



# Motivation and collaboration: The keys to a developmental framework for teachers' professional learning



Tracy L. Durksen<sup>a,\*</sup>, Robert M. Klassen<sup>b</sup>, Lia M. Daniels<sup>c</sup>

<sup>a</sup> School of Education, University of New South Wales, Level 1 John Goodsell, Sydney, NSW 2052 Australia

<sup>b</sup> Department of Education, University of York, Derwent D/L/206, York, YO10 5DD UK

<sup>c</sup> Department of Educational Psychology, University of Alberta, 6-102 Education North, Edmonton, AB, T6G 2G5 Canada

## HIGHLIGHTS

- Teachers' motivational beliefs and professional learning are positively related.
- Time and space to think is the most important reason for professional learning.
- The most important types of professional learning involve collaboration.
- We propose a research framework for teachers' motivation and professional learning.

## ARTICLE INFO

### Article history:

Received 17 November 2016

Received in revised form

13 May 2017

Accepted 22 May 2017

### Keywords:

Teacher motivation  
Professional learning  
Teacher development  
Teacher engagement  
Teacher self-efficacy  
Collective efficacy

## ABSTRACT

The current study contributes to the growing body of empirical research on the connection between motivation and teachers' learning across professional life phases. With data from 253 practicing teachers, we tested hypothesized relationships through structural equation modelling in order to answer the question: How do practicing teachers' efficacy beliefs and engagement influence their professional learning beliefs? Results highlight the positive relationship between motivational constructs and professional learning – specifically, when learning is collaborative. Conclusions include implications for future research and a proposed integrative theoretical and developmental framework for understanding teachers' motivation and professional learning.

© 2017 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

## 1. Introduction

To promote what is best for student learning and teacher wellbeing, we need to support teachers who are in constant contact with students (Shirley, 2015). Teachers' wellbeing is nurtured through the satisfaction of key intrinsic motivators (e.g., relatedness; Ryan & Deci, 2000) and can be influenced by ongoing relationships between teachers' professional and personal resources. Yet how this process is experienced can depend on a teacher's career stage. In the current study, we focus on the opportunities and resources for motivational and engaging professional learning

as one critical way to support teachers. We begin with a definition of teachers' professional learning and identify the influential role that motivation plays in the life of a teacher. Next we describe how social cognitive theory serves as an initial overarching framework for hypothesizing a structural equation model of teachers' motivation and professional learning. Following the presentation and interpretation of the results, we conclude by proposing an integrative theoretical and developmental framework that attempts to categorize the complex, relational, and context-specific nature of professional learning for teachers.

### 1.1. Teachers' professional learning

The phrase professional *development* is often used when referring activities that are arranged for teachers, while professional *learning* places the focus and responsibility for learning on teachers

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: [tracy.durksen@unsw.edu.au](mailto:tracy.durksen@unsw.edu.au) (T.L. Durksen), [robert.klassen@york.ac.uk](mailto:robert.klassen@york.ac.uk) (R.M. Klassen), [lia.daniels@ualberta.ca](mailto:lia.daniels@ualberta.ca) (L.M. Daniels).

and their evolving needs. The definition of teachers' professional learning (TPL) used in this research comes from [Avalos \(2011\)](#) along with [Richter and colleagues \(Richter, Kunter, Klusmann, Lüdtke, & Baumert, 2011\)](#) because of their inclusion of motivational constructs. Here we view TPL as:

a complex process, which requires cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers, individually and collectively, the capacity and willingness to examine where each one stands in terms of convictions and beliefs and the perusal and enactment of appropriate alternatives for improvement or change ... [within] particular educational policy environments or school cultures ([Avalos, 2011](#), p. 10).

Specifically, the complex process of TPL includes “the uptake of formal and informal learning opportunities that deepen and extend teachers' professional competence, including knowledge, beliefs, motivation, and self-regulatory skills” ([Richter et al., 2011](#), p. 116).

Ideally, effective TPL can be identified by a teacher's professional growth plan that leads to the improvement of student learning. The description of the TPL process often includes comparisons that emphasize the activity (e.g., formal/informal, receptive/constructive) or the people involved (e.g., individual/collaborative, teacher-initiated/mandated; [Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002](#); [Hoekstra, Korthagen, Brekelmans, Beijaard, & Imants, 2009](#); [Jansen in de Wal, Den Brok, Hooijer, Martens, & Van den Beemt, 2014](#)). In the current research, we begin with a definition of TPL activities using [Joyce and Calhoun's \(2010\)](#) five categories of professional learning: individual TPL such as online coursework, collaborative professional service identified through mentorship, groups of teachers in collaborative and cooperative models such as professional learning communities, models for curricular and instructional changes such as workshops on formal initiatives, and traditional workshop models recognized as conferences or conventions.

