The causes and problems of professional development training conducted by the government schools in the Republic of Maldives

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Abstract

This study explored the problems that occur in the Professional Development Process and the causes associate with those problems in PD process. The study has employed a mixed method, the qualitative approach has used to gain relevant knowledge on the PD training problems and causes in the Four-Phase process of PD programs by using in-depth interviews. The knowledge gained by the interviews are used to prepare the quantitative questionnaire for eld survey.

The study has found that the gradual diminishing of functions in entire PD process has become a common practice by the PD coordinators in most of the government schools in Male' city, therefore, it is likely be the root cause of the existing problems in the PD system. It has shown that the diminishing the important functions in the PD process resulted in incomplete phases in PD process and consequently, the schools have failed to achieve the desired objectives of the PD programs. It also shows that the PD coordinators do not fully abide by the rules and regulations imposed by the regulating body, instead they have developed their own ways of doing things in their responsible schools. The whole PD process in the government schools in capital city Male' does not function well due to lack of monitoring by the superiors, including school principals, SMT members and chief PD coordinator in the central level assigned by the National Institute of Education. As a sole responsible body, NIE needs to apply better and effective methods in monitoring the entire PD system in the government schools to conrm whether the system is going on in the right direction aligning with the rules and regulation imposed by the concerned authorities to achieve the desired objectives of the PD.

Keywords : Causes, problems, professional development training, government schools.

Introduction

The teachers or instructional employees are the support and backbone of any successful academic institutions. While those in leadership make all of the big decisions in the schools related to teaching and learning process, the teachers are the ones who provide the labour to get the work done. Hence, teachers are required to refresh and upgrade their professional knowledge and skills to improve the performance in the job (Kratochwill, Volpiansky, Clements and Ball, 2007). Many studies have revealed that when the teachers become more competent in their work, the institution becomes more successful too. Therefore, sustainable Human Resource Development (HRD) programmes are crucial for any academic institution to gain competitive advantage over the other rival institutions in the same level or in the different level of the sector (Werner & DeSimone, 2012).

The Professional Development (PD) in the Maldives is the sustainable HRD program conducted by the schools to provide required competencies and skills for the professional employees. The ofcially recognised PD policy has been released by the Ministry of Education on 16th July 2009, and started implementing it nationwide since 19th July 2009. The PD policy states the Professional Development is termed as activities conducted for individual employees in advancement of teaching and learning in the schools. It is for the employees who are working in the professional eld and for those working for the development of physical and mental health of school students. It is an obligation of the head of school to plan and execute PD programs and the school should send details of the execution of the activities to the Teachers Resource Centre (TRC) in the atoll. The TRC in each atoll are headed by the teacher educator coordinator and it is functioning as a unit/section of the main responsible body, the National Institute of Education (NIE). Since the NIE is located in the capital city "Male" the schools in Male' city conduct programs directly coordinated by the NIE.

The aim of the PD policy is to establish, plan and execute professional development training required by the individuals in the eld and also to convey the regulations set to hold the standard of such programs. Apart from this, to help enhance the behavioural and educational standard of the students, establishing a school-based training and development environment in the school is also aimed by the policy. It stipulates that every professional employee of the school should participate in at least 15 hours of PD activity in every academic year. To make way for the school-based Professional Development, three days are specially allocated in the National Academic Calendar and these three days should be included in the school Annual Academic Plan. The duration of participation in PD would be considered while registering teachers, renewal of licence and promotion of job or a raise in salary.

Problem statement

The Professional Development (PD) programmes are criticized for their failure in changing teachers' practices and perceptions of teaching and learning situations in schools. The PD coordinators, leading teachers and head of schools are often heard expressing the concerns of PD programmes for not yielding the desired results in improving schools and changing teacher practices. As school principals our own experiences have reveal that the teachers never failed to participate 15 hours of PD in every academic year but signicant numbers of teachers do not satised what they have learned from PD programs. Consequently, they do not translate their new knowledge and skills learned from the programmes into actions.

It is also revealed by the NIE that the number of participation in PD activities are satised but it doesn't have same satisfaction with the outcomes of the PD. It has been noticed by the formal monitoring that some schools have included training topics irrelevantly without considering the needs of trainees. Some schools are even choosing training topics according to the availability of trainers and other physical resources, in such programs the expected outcomes may not be seen. Also, performance appraisal system in the education sector doesn't have link to the PD needs as it doesn't have specic part to identify the expected and required competencies for the teachers to achieve the school annual target. Therefore, it is expected that there might have serious problems in entire PD process which hinder to achieve the desired objectives of the PD programs. It may be caused by several factors and most likely it might have caused by missing some important activities in the Need Assessment and Designing phase of the PD training process. Because, when it comes to HRD intervention, there are several steps to be fullled before it comes to the implementation stage.

