

CHAPTER VI
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

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6.0 Introduction

Education reform efforts, teacher quality and the challenges of a constantly changing world require professional development practices that enable teachers to master new skills, assume new responsibilities, deepen and extend knowledge, and create lasting changes (Corcoran, 1995; Darling-Hammond, 1999; Fullan, 2001; Sparks 2002). For professional development to bring about these changes, it is important to know the characteristics of effective professional development (Cohen & Hill, 1998; Sparks, 2002), to understand how adults learn (Danielson, 2002) and to use that knowledge to design professional development activities (Speck, 1996). Professional development that has been “thoughtfully conceived, well-designed and well-supported” is believed to be the key to every successful school improvement effort (Guskey, 2000, p.4). In the past few years, there have been significant changes in the context, within which professional development is delivered as school reform efforts evolve based on the requirements of the No child Left Behind Act of 2001 (U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Policy makers and educators recognise that effective professional development is the vehicle for improving classroom teaching practices (Cohen & Hill, 1998; Danielson, 2002; Darling-Hammond & Ball, 1997; Guskey, 2003a; Sparks, 2002). Research confirms the common sense view that high quality teachers are the foundation of highly effective schools and the teacher effectiveness is the key to educational outcomes. Globalization, regional integration, and the ever-increasing mobility of students and scholars have made the need for internationally recognized standards among and between nations. There is a need for the developing nations to understand the importance of quality education that can prepare the human resources not only for their countries but also for global needs.

6.1 Purpose of the Study

India is a developing democratic republic. She is presently engaged in developing quality education for her citizens. There is, therefore a great need

for the well-prepared and trained teachers, principals, supervisors and inspecting officers. It also calls for adequate preparation for programs in the teacher training institutions. National Council for Teacher Education has been working in this direction to establish quality standards in school education in general and Teacher Education in specific. However, India, like other developing countries, needs a clear and transparent policy and regulatory framework for the professional development of teachers.

In the global era, USA is acknowledged as a high knowledge based society. Achievements in scientific, technological and medical sciences have made USA the model for many countries. USA has also developed a system of civic education that is among the very finest in the world. A review of the related literature of the researches conducted in the USA provided the researcher with the idea that these achievements were possible due to the continuous Professional Development programs for teachers, which are both Governmental and school based and are on content, pedagogy and psychology based.

A systematic examination of other systems of education will help to plan effective policies and professional development programs for one's own country. In a world where International relations and connections are getting more and more important and complex, it is of crucial importance to make it possible for researchers to broaden their outlook and learn more about other countries through research. Therefore, it would be helpful to compare and contrast different approaches to better understand the relative merits of professional development strategies in other countries. This information could help providers of professional development choose between different strategies and plan more effective professional development. Keeping these specific features of system for teacher development, in mind the researcher has chosen USA for a detailed study. The study is aimed at knowing the educational policies and the programs of professional development and their implementation in the schools of the USA, the specific factors responsible for this noteworthy development, the certification laws, professional organizations, community needs, size of schools, nature of job opportunities

and skills. The researcher has made an attempt, to understand the policies and the programs for the continuous professional development of teachers in the USA, in order to draw implications for the Indian context.

6.2 Professional Development of Teachers: Meaning and Importance

Professional Development refers to the continuous education a teacher receives after he/she has had the teacher education and entered the teaching profession. It includes all the programs, educational, social, or others, in which the teacher takes a vital part; all the extra education which the teacher receives at different institutions by way of refresher and other professional courses, and all the travel and visits which he/she undertakes. All these expand a professional teacher's experience and vision.

Professional development has traditionally been provided to teachers through schools in-service workshops. The term in-service is self-explanatory. In the classic conception of that model, the district or school brings in an outside consultant or curriculum expert on a staff-development day to give teachers a one-time training, seminar on a variety of pedagogic or subject-area topics. Such an approach has been routinely lamented in professional literature.

The Commission on Teacher Education in the United States America (1996) explained Professional Development clearly as: "The continued education of teachers' means much more than making up defects in preparation. It means continuous growth in the capacity to teach. It means broadened understanding of human development and human living. And now, more than any period at school history, it means growth in one's capacity to work with others".