For researchers interested in the frequency of teachers' participation within categories of professional learning, there is the comprehensive Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS; [OECD, 2013](#)). The TALIS questions are organised around seven categories: initial qualification programme, individual or collaborative research, observational school visits, formal mentoring, network or community of teachers, courses and workshops, and education conferences. Similarly, the Teachers' Professional Development at Work (TPD@Work; [Evers, Kreijns, & Van der Heijden, 2011](#)) survey presents questions organized by five theoretical themes. The TPD@Work survey was based on [Kwakman's \(2003\)](#) work and asks teachers to score how often (1 = *hardly ever* to 4 = *often*) they participated in professional learning activities. The TPD@Work survey contains themes similar to [Joyce and Calhoun \(2010\)](#) and consists of items on professional learning through:

- Keeping up-to-date through activities such as visiting educational Internet sites
- Experimenting within the classroom by applying and evaluating new practices such as new forms of assessment
- Activities that encourage reflection such as inviting colleagues to attend and provide feedback on a lesson
- Collaborating with colleagues for the purpose of improving a lesson through activities such as co-developing materials
- Collaborating with colleagues for the purpose of improving school development through activities such as assembling a school working group or committee.

From this foundation, we sought to understand how practicing teachers define and value their own professional learning when

framed in relation to motivational beliefs. As a result of this study, we conclude by proposing an integrative and non-linear framework of motivation with professional growth occurring through six embedded models of teachers' professional learning.

## 1.2. Context for learning

It is important to view teachers' work in the overall school context and to critically examine the working conditions that enable teachers to teach effectively ([OECD, 2013, 2015](#)). The current study took place in the Canadian province of Alberta, where the term professional learning has been used to encapsulate the wide variety of formal and informal opportunities for enhancing teaching practice while reciprocal forces engage teachers to remain centered on student learning ([Beauchamp, Klassen, Parsons, Durksen, & Taylor, 2014](#)). Alberta has been described as one of six high performance international systems ([Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012](#); [Hargreaves & Shirley, 2012](#); [Sahlberg, 2015](#)), with research attention drawn to the successes of a professional learning program called the Alberta Initiative for School Improvement ([Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012](#); [Parsons, McRae, & Taylor, 2006](#)). It is also important to note that Alberta teachers reported one of the highest rates of participation in professional learning despite an above-average teaching workload ([OECD, 2015](#)). Moreover, Alberta teachers reported the highest level of support for participation in those activities. Support, according to [OECD \(2014\)](#), was defined by administration's provisions for professional learning participation (e.g., additional days off from teaching). Yet TPL tends to involve more “one-size-fits-all” experiences (e.g., workshops or conventions), leaving little opportunity for teachers to intentionally engage in professional collaboration ([Sahlberg, 2015](#)).

## 1.3. A motivational approach to TPL

The overarching framework for the current study is social cognitive theory ([Bandura, 1997](#)). While examining TPL from a life-span approach, we recognize that TPL has the potential to influence and be influenced by teachers' beliefs and practices, which in turn influences student engagement and learning. Thus, we frame the current study with [Bandura's \(1997\)](#) theoretical reciprocal determinism by acknowledging three influential factors – personal, environmental, and behavioural – that can lead to professional growth and enhanced teaching practice. For example, when a teacher recognizes that a change in his or her teaching behaviour is enhancing student learning (e.g., applying a new strategy after a professional learning experience), teacher self-efficacy—the belief a teacher has about their capabilities to influence student learning ([Bandura, 1997](#))—may increase.

Moreover, motivation researchers consider teachers' self-efficacy as a personal resource that can enhance teachers' engagement ([Bakker, Albrecht, & Leitner, 2011](#); [Klassen, Tze, Betts, & Gordon, 2011](#)). Job resources, such as those available through effective TPL can strengthen personal resources, promote work engagement, and help buffer against job demands that are often presented through workload ([Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2007](#)). Thus, elements of the Job Demands–Resources model (JD-R; [Bakker & Bal, 2010](#)) may help further identify the important relationship between job resources (e.g., TPL) and personal resources (e.g., teachers' self-efficacy beliefs). In addition, elements of self-determination theory (SDT; [Ryan & Deci, 2000](#)) may further help promote our understanding of the important influences stemming from TPL that can help satisfy teachers' key intrinsic motivators (e.g., relatedness through collaborative TPL opportunities). Thus, elements from JD-R and SDT contributed to our overarching theoretical framework.

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/4941563>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/4941563>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)