

THE DEGREE OF AVAILABILITY OF SUSTAINABLE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMONG KINDERGARTEN TEACHERS IN THE STATE OF KUWAIT FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF FEMALE PRINCIPALS

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Abstract

The study sought to determine, from the perspective of administrators, the extent to which kindergarten teachers have access to sustained professional development. The study used a descriptive survey methodology, and the two researchers created a questionnaire to gauge the availability of professional development. The study sample, which included 145 directors, was selected at random, with a percentage of 62%. The study's findings indicated that the availability of professional development was generally present and significant, with no statistically significant differences found in the degree of availability due to years of experience or governorate, but there were significant differences found in the degree of availability due to the academic qualification variable and in favor of postgraduate studies.

Keywords: Professional Development, Teachers, Kindergarten.

INTRODUCTION

Global factors such as the communications revolution, the rise of market forces or globalization, and the cognitive, technical, and technological information revolution—where knowledge gained in the modern era surpasses all knowledge gained by humanity during its previous journey—impose challenges on the educational system. These factors all point to the growing importance of knowledge as the primary driver. Since kindergartens are currently among the most significant educational institutions, they hold particular responsibility for all facets of modern life. Educational and pedagogical institutions also bear the weight of ongoing development. They have an even greater responsibility than before to overcome obstacles from both the inside and the outside in order to finish their tasks and succeed. What its goals are.

Kindergartens are of great interest to people worldwide, and numerous studies have shown how important they are to societies because they are the cornerstone of society and its fundamental building blocks that support later generations, and because they contain human resources and potential energies that need to be nurtured and given attention for growth (Mawadiya and Al-Zoubi, 2021). The growth of teachers' cognitive structures, which is represented in the professional elements they practice on a daily basis, has a significant impact on the educational process by filling in the gaps in effective energies. Their capacity to address both current and emerging issues will determine how well they accomplish their goal. to advance both professionally and cognitively. In 2012, Blandford

Furthermore, recent developments and modifications to kindergarten environments gave rise to sustainable professional development. This was particularly the case following the crisis of digital transformations that directly impacted the educational process and the information technology revolution that overtook it and became an integral part of its operations and procedures (Gusky, 2006). According to Al-Asadi, Al-Masoudi, and Al-Tamimi (2015), it is seen as a purposeful and developmental process that aids kindergarten students in finishing their education and achieving professional development for instructors in order to reach the summit of the pyramid. Given that teachers play a major role in the overall conduct of the educational process (Goddard, 2007), and that role becomes even more significant for teachers as a result of each individual teacher, kindergartens have a lot of potential that must be realised in order to achieve the desired goal and increase the sustainable and advanced professional development in the form required for teachers. In order to guarantee the continuation of the teaching and learning process and its continuation in its proper, best, and most successful form, it is imperative that these roles be carried out with accuracy and skill. These roles include planning the programmes, activities, and services offered to students and the institution as a whole. (Thomas, 2014)

Kindergartens cannot succeed unless there is an ongoing, consistent effort to improve the professional development of all teachers. This is because the performance and productivity of each teacher within the kindergarten is affected by their professional development, and it becomes necessary to create contemporary administrative and technological policies and strategies in order to ensure the kindergarten's survival and continuity. Teachers' long-term professional growth. This makes it evident that instructors have an immediate need to learn relevant, modern professional development techniques as well as techniques for dealing with both internal and external obstacles. From the perspective of administrators, this survey thus revealed the extent to which kindergarten teachers had access to sustained professional development.

Professional Development and Its Concept

The idea of professional development: In order to maximise teachers' efficiency, professional development enables them to experience the cognitive and technological revolution, grow as professionals, and gain both short- and long-term experience. This makes it one of the most cutting-edge innovations seen in educational institutions. (Cagri & Erdusru, 2020). "The opportunities provided to the kindergarten teacher to acquire new knowledge and skills through multiple activities, such as: in-service learning, attending conferences, seminars, training courses, etc." is how Sherif (2019, 168) describes professional development. Based on the aforementioned, the two researchers draw the conclusion that in order to promote individuals' continuous professional progress in the educational setting, sustainable professional development necessitates meeting their wants and wishes.

The Importance of Professional Development

However, Radwan (2020) found that sustained professional development contributes to the improvement of problem-solving abilities, critical thinking skills, creative thinking, decision-

making abilities, and institutional identity. It's a novel kind of culture that centres on information, how it's gained and improved, and creating a positive learning atmosphere. Ideal for meeting fundamental needs in terms of gratifying motivations and desires associated with the teaching and learning process.

