

A Comparative Review of the New Teacher Induction Practices in China and Ethiopia

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Abstract

The education policy of Ethiopia identified equity, quality, relevance and access as the major challenges of education. After a while MOE come up with a result of evaluation which stated that the quality of education remain to be a challenge. Thus, MOE (2008) come up with General Education Quality Improvement Package (GEQIP) which consisted of six programs. One of the programs is called Teacher Development Program (TDP) which is responsible for the updating and upgrading of teachers. The updating part of the program, among other thing, consisted of induction and Continuous Professional Development (CPD). While the first designed for novice teachers, the latter is responsible for teachers with experience of three and more years. This paper, tries to assess the practice of induction by taking the experience of China and Ethiopia. The finding indicates that the practice of induction varied in the two countries. As Ethiopia yet to develop, the gap is visible and needs to take a lot of experience from china.

Keywords: Induction, CPD, TDP

1. Introduction

The idea of quality education has been a point of discourse for centuries. It seems that the discourse will continue so long as the human being interest of inquiry maintain. The term quality education has wide-ranging definition. UNICEF(2000) define quality education as Processes through which trained teachers use child-centred teaching approaches in well-managed classrooms and schools and skilful assessment to facilitate learning and reduce disparities.

The above definition underlines the significance of train teachers to realize quality education. Underpinning this fact Feiman-Nemser (2001) state that policy makers and educators are coming to see that what students learn is directly related to what and how teachers teach; and how teachers teach depends on the knowledge, skills, and commitments they bring to their teaching and the opportunities they have bring to continue learning in and from their practice. The same author goes to the extent of saying “if we want schools to produce more powerful learning on the part of students, we have to offer more powerful learning opportunities to teachers.”

The critical relation between teachers quality and students achievement supported by many writers who boldly argue that teachers are the most important factor influencing the quality of education in schools (Abbott, 1988; Hattie, 2003; Barber and Mourshed, 2007 cited in European Commission Staff Working Document SEC ,2010). Thus, significant parts of the learning-teaching process depend on the role of the teacher. This premise may take us in to the conclusion that teacher’s preparation has to be very vital since the success of the teacher has a lot to do with the holistic formation of the student. Taking in to consideration this, different governments come up with different interventions. The intention of this article is about the preparation of the teachers soon after they join the real world with a program called induction. In doing so, I will try to make comparative review between the experience of China and Ethiopia based on two studies which were conducted in the two countries.

Juan Miao (2009) come up with a study entitled Beginning Teacher Induction at Three Elementary Schools in China: A Case Study. The study was conducted as partial fulfilment of the Requirements of the Degree of Doctor of Education. On another note, Tadele Zewdie Zeru (2013) publishes his work called Teacher induction and the continuing professional development of teachers in Ethiopia: Case studies of three first-year primary school teachers which is also a PhD dissertation.

Before dealing with the comparison, it is important to discuss a bit about Induction. In an attempt to define Induction Wilhelmah (2008), cited in Ephrem(2012), states that the word induction derived from a Latin word 'induce', meaning to guide, to introduce or to initiate; especially something demanding, secret or of special knowledge. It may also mean; introduction, orientation, initiation, training and support. In the teaching profession, induction is often viewed as the extension of professional preparation for teaching, or as an introduction to a set of required skill and practices not learnt during training. It has been area of interest among scholars as to why induction is practiced in the past few decades. In his interesting article called *Discussing Teacher Induction in China and Relevant Debates in the United States* with a Chinese Teacher Liping Ma describe the following points as a response for the why of induction;

- Officially Qualified Doesn't Mean Practically Qualified
- Pay More Attention to Root Causes Than Symptoms
- Pedagogical Way of Knowing Will Happen in Teaching Practice
- Communication With the Community is the Moment for Reflection

Coming to components of quality Induction, different scholars suggest more or less similar components of quality induction. Basing in ample academic literature Ann L. Wood (2009) suggest the following nine points as a quality of Induction.

- (1) Educative mentors' preparation and mentoring of novice teachers,
- (2) Reflective inquiry and teaching practices,
- (3) Systematic and structured observations,
- (4) Developmentally appropriate professional development,
- (5) Formative teacher assessment,
- (6) Administrators' involvement in induction,
- (7) A school culture supportive of novice teachers,
- (8) Program evaluation and/or research on induction,
- (9) A shared vision of knowledge, teaching, and learning.

Taking in to consideration the above qualities of induction an attempt is made to prepare a criteria for review and finally from the above two PhD dissertation I took six common pointes for review which are used as means to analyse the Induction program both in China and Ethiopia. The pointes are; purpose of Induction, number of periods taught in a week day, new teacher's orientation, novice in the first year, lessons observation and mentoring. Let we see each one of them one by one;

2. Purpose of Induction

The focus of induction in China as to Juan (2009) is guidance and training with clear and consistent goals and target outcomes. Explaining why the same author state that through various processes and forms of guidance, the novice teachers are expected to shorten the period of transition and to perform at the level of the more experienced ones.

