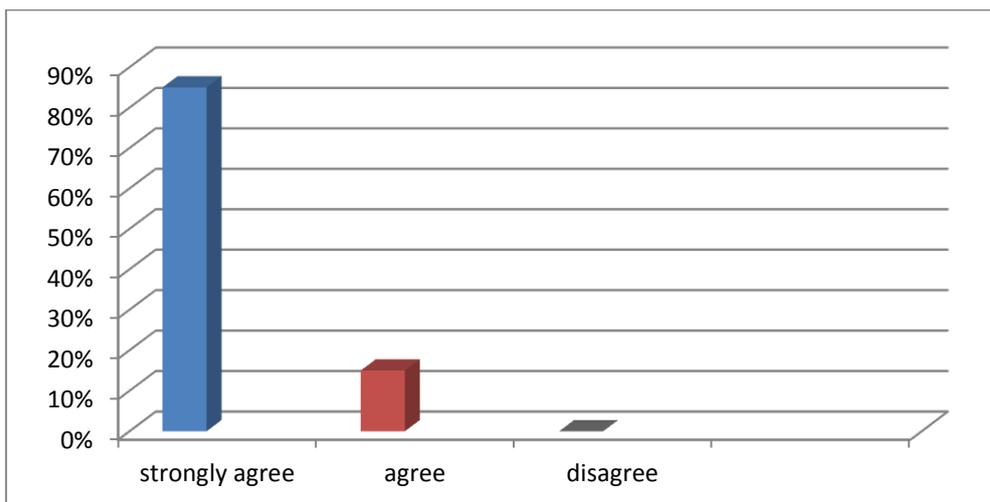


Figure 2.8: teachers' views concerning co-teaching at school

Finally, the interviewees were asked about the kinds of help that professional development provided them with. All teachers, both who did formal professional development and informal one have confirmed that professional development did really help them in improving their teaching. (90%) of them said it helped them to broaden their knowledge, (50%) said it increases their self confidence, (20%) said it helped them in improving their socio-communicative skills, and (65%) said it helped them in controlling the classroom in terms of time management and controlling students.

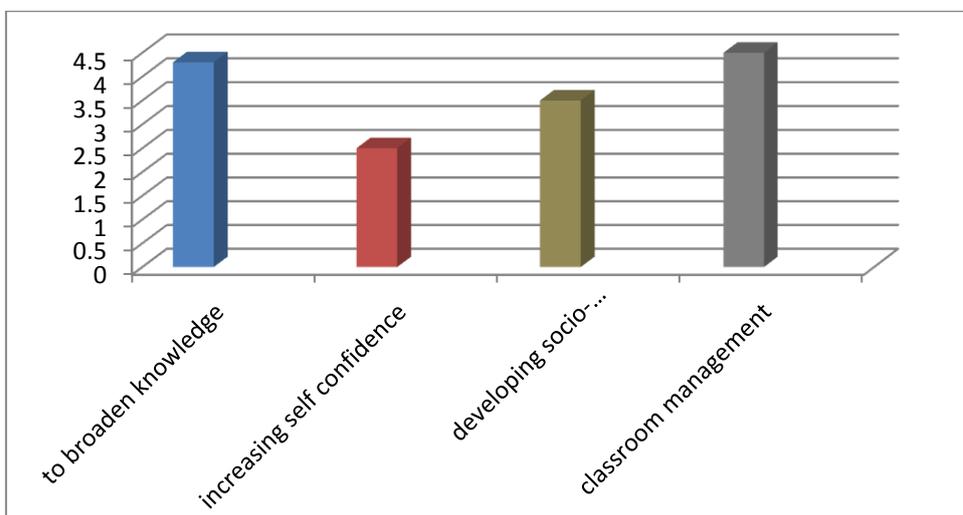


Figure 2.9 PD's affect on EFL teachers

2.5 Discussions

From the questionnaire results, it can be concluded that the participants are familiar with professional development since most of them have previous experiences concerning teaching development, i.e., seminars organized by the inspectors, workshops (i.e., British council), in-service training, programmes in the net (i.e., a course about ICTs), getting in touch with other experienced teachers, and doing free reading, but they are mostly popular with seminars and training. The minority of them have mentioned reading or free programmes on the net even if there were no exact names of special courses or programmes of professional development outside schools and away from the academic programmes such as seminars. As a result, we can say most of the teachers are pushed for teaching development, they do not volunteer to improve their teaching since both training and seminars which they were familiar with according to questionnaire results are indeed imposed on them by the administration.