Features of Professional Development and Its Benefits

According to Amer (2012), one of the features and benefits of sustainable professional development is that it provides more opportunities for collaboration, interaction, and cooperation between educators and administrators. This encourages research into the easily presented educational topics and makes it possible for those involved in the educational process to hold discussions, exchange viewpoints, and engage in dialogue while taking into account accurate opinions. And seek to eliminate harmful notions, strengthen the foundations of justice, equality, and transparency among instructors, and promote and spread it in a way that benefits all sides.

Obstacles to Professional Development

Challenges to Career Advancement, Professional growth has numerous challenges, as noted by Al-Atrouzi and Ababneh (2018): A multitude of challenges impede professional development from yielding the intended outcomes. These include inadequate plans for training, development, and innovation; deficiencies in teacher-focused training courses and programmes; a glaring lack of funding for kindergarten teachers' professional development needs; and a shortage of teachers' training skills. The ease with which current, innovative technology can be used by all parties is hindered by the shortage of skilled trainers to conduct training sessions.

Development of Professionals in Kindergarten

Professional development in kindergartens is currently regarded as one of the most significant ways to bring about contemporary renewal and change that aims to achieve the intended outcomes. Teachers attempt to ignore the surrounding circumstances and not be affected by their negatives in order to create a purely scientific educational environment through the interaction between all parties to the teaching process, including teachers, students themselves, and administration (Amal, & Fotia, 2017). Development offers kindergarten instructors a chance to learn about, adapt, and assess their proficiency with contemporary innovative approaches. It also offers a chance for professional advancement in this area. They must respond to changes and emergency situations with grace and wisdom, avoiding impulsivity, and engage in the creation and implementation of contemporary teaching methods that are appropriate for the times and the state of the world at large (Asiri, 2017). As it has become a crucial component for activating the quality of the educational process and acquiring competencies characterised by growth and innovation within kindergartens, the researcher concludes that sustainable professional development plays a significant role in developing the ongoing educational process in kindergartens and works to achieve the main goal of the educational process of improvement and reform.

Professional Development Has Been the Subject of Numerous Studies

The goal of the Al-Ammar study (2021) was to identify, from the perspective of kindergarten teachers, the professional requirements for achieving ongoing professional growth. The study employed a hybrid method and a questionnaire as its instruments. Five hundred kindergarten teachers in the city of Riyadh made up the sample. The findings demonstrated a high degree of consistency between the professional needs and the cognitive components of kindergarten. In order to shed light on the actual state of professional development for kindergarten teachers in Egypt, Abdel-Muttalib and Ismail (2020) undertook a study. Using a descriptive-analytical methodology, the study came to the conclusion that, given the significance of the age group that kindergarten teachers instruct and the rise of contemporary trends to support development, it is imperative that kindergarten teachers have adequate preparation and training. A study by Marrero and associates (Marrero & associates, 2010), the purpose of the study was to find out what instructors thought about how short, direct online training courses improved their professional performance. It was used with teachers in the United States of America, where information was gathered by giving participants in the courses a questionnaire. The study's findings demonstrated that quick online training sessions are crucial for enhancing teachers' professional performance, as evidenced by the participants' observations and viewpoints on in contrast to traditional training center courses, he observed the numerous advantages of this kind of instruction, chief among them being the chance for idea and experience sharing in a relaxed, stress-free setting.

Concluding Remarks

It should be highlighted that earlier research only partially addressed the study's primary factors (professional development). However, some of the previous studies, like the study by Abdul Muttalib and Ismail (2020), converge somewhat with the current study, and some of the previous studies, like the Al-Ammar study (2021), differ from the country and location of the current study in addition to its objectives, sample, population, and reality. The current study differs from previous studies in that it attempts to reveal the extent of professional development availability among kindergarten teachers in the State of Kuwait from the perspective of principals. This is made possible by drawing on these studies to develop a tool for gathering data, identifying its results, comparing them to the results of current research, and using appropriate statistical treatments.

The Study Problem

The reality of kindergartens in Kuwait reveals issues that prevent female teachers from adopting sustainable professional development, as well as variations in approaches and methods for its use and availability. Kindergartens must now follow modern strategies in order to overcome their current reality, which is full of many challenges and difficulties, and to achieve the goals that were set for them. They must also keep up with modern developments and prioritise sustainable professional development. Numerous research studies that examined the professional growth of female educators, including Al-Ammar's study (2021) and Marrero et al.'s study (Marrero & atl, 2010), concurred that there is variation in the degree of availability in kindergartens. Thus, from the perspective of female principals, this study came to illuminate

the extent to which kindergarten teachers in the State of Kuwait have access to sustainable professional development.