It is critical to pay close attention to how training and support for both new and experienced teachers are being given. It is critical for veteran teachers to have on-going and regular opportunities to learn from each other. On-going Professional Development keeps teachers up-to-date on new researches on how children learn, emerging technology tools for the classroom, new curriculum resources, which would develop them holistically to meet world-class standards in the given context. The best professional development is on-going, experiential, collaborative, and connected to and derived from working with students and understanding their culture.

Professional Development is taken by the teachers to keep oneself up to date with current thinking in their subject area and in pedagogy. The new media of learning, technology based teaching, knowledge system and raising one's own qualifications requires continuous learning. It also refreshes and revitalizes teachers and gives them a chance to share ideas with colleagues and experts in their field. Professional Development is crucial to the long term development of teachers as well as for the long term success of the programs. A different type of development is needed at different levels. Professional development would help to deepen and broaden content knowledge and enable teachers to anticipate and prepare for changes in the teaching-learning processes. It also empowers teachers to identify problems and make complex decisions to solve them. It improves the job performance skills of an individual teacher and to extend the experience of an individual teacher for career development or promotion purposes. What teachers know and help students to improve and achieve higher level of success is what matters in schools today. The knowledge and skills of teachers' are impacted by on-going professional and staff development.

6.3 Educational Policies and Programs

In the field of education, educational policies are important issues to be studied because of their contribution to the development of education. In India, the National Policy on Education 1986 (NPE) (revised 1990) and Program of Action 1992 are significant in addressing various challenges of Education. With respect to teachers' professional development, these policies have highlighted that the emphasis should be on developing a teacher rather than on training one. The NPE (1986) also lays emphasis on the continuing education of teachers and the need for teachers to meet the thrusts envisaged in this policy.

However, in developed countries training is an essential part of teacher professionalism and policies and programs focus on the training and development of teachers. In USA, the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, initially authorized in 1965 as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), was signed into law on January 8, 2002 as a means of holding states,

school districts and schools more accountable for improving the academic performance of each student regardless of economic status, race, ethnicity, proficiency in English or physical disability. For this the NCLB has given guidelines and recommendations for teacher development programs. Under NCLB, high school teachers must major in the 2 subject areas they teach and pass a licensing exam in those subjects to be considered highly qualified. Practicing teachers, who do not meet this standard, must either complete additional coursework to earn the equivalent of a bachelor's degree, or pass state content area exams in each subject they teach. At the class level, a majority of 9th- through 12th-grade classes were taught by teachers with an in-field major, an in-field certification, or both.

According to the policies all 50 States and the 2 federal districts in USA require public school teachers to be licensed. Licensure is not required for teachers in most private schools. Usually a teaching license is granted by the State Board of Education or a licensure advisory committee. Requirements for regular licenses to teach kindergarten through grade 12 vary from state to state. Almost all the states require applicants for a teacher's license to be tested for competency in basic skills, such as reading and writing, and in teaching and also require teachers to exhibit proficiency in their subject areas. Most states require teachers to complete a minimum number of hours of continuing education to renew their license. Many states have reciprocity agreements that make it easier for teachers licensed in one state to become licensed in another state.

6.4 Review of the Related Literature

Educational reforms in the USA and around the world are setting ambitious goals for student learning and there is a great recognition and importance for professional development. Professional development has been identified as an integral part of educational reforms (Gusky, 2000; Hawley and Valli, 1999; Lewis, Parsad, Carey, Barfai, Farris and Smerdon, 1999) and has been included in documents like educational excellence for All Children Act of 1999 (U.S Department of Education 1999) and No child Left Behind (Bush 2001). Lewis et al., (1999) writes "The inclusions of a national goal for

teach Professional Development represents an increased focus on professional development as an important vehicle for school reforms and education excellence” (p-21). Various educational reforms papers and documents claim that professional development is the key to (1) raising student achievement, (2) implementing high academic standards, (3) transforming schools, (4) improving instructions and (5) creating authentic professional learning communities. (Guskey, 1995; Libermann 1995; Sparks and Hirsh, 2000).

The researcher has reviewed a total of 85 research studies. This comprises of 59 studies from USA, 11 studies from other countries and 15 studies from the Indian context. A summary of the reviewed literature on professional development of teachers is categorised and presented under the following sub headings: studies on policies (9), programs (22), perception of teachers and principals (16), effect of the programs (31) and evaluation (7) of the programs.