In-service training is likely designed to pave the way for novice teachers specifically to start their educational career correctly and face new challenges and changes in the educational world.” The term training refers to, activities directly focused on a teacher’s present responsibilities and it is typically aimed at short-term and immediate goals. Often it is seen as preparation for instruction into a first teaching position or as preparation to take a new teaching assignment for responsibility” (Boudersa, 2016, p. 02).

While seminars are designed to keep teachers up-to-date with the developments and changes that happen in the educational world. In Felipe’s blog post on mars 29th, 2013, the author said: “Their attendance to these seminars will help create an effective learning environment, improve teaching-learning situations, and keep updated on modern instructional devices in the modern world”. but both in-service training courses and seminars are still not enough for them to improve their personal teaching competencies and stay current for all the developments happen in school since in-service training period is limited (only one year) while seminars are rarely done (at most four times a year).

With regard to teachers’ interview, their answers were not that different from the questionnaire answers. All of them agreed on the need of the teachers for the professional development in order to improve their teaching competencies. This study also proved that professional development is a source of gaining extra knowledge that would help in improving teaching skills and enhancing the learning process, besides helping teachers to be more confident, wise, and knowledgeable. These findings confirmed Boudersa’s

claim(2016): “in the Algerian educational context, there seems to be urgent need for a system of education which encourages and promotes active engagement and reflective teaching and learning” (p.04), “both experienced and novice teachers might be in need of continuous teaching and professional development trainings provided by the school” (Boudersa, 2016, p. 04).

The data gathered also unveil that the teachers’ views regarding team working reflect their awareness of its importance as a kind of informal professional development which is considered as a good source of information. Since most of them pointed to the need for coordination with colleagues specially with experienced ones, and attending each other classes or organizing meetings to exchange knowledge and learn from each other.

2.6 recommendations

The findings obtained from this study indicate an unexpected overall increase in Algeria for professional development programmes even if there was not a large turnout on independent professional development such as attending special programmes. The results obtained from our informants’ responses were of a great importance for the present research. They revealed that both formal and informal continuing professional development activities should be one of any teacher’s priorities in his daily life. Undeniably, being a teachers and a learner at the same time is not that easy, “...it is a job that really never finished” (McGrane, 2010, p.157). The present study suggests and recommends the following:

First, EFL teachers should be encouraged to improve their teaching competencies and skills. Meanwhile, the administrations should take into consideration the efforts teachers do when bringing new educational techniques to the classroom. Second, seminars should be intensified so that teachers who do not attend any professional development courses outside schools would have the chance to develop their competencies and stay up-to-day with the changes in the educational world. Additionally, the cooperation between the novice and experienced teachers which is indeed considered as a kind of informal PD would be a fruitful work that would results a dramatic influence on both of them. The spirit of cooperation and team working should be spread among EFL teachers to exchange benefits from each other.

Moreover, reading should be one of EFL teachers' priorities needed in their career, extensive reading mainly is so important for EFL teaching in broadening their knowledge. In other words, EFL teachers should build up the culture of reading since it is considered as the most important way to enrich their minds with much more information that they need to perform effective lessons and reflect better students' achievements.

More importantly, the use of ICTs is needed in the teaching process, it facilitate and illustrate to the student what the teacher is performing. It can be also a great means of professional development; there are endless websites and programs for EFL teachers to sign in, in order to develop and improve their teaching competencies.