Signicance of the research

This research would highlight the issues to be addressed when the schools are going to establish school-based professional development training. It would also be given ideas to the NIE about the steps to be taken seriously to minimize the existing problems in the four phases of PD process. The research would draw idea about the causes for the existing problems which obstruct to achieve the desired goals. Therefore, the NIE is expected to get to know what could be done for effective implementation of PD programs in the Maldives by aligning the needs of teachers to reach the expected outcomes of the schools. They also would know what has been missing from the responsible bodies of entire PD process while the schools are implementing PD programs in the school level.

Objectives of the research

1. To study the problems that occurs in the PD process including need assessment, designing, implementation and evaluation, in the government schools of Maldives.

2. To identify the causes of problems in PD process conducted by the government schools of Maldives.

The Conceptual framework

The study used *"Training and HRD process model"* of DeSimone & Werner (2012) as a theoretical guideline to explore the existing problems and the associated causes in Professional Development (PD) programs conducted by the government schools in the Maldives. To explore the problems, it has focussed to identify the situations regarded as unwelcome or unacceptable to exist in the PD process by considering the actual state of HRD process. The process of HRD, DeSimone & Werner (2012) classied into the four phases including need assessment phase, design phase, implementation phase and evaluation phase. The model stated that the phases are very much connected with each other, hence, if any phase is incomplete or improperly done, the next phase would be facing lots of unexpected problems and eventually the desired objectives may not achieve on its intervention. To explore the causes, it has focussed to identify the reasons for creating problems in the PD process. Therefore, the study assumed that the possible causes of problems would be incomplete need assessment phase, incomplete design phase, improper implementation phase and improper evaluation phase. Also it focussed to identify the other causes which may associate with the existing problems, such as lack of physical and human resources, lack of monitoring, lack of support and cooperation by concerned authorities, etc.

Literature review

Many studies have revealed that the school-based professional development programmes are of great signicance for teacher learning and improving student learning outcomes. Kratochwill, Volpiansky, Clements and Ball (2007) recognize professional development programmes attempt to change teachers' beliefs about certain aspects of teaching a particular curriculum or instructional innovation. As claimed by Kushner (2008); Lee and Buxton (2013) the high-quality professional development is taking on greater importance, largely because of the established link between teacher inuence on student outcomes and the urgency to positively affect student performance to meet the expectations.

The term Professional Development (PD) has been used in same context as Human Resource Development (HRD). This view has been further supported by McLean, Karimov and Asankanov (2004) and Murphy-Latta (2008) by dening the term of Professional Development in workplaces context as "the acquisition of skills and knowledge, both for personal development and for career advancement and it encompasses all types of facilitated learning opportunities." Therefore, when conducting the Professional Development (PD) programmes in Maldives, it followed the PD guideline prepared by NIE based on the basic HRD process model (Rizwan, 2010). DeSimone and Werner (2012) classied the basic HRD process into the Four-Phase approach model of HRD including all the functions holistically by classifying into the needs assessment phase, design phase, implementation phase, and evaluation phase.

The needs assessment phase is the beginning of HRD process and it enhances knowledge on HRD needs among concerned authority of the organization for effective decision making (DeSimone & Werner, 2012). As claimed by Noe (2008); McGuire and Jorgensen (2011) needs assessment is the process used to determine whether training is necessary for the organization and what type of training components are important to address the present and future job demand. It typically involves organization analysis, person analysis and task analysis. After the needs assessment phase has been completed, the HRD process will come to the second phase as known as design phase. In this phase there must be a detailed proposal including dened objectives, detailed lesson plan, acquired materials, qualied trainer, selected methods and techniques for delivery and detailed program schedule (DeSimone & Werner, 2012). After the design phase, follows the implementation phase. In this phase the HRD manager must deliver the HRD intervention as planned in the design phase (DeSimone & Werner, 2012). According to Bohlander and Snell (2007); DeSimone and Werner (2012) training evaluation is the nal phase in the training and HRD process model and it is a systematic collection of descriptive and judgemental information necessary to make effective training decisions related to the selection, adoption, value, and modication of various instructional activities.