From the review of literature it was found that professional development programs are important for teachers to enhance their teaching competencies. Studies also revealed that the effectiveness of the programs is largely depending on the expertise of the resource persons and the relevant design based on the needs of the teachers (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, and Birman, 2002; Nonyelum, 2010;Srivatsava, 1966).The state policies focused exclusively on the time required and the types of opportunities that can be used for renewal of licensure but the quality and the relevance of the professional development was not regulated by states (Grossman, Tabitha, Hirsch and Eric , 2009). The study revealed how the policies are meeting the needs of beginning teachers and found that a gap between the policies for certification and the implementation exists (Allison Ashley, and Christa, 2007).

The novice teachers experienced the professional development to be high quality than the experienced teachers(Spicer, 2008; Sefrit, 2008). From the review it was found that the professional development programs need to be effectively planned, implemented, and evaluated. Teachers found the programs to be ineffective (Yiasemina and Loizos, 2008; Meera, 2009).

From the review of literature it was found that the right efforts to improve teacher effectiveness can lead to higher and more equitable student

achievement (Hammond and Rothman, 2011; Wenglinksy, 2000; Pradere, 2007; Rosemary, 2010). Teacher developed professional development programs which included independent exploration, collaborative time with peers and on-site coaching enables teachers to utilize technology for lessons and classroom management were very successful and also facilitated the students in using technology tools (Miller, 2009; Cynthia, 2010; .Hoque, Alam and Abdullah, 2011). The studies also revealed that effective evaluation and feed-back systems are essential for professional development programs to be effective (Murphy, 2008; Furman, 2005).

Reviewing the methodologies, tools and techniques employed by various studies, the researcher could gather insight for the present study. Studies on policies were all qualitative studies which used, questionnaires for teachers, interviews with district authorities and document analysis (Sylvia, 2005; Kyle, 2006; Grossman, Tabitha, Hirsch and Eric, 2009). There were 2 case studies conducted on programs (Frank, 2003; Hall, 2007). A few quantitative studies were conducted (Duygu, 2006; Spicer, 2008; Robinson, 2009, Suski, 2009). Surveys were conducted and the data was analysed by mixed methodology (Sefrit, 2008; Teague, 2010). There were 32 studies conducted on the impact of the professional development programs. There were five studies which used mixed methodology (Steinback, 2008; Rosemary, 2010; Meade, 2006; Pradere, 2007; Kelly, 2006). Quantitative studies were seven in number (Murphy, 2008; Miller, 2009), the rest of the studies were qualitative which were descriptive studies and case studies (Ralph, 2010; Kelley, 2009; Susan, 2010). Most of the studies triangulated the data received from the interviews, questionnaires and the observations to find the impact of the program.

After reviewing the studies, the researcher have not come across any study pertaining to the specific policies related to professional development of teachers in India. Further, most of the studies conducted in this area are data based and interpreted quantitatively rather than qualitatively. The studies that were reviewed, especially studies in USA, it was found that most of the studies were conducted on the evaluation of the programs in terms of content,

logistics, methodology and impact of specific programs and were qualitative in nature. Very few international comparative educational studies are conducted in India and therefore, the researcher strongly feels that the present study is extremely relevant in this context to study the policies and programs of professional development of USA and draw some implications to India.

6.5 Rationale of the Study

Quality in education is the key concept of nations across the globe. Teachers occupy an important place in the educational scenario. The success of the institutions and the quality of education ultimately depends upon the teachers in those institutions. They are the ‘critical link’ between the nation and the nation builders of tomorrow – students. Teachers need to be seen as creators of knowledge and thinking professionals. They need to be empowered to recognize that there is a need for shift, from the behaviourist to a constructive domain. One important way to provide teacher support is through Professional Development.

The primary way in which teachers are supported in their personal and professional growth is through professional development programs. The policies and programs of the government must provide education and high quality professional development to the teachers.

The in-service education and continuous professional development of teachers has been given prime importance in the USA over the last two decades. The specific factors responsible for this development are: certification laws, professional organizations, community needs, size of schools, nature of job opportunities and skills.