2.7 Conclusion

The last chapter in this dissertation was devoted to both of the description of the research design and data collection tools, and the analysis of the information gathered from our informants. The obtained results helped to answer the research questions generated previously. It has been noticed that EFL teachers of Mostaghanem support and appreciate attending teacher's development courses and working on improving personal knowledge and skills. From the information gathered in this research, we can say that professional development did a noticeable effect on both EFL teachers and their learners; it helped teachers to improve their personal competencies and enhanced the learners' achievement. In the end of this chapter, we provided some recommendations that we saw they may help EFL teachers in their educational career.

General conclusion

In conclusion, teaching is considered as the most difficult job, teachers are holding heavy responsibilities, they are raising generations. However, teachers are often heavily judged and criticized. People are always blaming teachers about the students' failure even if the teachers are qualified and experienced. In the case of teaching foreign languages the pressure increases much more, the EFL teachers should master the English language in order to teach effectively. This demands from the EFL teachers to keep on learning more about the language, he should continuously develop his professional competencies. This research was done on twenty EFL teachers of high schools in Mostaghanem, Algeria to see if professional development is taken into consideration there and to know how it affects the teaching-learning process.

The findings obtained from our informants helped in unveiling RFL teachers' views and attitudes regarding professional development, they were familiar with it and most of them had previous experiences in professional development activities. These activities contributed in enhancing EFL teachers' competencies and skills and improving students' achievement. Most of the participants supported attending professional development courses, many kinds of those courses were named such as the workshops (British council), training, co-teaching... etc

This research proved wrong the premise that professional development is an infamous and not appreciated activity for EFL teachers at Mostaganem high schools in Algeria since most of them mentioned types of PD they have been taken. While it proved the premise that PD helps EFL teachers to improve their teaching competencies. From the informants' answers, it has been confirmed that PD is the best means to develop personal information of the EFL teacher and gain extra knowledge that he may include in his classes. This research proved also that PD affects positively EFL students since the participants who attended PD courses confirmed that it helped them to improve the students' achievement and they embodied this in their exams marks.

Teaching a foreign language at high schools is not an easy job; teachers need to work hard, make extra efforts, and never stop learning. In this case, further researches may be done such as: which professional development is more effective for EFL teachers, the formal or the informal one?

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Appendix

Questionnaire

Dear teachers,

The following questionnaire aims at discussing your teaching views concerning your professional development during your carrier at high school. Would you please provide honest answers to the following questions, in order to improve teaching and make the learning process successful. Thank you for your helps.

Note: put a tick (√) next to your answer.

1-Male Female

2-Age 25-35 35-45 45-60

3-How many years have you been teaching English?

4-During such experience, have you ever attended or taken any course or professional development programme? Yes No

- If yes, can please answer the questions bellow:

- Could you please describe the kind of professional development programmes you have taken.

.....
.....

Do you apply the information you get from such course or programme in your classes?

Yes No

- Have you noticed any changes in your classroom after applying new information?

Yes No

- Has the professional development programme developed your:

- Way of thinking
- Way of teaching
- Way of dealing with students
- Way of collecting information

5- To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements: put a tick (√) next to your answer (please make sure to answer next to each statement).

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
a- developing my teaching knowledge and skills does really matter for me.					
b- It is a waste of time and energy I can teach well, I do not need it.					
c- It is important but I have no time or the means to do it.					
d- I can get beyond the syllabus in teaching to help students learn.					

6- In your job? you are mainly interested in:

- Completing the syllabus.
- Adding new materials that are not included in the syllabus but can help students learn.
- Preparing students for exams.
- Others. Please mention them.

.....

7-Do you think teachers need to keep on learning? Yes No

Please explain

.....

- Thank you -

The interview

1. Are You a novice or an experienced teacher ?
2. What is your own definition to an experienced teacher?
3. How do You think the teacher can improve his teaching competencies ?
4. Do you believe in what we call professional development?
5. If no, Why? –if yes, why?
6. What continuing educational classes have you completed recently?
7. What new skills have you gained in the last five years?
8. How do you stay current on the developments in your job?
9. What is the attitude towards team teaching or co-teaching at your school?
10. Do think professional development may help in your teaching?
11. How?