The phases in the four phase approach model of the HRD process are inter-related and it has sequencing in its process. Especially implementation phase is the delivery of the whole HRD program (DeSimone & Werner, 2012). Delivering any HRD program generally faces lots of challenges, but the challenges may vary from organization to organization based on the resources and environment available in the organization (Danielson, Doolittle & Bradley, 2007). Although the challenges vary from organization to organization Werner and DeSimone (2009); Wei, Hammond and Adamson (2010) have claimed that there are challenges that have been noticed as common for all the organization while implementing HRD intervention. They have highlighted that the most common challenge that has been faced by most of the organizations is not implementing the program as planned due to lack of resources. Kossek and Block (2010); Newman, Samimy and Romstedt (2010) also claimed that the nding a qualied trainer for program delivery, allocating suitable resources, creating an environment that enhances learning, and resolving problems that may arise when conducting delivery are noticed as common challenges in the implementation phase of training programs. DeSimone and Werner (2012) have further supported in this view and state that some of these issues are unpredictable in the initial stage of training process, therefore, it would be quite difcult to have backup plan for resolving such issues by speculating on it, but the issues that can be predictable in the initial stage can have backup plan to minimize the potential threat which will cause by these challenges to hinder for achieving the desired objectives of training intervention.

Methodology

To achieve the research objectives, this research was used xed-mixed method design; both the qualitative and quantitative approaches. According to Creswell (2014) the xed-mixed methods designs are mixed methods studies where the use of quantitative and qualitative methods is predetermined and planned at the start of the research process, and the procedures will be implemented as planned at the beginning.

The qualitative phase - The qualitative method was used as it is an appropriate method to explore perceptions and practices of PD programmes in real school setting (Creswell, 2014). Therefore, this method was used to gain relevant knowledge on the PD training problems and its associated causes in the process of need assessment, designing, implementation and evaluation of PD programs conducted by the government schools of Maldives. In this phase, data was collected through semi-structured interviews. The interviews were administered with the teacher educator coordinator, school PD coordinators and leading teachers who were practically involved with the PD activities and also known as professional employees.

The quantitative phase - The knowledge gained by the interview about the existing training problems and associated causes of PD implementation was used to prepare the quantitative questionnaire for eld survey. The quantitative phase of the research was intended to collect numeric description of opinions from professional employees by a survey method through pre-designed quantitative questionnaire. The survey was administered by using randomly selected samples among leading teachers who were included in the professional employees.

Population and sample

As the title of the research implies, the research is based on the PD training problems and its causes for conducting professional employees who are working in the schools in capital city Male. The PD policy stated that the professional employees are the employees working in the professional eld and for those working for the development of physical and mental health of school students. Therefore, the population of this research is the academic employees those who facilitate for the development of the teachers to enhance teaching and learning process of the government schools in capital city Male.

According to the PD policy (2009) the teacher educator coordinator working in NIE is the overall responsible person for all the training and development activities in central level, and the school PD coordinator is the person who has duty and responsibility to plan and execute PD programs in the school levels. Also all the training and development activities conducted for the teachers are assisted by the leading teachers from the beginning till the end. Therefore, the target population of this research paper is focussed on the teacher educator coordinator in NIE, the school PD coordinators and leading teachers who are working in government schools in the capital city, Male'. There are 14 government schools in the capital city Male. To comply with PD policy, each school must be assigned at least one PD coordinator

in school level and assuming to the number of schools in capital city Male' there must have at least 14 PD coordinators in 14 government schools. Also the school statistics of the Ministry of Education (2014) has indicated that there are 150 leading Teachers working in these government schools and to regulate PD policy in central level there must have at least one teacher educator coordinator in NIE for Male zone. To combine with these three target groups, the whole target population size is 165 academic employees.

Sampling in the qualitative phase - To maintain validity of the ndings in the qualitative phase, the interviewees were selected from different categories among three target groups who were practically involving in the PD process in government schools in the capital city Male'. The number one interviewee was the chief PD coordinator of the Male' zone, who has sole responsibility to coordinate and regulate the entire PD process under National Institute of Education (NIE). Others were selected from 14 government schools in the capital city Male, among PD coordinators, leading teachers or Senior Management Team (SMT) members who have assigned responsibility by the head of school in monitoring and conducting PD programs in the school level. The selected number of respondents are categorised and shown in Table 1

Table 1 Respondents by category

Category of respondents	Numbers of respondents
- Teacher educator coordinator (Chief PD coordinator in Male zone)	1
- School PD Coordinator	8
- Leading Teacher/SMT members	11
Total	20

Sampling in the quantitative phase - After collecting data by in-depth interview with three main target groups, the questionnaires were distributed to the leading teachers for eld survey to collect data for maintaining the consistency of the qualitative result. The sampling of this phase has been done by using random sampling method by considering the Yamane's formula. According to Ministry of Education (2014) there are 150 leading teachers in 14 government schools, based on the Yamane's formula, the randomly selected sample group of leading teachers are reduced to 109 employees. As these 109 leading teachers are selected from 14 different schools in capital city Male' the stratied random sampling method has been applied to select the sample subgroup sizes proportionally from population subgroup size.