Study Questions: The study sought to answer the following questions

The first question: What is the degree of availability of sustainable professional development among kindergarten teachers in the State of Kuwait from the point of view of female principals?

The second question: Are there statistically significant differences at the degree of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the arithmetic averages in the responses of the study sample members regarding the degree of availability of sustainable professional development due to the variables of years of experience, academic qualification, and governorate?

Objectives of the Study

This study sought to identify the following:

- Determining the extent to which kindergarten teachers in the State of Kuwait have access to sustainable professional development, as seen from the perspective of principals, in order to identify and assess positive aspects as well as identify and enhance negative aspects.
- In order to determine the degree of influence and controllability of many variables, such as years of experience, educational background, and governorate, a deeper comprehension of their effects must be attained.

Significance of the Study

The following groups of people are anticipated to gain from the study's findings: - Kindergarten principals, who will be able to voice their opinions about the State of Kuwait's kindergarten teachers' comprehensive professional development and the input this provides to these administrations.

- Kindergarten teachers, who will get input on how readily available sustainable professional development is, enabling them to enhance the processes for implementing and using it.
- Researchers studying education, as they will own an invaluable resource for conducting analogous investigations on the same topic, which they may readily consult to enhance their research at any time.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are used to unite the study:

Professional Development: "A set of goals that are translated into means and activities that the organization takes to plan and develop the future of its jobs by raising the continuous efficiency and adequacy of its workers to meet current and future needs" is how Al-Deeb (2007: 14) defines professional development. The procedure used in this study to determine

professional development is the degree to which respondents scored on a study tool designed to gauge the availability of professional development for kindergarten instructors.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The results of the study are determined in the light of the following limits:

- Limitation in terms of the objective: his study was limited to identifying the degree of availability of sustainable professional development among kindergarten teachers in the State of Kuwait from the point of view of principals.
- The constraints imposed by humanity: This study was limited to a sample of female principals in the governorates of the State of Kuwait.
- Spatial limitation: The study was applied in six governorates in the State of Kuwait.
- Time limitation: This study was conducted during the year 2022/2023
- Study Determinants: The possibility of generalizing the results of this study is determined by the psychometric properties of its tools properties (validity and reliability).

METHOD AND PROCEDURES

This part deals with the study's methodology, population, sample, and **instrument of the study** used:

- **Study Methodology:** Using the descriptive survey method.
- **Study Population:** The study population consisted of all kindergarten principals in the State of Kuwait for the academic year 2022/2023, who numbered (231) principals, as shown by the statistics of the Ministry of Education for the academic year 2022.
- **The Study Sample**

A simple random sample was selected from the study population, consisting of (145) principals, representing (62%) of the study population, distributed among kindergartens in the governorates. Table (1) shows the distribution of the study sample according to its variables.

Table 1: The Distribution of Students' Sample According To the Variables

Variable	Variable Levels/Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Years of Experience	From 20 Years To Less Than 25 Years	57	%69
	25 Years and Over	88	%31
	The Total	145	%100
Academic qualification	Bachelor's	101	%38
	Postgraduate	44	%62
	The Total	145	%100
Governorate	Mubarak The Great	22	%17
	Jahra	20	%14
	Ahmadi	39	%30
	Al Farwaniyah	30	%16

	Hawally	19	%10
	Capital	15	%13
	The Total	145	%100

Instrument of the Study

The study tool consisted of (16) items covering professional development items. The items related to professional development were constructed after referring to these standards and reviewing theoretical literature and previous studies, such as Al-Amari's study (2021), and the study of Marrero et al. (Marrero & atl, 2010).

Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

To verify the content validity of the study tool, it was presented to a group of (10) arbitrators in the fields of (administration, pedagogy, sociology, and the Arabic language), where they were asked to express their opinions about the scale in terms of linguistic wording, its clarity, and the affiliation of each A paragraph for the scale, and any modifications they deem appropriate. The researcher adopted the paragraph on which (8) or more arbitrators agreed, meaning (80%) of the arbitrators. Thus, the tool remained in its final form, consisting of (16) items.

Content Validity of the Instrument

To ensure the construct validity of the study tool, it was distributed to an exploratory sample of (30) managers from the study community and from outside its sample. Correlation coefficients were calculated between each item of the tool with the field to which it belongs and with the tool as a whole, and the results were as follows: Table (2).