Review of the related literature of the researches conducted in the USA provided an idea that this achievement is possible due continuous PD programs for teachers, which are conducted by both the Governmental and schools and are based on content, pedagogy and psychology. Keeping the specific features of the system for teacher development, the researcher has taken the USA for the study. The study is aimed at knowing the educational policies and the programs of professional development and their implementation in the schools

of the USA. Therefore the present study is planned with the following questions in mind and to explore the answers.

6.6 Research Questions

During the development of this present research study, several research questions have emerged and they are:

1. What are the different policies formulated by the Federal and the State Government for the professional development of teachers in the USA?
2. What are the on-going professional developments Programs being conducted for teachers in the USA?
3. Do the teachers have the freedom to choose the type of professional development programs to participate in the USA?
4. To what extent do teachers believe that such professional development programs improve their teaching and classroom practice in the USA?
5. What is the impact of the professional development programs on teacher development in the USA?
6. How is the study of the professional development policies and programs of USA relevant to the Indian context?

By keeping the above research questions in mind, the researcher has formulated the research problems as follows:

6.7 Statement of the Problem

A Study of the Policies and Programmes for the Professional Development of School Teachers in the United States of America

6.8 Objectives of the Study

1. To study the Federal and State Policies related to Professional Development Programs for the School teachers in the USA, in terms of:
 - Guidelines for Teachers
 - Professional standards and requirements
 - Monitoring and appraisal system
 - Career advancement if any

2. To study the on-going Professional Development Programs in USA, in terms of content, methodology and feedback system.
3. To study the opinions of Teachers and the Principals regarding the Professional Development programs.
4. To study the issues and challenges in managing the Professional Development Programs.
5. To study the relevance and to draw implications to the Indian context.

6.9 Explanation of the Terms Used

1. Policies: Refers the broad guidelines that direct the plan of actions. Policies describe the federal and State Government guidelines for the PD of teachers in the USA.
2. Programs: Refers to the activities evolved from the relevant policies at the Federal and State level.
3. Professional Development Programs: Refers to in-service teacher development programs conducted by federal, state governments and school based for enhancing the teacher competencies.

6.10 Delimitation of the Study

This study is delimited to a few states of the USA and selected school districts.

6.11 Methodology

The present study is of a descriptive kind of study. A descriptive study includes survey method of all kinds and fact-finding enquiries carried out through interviews and focused group discussions. Descriptive survey studies are conducted to collect detailed descriptions of existing phenomena, current conditions and practices or to make more intelligent plans for improving them. Survey studies take different forms depending upon the scope, nature and purpose of the problems under investigation. This particular study sought to reveal the nature of Professional Development policies, programs and the perceptions of the District Educational officers, principals and teachers of a sample of secondary schools in USA. For this qualitative and quantitative method were used. For the quantitative method, survey questions were developed for the teachers to answer the research based questions. For the

qualitative method, four qualitative components of data collection were incorporated into the study. One-to-one interviews, focus group discussions, document analysis and participant observation; afforded the opportunity to develop a more comprehensive understanding of the policies and programs for the professional development of school teachers in USA.

6.11.1 Population of the Study

USA is a federal republic with fifty States and two Federal Districts. Each State has many school districts which comprises of Private Schools, Public Schools and the Charter Schools. The present study is in the context of all the schools at the secondary school level.

6.11.2 Sample of the Study

A purposive sampling technique was used for selecting the states for the study. The states were selected purposively on the basis of the following criteria:

1. States where the academic excellence is comparatively higher in the last three years as per the American Legislative Exchange Council Report (ALEC) were selected. This ALEC report is published every year by the Federal Government in USA and places the states according to their educational attainment.
2. Under each selected state one school district was selected where the research study was accepted.
3. Under each school district, schools, where permission was granted for research were chosen.
4. The principals and the secondary school teachers of the selected schools constituted the sample for the present study.

6.11.3 Research Tools and Techniques

In order to collect relevant and authentic data, researcher used the following research tools.

6.11.3.1 Document Analysis

The researcher personally collected the reports of the policies of the federal and state governments from the District School Education Boards of the selected school districts for the present study. The relevant documents were analysed to study and understand the nature of policies pertaining to the Professional development of teachers, guidelines for implementation and specific rules and regulations for the teacher development in school education.