On the other hand Ethiopia also gives almost similar definition for the purpose of induction which argues that:

'The newly deployed or beginner teacher will serve an initial period of supervised and supported teaching for a set interval of time (2 years). That period will be one of probationary service and it must be completed satisfactorily before the teaching license is awarded. For this to happen, the beginner has to go through the first phase of CPD- the induction process and- show realistic levels of master of teaching required for the phase. ... At the end of the two years, before they receive the initial license, all beginner teachers will have to demonstrate competence in the areas set out in the pre-service list of professional competences. (MoE, 2004: 27-28 cited in Tadess)

The above justifications are supported by different authors. For example explaining the importance of induction Newman Wadesango and Severino Machingambi (2011) in their study entitled *what's the Use of Induction Courses? A Case Study of Three South African Universities* find out that induction has the potential to boost lecturer effectiveness and ultimately, student performance and throughput rates. Universities therefore, have a mandate to integrate each new staff member into his/her new work environment as quickly as possible so that a productive contribution can be made as soon as possible.

This is also supported by Michael Strong (2011) who state that for classroom instructional practices, beginning teachers who participated in some kind of induction performed better at various aspects of teaching, such as keeping students on task, using effective student questioning practices, adjusting classroom activities to meet students' interests, maintaining a positive classroom atmosphere, and demonstrating successful classroom management. Basing ourselves on the above justification we can abridge induction as a process of supporting, training, integrating, and so on of the newly deployed teachers with the intention of making them the best device of producing a generation which will not only be sovereign but also of captivating the world in to a healthier tomorrow.

3. Number of Periods Taught in a Week Day

In China, according to Juan (2009), the maximum number of periods the new teacher taught was 18 and the minimum was 10 per week. Usually major subjects teachers, like English, Chinese, and Math teachers had fewer teaching periods than special subject teachers. In Ethiopia Teachers have to carry a full workload with an average of 20 to 25 in addition to having to focus on the activities of the induction programme. Moreover, they are expected to involve in teaching and none teaching assignments.

Time Use of Teachers in Secondary Schools, 1998				
Workload	Lower		Upper	
	Public	Private	Public	Private
Weekly teaching workload per teacher (hours)	15	19	13	18
Teachers teaching two subjects or more (%)	33	45	4	30

Source: Caillods (2001), pp. 147–48 cited

As we can see from the above table, the average workload in Ethiopia is higher than the international standard where as in China the teachers are entertaining less work load. This symbolise the two extreme where in China induction considered as serious duty and there seems to be one of the fertile ground is created. When coming to Ethiopia even if the program considered as very critical part of the government's General Educational Quality Package, the minimum fertile ground is not yet created. Thus, the teachers may do it for the sake of doing it or for acquiring the different benefits associated with the program which finally has negative impact on the permanent nature of the program i.e. the formation of the novice teacher.

4. New Teachers Orientation

Teacher's induction in China is viewed as consisting of the following three major components: new teacher orientation, in-service training and mentoring. Thus, different orientation organized so as to orient the teachers so that the newly deployed teachers may start their work smoothly. The orientation covers topics about the school, procedures, and homeroom teachers' responsibilities (Juan: 2009). In Ethiopia, explain Tadele (2013), upon the arrival at the school, the new teachers meet with the school principal who usually organize a brief introductory orientation. Thus, the school principal introduces them to the staffs, which is important to socialize with the people they will work with, and to adapt to the environment. The principal also provide the new teachers information about the school and their teaching assignment. However orientation in the district or any level of government out of the schools is rare both in China and Ethiopia.

Answering the individual needs of the new teachers helps the smooth settlement of the new teachers. Harry K. Wong (2005) state that, considering this view some countries set up a welcome centre for the newly deployed teachers. The Dallas Independent School District in Texas and the Clark County Schools in Nevada have a "welcome centre" for their new teachers. The centres help new teachers find housing and set up utilities, provide maps, recommend banking facilities, and assist with all the other practical needs of teachers who are new in town. As to Wilhelminah (2008) Orientation should not be misguided for all the support that the teacher needs. It is just the commencement phase of the induction course. Orientation is done soon after the teacher has signed the agreement with the employer. The nature and amount of support depends on the age, background and previous experience of a teacher. This makes it apparent that orientation needs to be peculiar, specific and exclusive. Thus, individual needs must be assessed and addressed accordingly. The most important point here is that by helping the new teachers to integrate with the situation we help them to focus on their primary task which is teaching and forming the intended generation.

Orientation should be considered as the commencement of the intensive induction program. When it comes to orientation even if varied place to place the basic intention is visible both in China and in Ethiopia.