Table 2: Correlation Coefficients between the Items and the Total Score

Item No	Correlation coefficient With the instrument	Item No	Correlation coefficient With the instrument
1	0.62**	11	0.80**
2	0.74**	12	0.73**
3	0.68**	13	0.55**
4	0.76**	14	0.81**
5	0.78**	15	0.75**
6	0.81**	16	0.82**
7	0.69**		
8	0.83**		
9	0.80**		
10	0.81**		

Reliability of the Instrument

To ensure the stability and consistency of the study tool, two methods were used. The first was the test-retest method, where the tool was applied twice to the exploratory sample with a two-week time difference. The Pearson correlation coefficient was calculated between the two applications. In the second method, the Cronbach alpha coefficient (the internal consistency coefficient) was calculated, and it was the results are as in Table (3).

The first field: Code of ethical conduct	
Domain	Cronbach Alpha

Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha Internal Consistency Coefficient and Repeat Reliability of the Total Score

Instrument	R	Cronbach Alpha
Professional development	0.93	0.9

Standard Correction of the Study Instrument

A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the opinions of the study sample members, where they gave a very strong degree of agree (5), a strong degree of agreement (4), a moderate degree of agreement (3), a slight degree of agreement (2), and a very slight degree of agreement (1), and the following classification was relied upon to judge the arithmetic averages:

Period length = (highest value - lowest value) / 5 = (5-1) / 5 = 0.8

$$0.8 = 5 / (1-5) = 5 / (\text{أعلى قيمة} - \text{أدنى قيمة}) = \text{طول الفترة}$$

Table 4: The Statistical Criterion for Determining the Degree of Availability of Professional Development among Kindergarten Teachers from the Point of View of Principals

Degree of practice	Mean
Very little/very low	From 1.00 to less than 1.80
Little/low	From 1.80 to less than 2.60
Medium	From 2.60 to less than 3.40
Large/high	From 3.40 to less than 4.20
Too big/too high	From 4.20 to 5.00

Study Variables

The study included the following variables:

First: Intermediate variables:

- Years of experience: It has two levels: (from 20 years to less than 25), (25 years and more).
- Academic qualification: It has two levels (bachelor's, postgraduate).
- Governorate: It has six categories (Mubarak Al-Kabeer, Al-Jahra, Al-Ahmadi, Farwaniya, Hawalli, and the Capital).

Second: The main variable: sustainable professional development.

Statistical methods used. To answer the study questions, the researcher used appropriate statistical analyzes after entering the data into the computer, analyzing it using SPSS and processing it statistically. This is as follows:

- **To answer the first question: Arithmetic means and standard deviations were used.**
- **To answer the second question: Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and three-way analysis of variance (3-ways ANOVA) were used.**

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study aimed to reveal the degree of availability of sustainable professional development among kindergarten teachers in the State of Kuwait from the perspective of principals, and whether the degree of availability varies according to years of experience, academic qualification, and governorate, by answering each of the following study questions:

First: Presenting and discussing the results of the first question, which states: “What is the degree of availability of sustainable professional development among kindergarten teachers in the State of Kuwait from the point of view of female principals”?

The arithmetic means and standard deviations were extracted for the degree of availability of sustainable professional development among kindergarten teachers in the State of Kuwait from the point of view of the principals, taking into account the descending order of the items and the general average of the overall scale, and Table (5) shows this.

Table 5: Arithmetic Means and Standard Deviations for the Degree of Availability of Professional Development among Kindergarten Teachers from the Point of View of Principals, Ranked in Descending Order

Rank	No	Item	Mean	Standard Deviation	Degree
1	1	The teacher adheres to the rules, regulations and instructions of the kindergarten	4.02	0.848	High
2	15	The teacher is keen to achieve the objectives of the educational session on time	4	0.973	High
3	13	The teacher is keen to provide immediate and appropriate feedback	3.99	0.9	High
4	9	The teacher listens to the ideas, opinions and suggestions of the administration	3.98	0.915	High
5	6	The teacher infers new knowledge from available information	3.96	0.897	High
6	2	The teacher is keen to deal with problems and work pressures wisely	3.95	0.963	High
7	8	The teacher applies the principle of equality among students without discrimination	3.92	0.927	High
8	14	The teacher values the achievements of all students	3.91	0.908	High
9	16	The teacher uses preventive and curative activities	3.87	0.96	High
10	12	The teacher is keen to perform the work requirements seriously and effectively	3.85	0.982	High
11	10	The parameter responds to recent developments	3.79	0.999	High
12	4	The teacher is keen on professional growth in all its forms	3.74	0.948	High
13	11	The teacher is keen on continuous self-development	3.72	0.95	High
14	7	The teacher undergoes training courses	3.63	0.984	High
15	5	The teacher participates in scientific conferences and seminars	3.62	0.961	High
16	3	The teacher is keen on community partnership	3.52	0.982	High
		The degree of availability of professional development for teachers as a whole	3.84	0.694	High