6.11.3.2 Participant Observation

The researcher personally visited the centres where professional development programs were taking place and observed the on-going Professional development programs to understand the actual transaction of the programs in terms of content, methodology and feedback system. This gave the researcher the first hand information about the actual implementation of the program, perception of the teachers regarding the nature of the program, the need for the program, the logistics of the programs, the impact of the programs on the teachers, adaptability of the programs in the classroom practice and in their teaching learning process. This also gave information about the resource persons. The researcher attended the Math teachers' content knowledge workshop conducted by the St.Louis Public School District. The school district's goal was that all students improve in math curriculum. There were 10 beginning teachers, 8 teachers in their 4th and 5th year of teaching and 8 tenured teachers, teaching grade 8 to 10, the researcher and the program's instructor in attendance.

6.11.3.3.1 Interview of the Professional Development Directors of the School Districts

The researcher interviewed the Director of professional development of the school districts to understand the policies for the professional development of teachers and to understand how the programs were conducted, implemented and evaluated.

6.11.3.3.2 Interview of the Principals of the Schools under Study

The researcher interviewed the Principals to understand the policies of the federal and state governments for the professional development of teachers, the on-going Professional development programs and the issues and challenges associated with the planning and implementation of the professional development programs.

6.11.3.3.3 Focus Group Discussion with Teachers

One goal of the focus group was to highlight the understandings and meanings that may be revealed by participants and the several explanations articulated by the participants. In order to encourage active involvement by all members, participants were given a copy of the topics of discussion in advance. This would offer more opportunities for participants to be actively involved since they had time to reflect prior to the focus group session. It was recognized by the researcher that there will be less control over the data as the participants may ask questions and express opinions, but the researcher kept participants focused on the open-ended pre-determined questions. For the focus group discussion the teachers who had responded to the questionnaires were chosen based on their interest and availability.

6.11.3.4 Questionnaires

A questionnaire as a tool for a particular study depends upon the objectives of the study, the amount of time at the disposal of the investigator, the availability of time of the participants and the competency of the researcher. Based on these criteria, the researcher developed questionnaires for teachers and principals to meet the demands of the objectives. Questionnaire consisting of both open and closed ended questions were developed by the researcher, based on a thorough review of the literature. The questionnaires were validated. These questionnaires helped to understand the teachers' perception of the professional development programs, need of the programs, their freedom to choose the programs, impact of the programs, issues and challenges thereof.

6.11.3.4.1 Questionnaires for Teachers

Going by the objective of this study the final questionnaire were designed consisting of ten (X) sections of questions in a closed-ended or open-ended format. For the closed-ended questions a Five point Scale was used. The respondents indicated how closely their feelings matched the question or statement on a rating scale. The number at one end of the scale represented least agreement or *strongly disagree*, and the number at the other end of the scale represented most agreement or *strongly agree*. The open-ended forms of the questions were constructed to provide greater depth of the response and freedom to the respondents so that they could reveal their opinions and clarify their responses. From the responses, the researcher could make a generalization of the opinions. These questionnaires helped to understand the teachers' perception of the professional development programs, need of the programs, their freedom to choose the programs, the impact of the programs, issues and challenges.

6.11.3.4.2 Questionnaires for Principals

The questionnaires for the principals were directed towards the principals' perception on the teachers' professional development. The questionnaires were designed to study the Principal's perception on the on-going programs, the need for the programs, the impact of these programs on the school's development, teachers' professional growth and the issues and challenges faced in the implementation of the programs. Going by the objective of this study, the final questionnaire was designed consisting of ten (X) sections of questions in closed ended or open ended format to study the principal's perceptions on the various aspects of the current programs and on the issues and challenges faced when implementing them.

6.11.3.5 Procedure for Data Collection

From The American Legislative Exchange Council Report (ALEC) which is published every year by the Federal Government in USA and places the states according to their educational attainment, four states were selected by the researcher and in each state one city were selected randomly. The researcher

applied to the Research Review committee of the school districts for permission to conduct research in their school districts. After receiving permission from the Research Review Committee, the researcher contacted the school principals for permission to conduct research in their schools. After receiving the permission, the researcher personally went to the schools, and collected the requisite data through interviews and questionnaires to the principals and teachers. The researcher made extensive field notes. The Directors of professional development programs of the School Districts were interviewed and documents on professional development were collected by the researcher personally.