5. Novice in the first year

The newly deployed teachers before they assume permanent teaching position, they play a role as a substitute teacher and at the same time are involved in many new teacher orientation activities such as, meeting with administrators, observing lessons, and being observed teaching lessons. Teachers who make greater progresses are assigned to a regular teaching position earlier (Juan 2009). On the contrary, in Ethiopia, the new teachers assume teaching position as similar as that of the experienced teachers since the beginning of school day. Explaining the situation Tadele (2013), new teachers has to carry a full workload in addition to having to focus on the activities of the induction programme. Even if they are novice, who has to learn a lot from the actual classroom and school situation, they are required to act like an experienced teacher. Thus, to cope up with this situation, the new teacher has to work long hours than the normal working hours, and even during weekend. On top of this, they are also given various co-curricular responsibilities.

6. Lessons Observation

China considers lessons observation as another important activity that all newly deployed teachers go through. Thus, substituting the main teacher, observing lessons and being observed teaching lessons were the main activities taking place. The justification of observing lessons is that new teachers need to see the good lessons in order to simulate them in their own classroom and later develop even better ones. After the end of class, a kind of reflection meeting will be organized in which other new teachers and mentors also included. This is also another opportunity for the newly deployed teachers to learn significant points on the teaching learning process. On another note, Ethiopia also includes lesson observation as part of the induction program. However, different from China, it is only the mentor who is entitled observing the newly deployed teacher. Moreover, the post observation discussion is organized between the two partners, mentor and mentee.

Ann L. Wood (2009) citing immense scholarly works explain that systematic, structured observations of novice teachers' teaching practices are a major component of quality induction programs. All observed novice teacher behaviours become topics of mentor/novice teacher dialogue about observed lessons and larger issues about teaching and learning. These observations often follow the peer coaching model where the observation is preceded by planning between the novice teacher and the mentor and followed by a feedback conference. Observations are used to encourage novice teachers to think critically about their practices and to reflect on their knowledge, skills, and abilities as teachers. Novice teachers' observations of their mentors' and other experienced teachers' instructions are valued induction activities. Findings show that novice teachers view observations with their mentors of experienced teachers as most useful because they can compare their own observations with their mentors' observations. While encouraging the existing attempt, Ethiopia should further see the way the observation is conducted i.e. new teachers should get an opportunity to visit senior teachers while it will help them to observe how the mentors practice the theory. Additionally, the post observation phase should include other new teachers and mentors which can be considered as experience sharing. This kind of program can be organized by the school once in a while.

7. Mentoring

After reviewing four studies, Richard M. Ingersoll and Michael Strong (2011), when explaining the effects of teachers' Induction on Student Achievement, they identify Mentoring as the core element of induction program. Since all teachers in the samples participated in the mentoring program, these studies compared teachers according to the degree and type of support they received. The two studies in California and the study of large, urban, East Coast district each found evidence that greater participation by beginning teachers in mentoring programs had a positive impact on their students' achievement; the New York City study showed mixed effects—some positive effects, but also, in some comparisons, no effects.

For mentoring program to be successful in accomplishing their primary goal of supporting and guiding beginning teachers, they should be integrated into the larger framework of the induction process for the beginning teachers. The component essential for a successful mentoring of beginning teachers include: Program Purpose and Rational; Mentors role and practice; Program Administration, Implementation, and Evaluation; and school, District, and school Cultures and Responsibilities (Odell, 2006 cited in Jared and Emmanuel, 2012).

Juan (2009) explains that in China mentors activity can be summarized as; first, mentors helped protégés solve problems in teaching and planning. Second, protégés observed their mentors teach lessons. Third, mentors observed and critiqued the lessons that their protégés taught. On the other hand when we see the case in Ethiopia Tadese (2013) agree that the role of mentor is similar to the above explanations. However, the same author identified three kinds of mentor appointment.

1. Mentors and mentee from the same department and similar educational preparation,
2. Mentor and mentee similar educational preparation but different department and
3. Educational preparation of mentee better than the mentor.

Moreover, both mentors and mentees lack the necessary training to conduct the program.

Thus, we can conclude that the success of induction has a lot to do with the quality of mentor and the quality of mentor depend on the adequate preparation of the mentor and capacity building. In this regard, Ethiopia needs to reconsider mentoring so that the role of mentors fits to the needs of the mentees and the education system at large.

8. Conclusion

It is clear that the interest of human being is growing from generation to generation. This helped the development of science and technology. It is possible that such progress is the impact of the various investments in education. One of the investments is on the professional development of teachers which we see it as updating and upgrading. This paper made an attempt to see the updating of the new teachers by comparing the practice of teachers induction in China and Ethiopia. The writer believe that the work encourage discussions particularly among the concerned bodies in Ethiopia where the practice of induction yet to develop.

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