It appears from Table (5) that the arithmetic averages for the paragraphs in the field of professional development for female teachers ranged between (4.02 - 3.52), and Paragraph (1), which talks about “The teacher adheres to the rules, regulations, and instructions of kindergartens,” ranked first and to a large degree, then Paragraph (15) came. In second place

with a arithmetical mean (4.00) and to a large degree, then paragraph (13) which talks about “The teacher is keen to provide immediate and appropriate feedback” came in third place with a arithmetical mean (3.99) and to a large degree, then came paragraph (7) which talks about “ The teacher “submits to training courses” ranked fourteenth with an arithmetic average of (3.63) and with a large degree. Then paragraph (5) which talks about “the teacher’s participation in scientific conferences and seminars” came in fifteenth place with an arithmetic average of (3.62) and with a large degree, and the lowest arithmetic averages came for the paragraph (3) which talks about “the teacher is keen on community partnership” with a mean of (3.52) and a large degree. The overall average for the items in the field of professional development was (3.84) and to a large extent. The researchers may attribute this to teachers’ awareness of the importance of planning, control and organization in progress and development, and teachers’ awareness of the importance of professional development and its role in increasing growth, improvement and reform, in addition to teachers’ awareness of the implications of professional development and their expectations that are compatible with modern educational requirements. The results of the current study are consistent with the results of Al-Ammar’s (2019) study, the results of which were very high. Presenting and discussing the results of the second question, which states:

“Are there statistically significant differences at the degree of significance ($\alpha = 0.05$) between the arithmetic averages in the responses of the study sample members regarding the availability of sustainable professional development due to the variables of years of experience, educational qualification, and governorate”?

To answer the second study question: Arithmetic means and standard deviations were calculated for the degree of availability of sustainable professional development among kindergarten teachers in the State of Kuwait from the point of view of principals as a whole, according to the variables of the study (years of experience, academic qualification, governorate), as shown in Table (6).

Table 6: Arithmetic Means and Standard Deviations for the Degree of Availability of Professional Development among Kindergarten Teachers Attributed to the Study Variables

Variable	Levels/Categories	Means	Standard Deviation	The Number
Years of Experience	25 Years and Over	3.73	0.704	57
	The Total	3.93	0.678	88
Academic qualification	Bachelor's	3.78	0.669	101
	Postgraduate	3.9	0.703	44
Governorate	The Total	4	0.737	22
	Jahra	3.5	0.727	20
	Ahmadi	4.06	0.653	39
	Al Farwaniyah	4.02	0.548	30
	Hawally	3.82	0.728	19
	Capital	3.84	0.679	15

It is noted from Table (6) that there are apparent differences between the arithmetic averages of the degree of availability of sustainable professional development among kindergarten

teachers in the State of Kuwait from the point of view of principals, resulting from the different levels of study variables, and with the aim of verifying the fundamentality of the apparent differences. A three-way analysis of variance (3-ways ANOVA) was conducted as in Table (7).

Table 7: Results of the Four-Way Analysis of Variance for the Sample Members' Responses According to the Study Variables

Impact	Eta Squared	Degree free (df)	Mean squares	F	statistically significant
Years of Experience	0.786	1	0.786	1.914	0.167
Academic qualification	3.558	2	1.779	4.33	0.014
Governorate	0.152	1	0.152	0.37	0.543
The error	202.515	493	0.411		
Total Corrected	240.31	499			

It is clear from Table (7) that there are no statistically significant differences at the degree of significance ($\alpha=0.05$) between the arithmetic means of the degree of availability of sustainable professional development for kindergarten teachers due to the variables of years of experience and governorate, while it was found that there are statistically significant differences at the degree of significance ($\alpha=0.05$) between the arithmetic averages attributed to the academic qualification and in favor of (postgraduate studies). The researchers may attribute the absence of differences attributed to the variables to the similarity of working conditions within institutions, the teachers' having the same professional educational experiences, and the similarity of educational environments, regardless of years of experience and governorate, and the presence of differences attributed to the variable of academic qualification and in favor of (postgraduate studies) to the fact that teachers of this category have a response High to achieve professional development and increase the stock of knowledge and practical capabilities and skills to achieve competence.

Recommendations

The researchers suggest the following in light of the study's findings:

- 1) promoting long-term professional development for kindergarten instructors.
- 2) Make an effort to encourage kindergarten principals and teachers to embrace the concept of sustained professional development.
- 3) Arranging conferences, training sessions, and seminars to improve kindergarten instructors' long-term professional growth.

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