6.11.3.6 Procedure for Data Analysis

The data collected from the multiple sources was put to content analysis. This process enabled the researcher to check the facts and evidences collected and thereby validity was built in. A detailed analysis was done state wise by analysing the information gathered from different sources which is presented in Chapter IV of the thesis. At the end, an attempt was made to derive conclusions in the form of major findings of the study logically in the following areas; the policies and programs pertaining to professional development of teachers, the process of implementation, evaluation and feedback. The perception of the teachers and the principals was also considered.

6.12 Major Findings of the Study

The findings of the study are discussed in terms of the policy framework for professional development and programs for the professional development of teachers.

6.12.1 Policy Framework for the Professional Development of Teachers

From the national reports and documents procured from the respective school authorities pertaining to the teacher professional development in United States of America by the researcher, a detailed analysis was conducted by keeping the objectives in mind.

1. It was found that in all the States and the federal district of USA, teaching licensure is required for teachers to teach in public schools however the licensure is not compulsory requirement for the teachers in most private schools.
2. It was revealed from the study that with respect to NCLBA (2001), a teacher is expected to be qualified in the examination conducted by the state to obtain the teaching licence. The licence need to be renewed, once in three to five years depending on the states. Teachers need certain number of credits to renew their license from the professional development programs or college courses as well.
3. It was found from the discussions that a performance-based system for licensure is being followed in some school districts. This performance-based system for licensure usually require teachers to demonstrate satisfactory teaching performance over an extended period in order to obtain a provisional license, in addition to passing an examination in their subject.
4. The study revealed that states offer alternative licensure programs for teachers who change their carrier to teaching from other carriers. It was found that States have reciprocity agreements that make it easier for teachers licensed in one State to become licensed in another state
5. From the discussions with the directors of professional development, it was found the many teachers join the teaching profession coming from other countries, especially India. Their number of years of service in their respective country is taken into consideration. But these teachers have to complete the licensure programs within a specified time or their contracts are cancelled.
6. It was found that the federal government through NCLBA has set standards and requirements for teacher qualification and professional development.
7. It was observed that organisations such as the NSDC have been associated with the federal government for teachers' professional

development. It has also specified standards for teacher professional development on context, process and content.

8. It was found that the NCLBA mandates teachers to be proficient in their subject knowledge and they also understand how much of that to be taught to their students.

6.12.2 Professional Development programs for Teachers

The programs for professional development are presented in six categories such as the nature of the program, the program implementation, the evaluation of the program, impact of the program, incentives for participation in the programs and the issues and challenges in implementing the professional development programs.

6.12.3 Nature of Professional development Programs

The study revealed that professional development programs conducted for the teachers by different agencies are with relevance to content knowledge, pedagogy, evaluation, and use of technology and for personal growth.

1. Through the questionnaires and discussions with the teachers the researcher found that, the professional development programs conducted by the state are mainly for content knowledge in different subjects and personal growth.
2. The school district professional development directors revealed that the school districts conducted programs for Technology based pedagogy, and evaluation patterns. It was also found that workshops were conducted for content knowledge and classroom management.
3. It was found from the discussions with the principals that the school based programs were varied. Beginning teachers had classroom management and evaluation programs. Experienced teachers had techno-pedagogy programs.
4. The professional development programs are basically needs based and are planned on the basis of the continuous reviews and researches conducted by the school districts and the colleges of teacher education affiliated to the school districts.

5. It was found from the questionnaires and the discussions with the teachers that, the teachers attend professional development programs conducted by the State Government such as National seminars and workshops for different subjects. The teachers also undergo training programs conducted by the state government through the National Association of School Teachers during the school vacations.
6. The study revealed that the focus of the professional development programs were to update the content knowledge and pedagogy of the teachers in the subjects of mathematics and science, the evaluation patterns for assessing students and also to help teachers to teach diverse and ethnic group of students.
7. It was found that the professional development programs organised by the school districts focused on the use of digital technology and use of webinars.
8. It was observed that the focus of professional development programs for the beginning teachers were for classroom management and evaluation practices.

6.12.4. Implementation and Evaluation of the Professional Development Programs

- **Planning and Implementation**

1. The professional development programs are basically needs based and are planned on the basis of the continuous reviews and researches conducted by the school districts and the colleges of teacher education affiliated to the school districts.
2. Professional development programs for teachers have been offered by the government as well as by individual schools.
3. It was found from the questionnaires and the discussions with the teachers that, the teachers attend professional development programs conducted by the State Government such as National seminars and workshops for different subjects. The teachers also undergo training

programs conducted by the state government through the National Association of School Teachers during the school vacations.

4. The study also revealed that the School Districts administer needs assessment surveys to the teachers near the end of the school year for the following year to determine the professional needs. And the programs are conducted in the beginning of the year and on the specified professional development days.
5. From the study it was found that the school Principals plan professional development activities based primarily on teacher needs and student test scores; the schools' plans provide adequate time for professional development on school sites and year round. It was also found from the discussions with the principals that the subject teachers meet once in a week to discuss the student achievement and also discuss the areas in which the teachers need improvement to increase student achievement
6. It was found that the teachers' self-directed plan for the type of professional development programs needed for them helped them in their personal growth.
7. The study also revealed that the subject teachers met once in a week to discuss student achievement and also discuss the areas in which the teachers need improvement to increase student achievement. The training for which is given in the school by the principal, supervisor or the head of the department.
8. It was found from the study that the colleges of teacher education in the respective states also design and conduct short term courses for teachers in content, pedagogic and managerial competencies.

- **Evaluation**

1. It was found from the discussions with the directors of professional development of the school districts and the school principals that, once the teachers undergo training, it is implemented in the class rooms. The implementation and the impact of the programs for teaching-learning are evaluated through a comprehensive system of evaluation. The school

districts evaluate the effectiveness of the program by visiting and observing the teachers classroom practices. The mentors of the beginning teachers send their observation of the teachers in the classroom directly to the school district officials.

2. It was found that the officials of the school districts in collaboration *with* the principal gives feedback and helps the teachers to improve on their performance.
3. The teachers revealed that, the principal, the coordinators and the mentor teachers observe the teachers in their classroom for the implementation and impact to learners and feedback given to teachers personally. They are again evaluated after a gap.
4. It was found that the school principals and the mentor teachers were given training, separately for the evaluation and implementation of the professional development programs

6.12.5 Impact of the Professional Development Programs

1. The study revealed that the teachers have the liberty to choose the programs conducted by the state, school and other agencies.
2. It was found that the programs conducted by the school districts for the evaluation and technology based pedagogy are compulsory.
3. The teachers' opined that the programs conducted by both the districts and the schools are effective as it was need based.
4. The principals opined that they have a performance appraisal system in the schools and a good feedback system.
5. It was found from the study that the professional development activities were regularly evaluated for their impact on increased teacher effectiveness as measured from the improved student academic achievement.
6. Teachers opined that participation in the programs helped them in the career advancement as supervisors and in administrative positions

6.12.6. Issues and challenges

1. The study revealed that the teachers' need more programs to update the latest technology.

2. It was found that the major challenge for the teachers is time, to attend more programs.
3. Teachers opined that plentiful opportunities were given to participate in professional development programs however prior family commitments pose problems to attend the programs.
4. The principals opined that time and teacher mobility was the biggest challenge.
5. The principals opined that finding professional development programs relevant to all teachers was a challenge but the schools were able to achieve the task of differentiated programs for individual teachers through mentors, supervisors and departmental heads.
6. The principals expressed that time and teacher mobility are the biggest challenges for the principals though student free days are allocated for Professional development activities.

6.13 Implications of the Study

The findings of the study are relevant to draw implications to the professional development of school teachers in India. The study also throws light on the teacher development, the policies for teacher professional development, the designing of the program and evaluation of the implementation of the Professional Development Programs in United States of America. Teachers, administrators, policy makers and researchers can take some specific steps from this study to improve professional development in our schools.

1. The present study underlined the scope for improving the Teacher Eligibility test conducted by the The Central Board of Secondary Education of India and some of the State Boards of Education. Now the school boards require teachers to have a bachelor's degree and to have completed an approved teacher training program as well as supervised practice teaching. The policy makers need to emphasize this by providing a registered license number to the eligible teachers. The License also needs to be renewed after 3 years or a certain number of years. For renewing the license, the teacher needs to obtain certain credits through professional development programs. Teacher

certification, tenure and renewal of license need to be the province of states and teacher professional development and evaluation of classroom teaching must be the domain of schools and school districts, in an effort to increase the likelihood that the teachers will be effective with their students. Government funding for education in India need to target on the training and development of teachers.

- The study emphasizes on the need for School district boards (District Education Offices) to organise research based teacher professional development programs for school teachers.
 - Teacher education institutions need to be held accountable for the quality of their graduates; these institutions need to take steps to strengthen both their pre-service and in-service programs.
2. The study emphasizes on the need for the nature of content and methodology to be used in professional development programs.
- Efforts to improve professional development need be undertaken with the goal of remedying the academic and pedagogic deficiencies of current teachers, a daunting task given the magnitude of the teaching force.
 - The institutions need to focus on the relevancy of the programs for teacher development. Teacher Professional development programs need to focus particularly on subject matter knowledge, evaluation pattern and classroom management. Techno-pedagogical skills of teachers must be developed.
3. The present study the researcher could draw implications for improving the implementation and evaluation of the professional development programs for the teachers:
- Implementation of teacher professional development programs and evaluation need to be the domain of the schools and the school district boards.
 - Teachers to be observed in the classroom for the implementation of the professional development program by the principal, supervisors,

and the authorities from the school district boards regularly and proper feedback to be given to them.

4. The study emphasizes on the following need to have effective professional development for school teachers:
 - Performance based pay for teachers which need to reward quality should be thought of.
 - “High Objective Uniform State Standard of Evaluation” (HOUSSE) should be set up. HOUSSE needs to provide objective information about teachers’ content knowledge in all subjects taught, be aligned with challenging state academic and student achievement standards; be applied uniformly state-wide to all teachers in the same subjects and grade levels.
 - National Council for Teacher Education needs to think of setting National Board for Professional Teaching Standards or National Council on Teacher Quality, to ensure that all teachers are highly qualified and continuously developed throughout their teaching carrier.

6.14 Recommendations for Further Research

From the present study entitled “A study of the policies and programs for the professional development of school teachers in the United States of America” the researcher had some limitations and therefore the study has been confined to the seven selected schools in the four states in USA. Based on the findings from the study and the other similar studies and from the review of literature the following recommendations are made for further research.

1. A major study could be undertaken to study the training needs of teachers.
2. The training needs of teachers in higher secondary school under Central Board of Secondary Education could be studied.
3. The training needs of teachers in different subject areas could be identified.

4. Development of professional enrichment Programs for teachers at various levels can be an important area for further research
5. The colleges of teacher training can prepare modules for in service training on regular basis.
6. Development of professional enrichment programs for teachers by the University can be a very important area for further research.
7. The in service programs by the DEO can be an area of research and new modules can be prepared.
8. Research studies examining the link between professional development and student achievement are rare, research in this area can be conducted.
9. Further research can be conducted to study if the school level programs are in alignment with the policies provided in NCF 2005 and NCTE 2009 for teacher professional development programs.
10. Comparative research on policies and programs of professional development of teachers with other countries.

6.15 Conclusion

Professional development is the bridge that allows teachers to enhance their knowledge and practice. The influence of professional development should be understood if one believes that it makes a difference in the lives of teachers and students (Guskey,1997). The purpose of this descriptive study was to study the policies and programs for the professional development of teachers in USA and to present the findings of the study that are relevant to draw implications to the professional development of school teachers in India.

The results of the study may be used to better understand the policies and programs which have made professional development of teachers to be highly qualified in USA, and to improve the design and delivery of professional development programs in India. In addition the results of this study can be used to look into aspects like knowledge, skills, practices and attitude of teachers with the goal to improving student achievement. Evaluation and feedback are critical components in the implementation of professional development programs. As teachers are continually changing their practice to

meet the challenges of educating students in the 21st century, it is necessary for teachers to learn accountability and how to document everyday work.

This is a small step towards educating about professional development of teachers. By contextualizing information from this study, administrators and teachers will be required to critically question the present professional development programs and bring in betterment in the teaching learning process.