Instrumentation

As the research employs xed-mixed method design, qualitative and quantitative research instruments were used to collect both qualitative and quantitative data.

The qualitative instrument - The qualitative instrument of this research was a semi-structured interview. This instrument was used to administer interview with the teacher educator coordinator, School PD coordinators and leading teachers for collecting qualitative data about the existing PD implementation issues. Though these three subgroups have been assigned three different duties and responsibilities in their work, the general functions of PD process has been carried out by considering the major four phase approach of the HRD Process. Therefore, each group was administered interview with same set of interview guide, but when counter questions were required to reect the discussion of interview, it was added on within the interview process.

The quantitative instrument - After analysing the qualitative data collected by the interview, a quantitative questionnaire was prepared to administer survey for maintaining the consistency of the result. The quantitative questionnaire was collected numeric description of opinions from leading teachers and it was prepared to collect data in the Likert Scale ranging from 1 to 5 as 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. Also the respondents who have answered the questionnaire were collected their demographic data by using special tool designed for this particular purpose.

The items of both instruments were tested by applying Item Object Congruency (IOC) with ve HRD specialists and The Cronbach's alpha was applied to measure the reliability of questionnaire and the overall scale was judged to be reliable when it got $a \geq 0.7$.

Data collection

The micro level study was based on the primary data and it was collected by the semi-structured interview and eld survey by using interview guide and questionnaires which have been constructed to achieve the research objectives. At the macro level, the documents from Ministry of Education and target schools which were related to the Maldivian Education System, Teachers' Enrolment of the target Schools and Documents related to PD programs were collected.

The interview process was conducted directly by meeting with the professional employees who were involved with the three target groups. Since the focus of the interview was to know the existing problems and the causes in the PD system in Maldives, the process was conducted until the researcher got a clear idea about the situation. Also the questionnaires were handed over to the school PD coordinators after giving detailed brieng about the research. Then it was delivered to the leading teachers by the PD coordinators who were working in 14 government schools in capital city Male'. The survey forms were collected by the PD coordinators from the leading teachers when it was completed and the researcher got the forms back from PD coordinators of each school.

Data analysis

As it is a mixed-method research, the data analysis procedure has been done one after the others (sequential), and according to this procedure, it analysed the qualitative data rst to know insight of the existing PD problems associated with the potential causes which experienced by the schools. The qualitative data were collected through interview and analysed in content analysis.

To analyse the qualitative data, it was focused on the descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation to summarize and describe the important characteristics. It was converted into information by using analytical techniques and interpreted as tables and bar graphs. The computation of these techniques have done by using the Statistical Package for Social Science Program (SPSS 17.0). The average of the mean of the quantitative data also calculated by determining of the rank for the average means with reference to statistic formulation: $(5-1)/5 = 0.8$, as follow.

1.00 - 1.80 = Strongly Disagree

1.81 - 2.60 = Disagree

2.61 - 3.40 = Neutral

3.41 - 4.20 = Agree

4.21 - 5.00 = Strongly Agree

Results

1. The needs assessment phase of the PD programs

Almost every respondent who participated in the interviews has agreed that they have done some kind of needs assessment before they go for the designing phase.

1.1 The problems identied in the needs assessment phase

As revealed by the respondents that the needs assessment phase did not conduct completely before they go for design phase. Among 3 major parts, they have done task analysis only. The organization analysis and person analysis were mostly neglected when they do the needs assessment.

Another major problem identied is that the PD coordinators have done needs assessment in their own methods instead of following a standard framework which has been provided by NIE in the PD coordinators' handbook. The PD coordinators have expressed that "if follow the format provided by NIE in the handbook, it consumes lots of times and resources, therefore, they are mostly following their own ways and methods to conduct needs assessment for minimizing the utilization of limited resources". But the leading teachers and SMT members have argued differently as "they already have lots of information about the teachers and their performances, hence, the need for conducting another survey or data gathering procedure is not important".

1.2 The causes of problems in the needs assessment phase

As revealed by the respondents, the lack of monitoring of entire PD process by school authority and NIE would be the one of the causes for incomplete needs assessment phase. The PD guideline provided by the NIE has given responsibility to both principal and the coordinator of NIE to monitor it carefully before it sent to the implementation. The following quotation of PD coordinators conrms the above statement as they said:

"The principal must carefully scrutinize each and every program before it is endorsed and in the same way the coordinator of NIE also must scrutinize it before the approval has been granted by the NIE."

Another major causes identied are the lack of time and lack of resources. Some of the PD coordinators shared their feelings as "if they follow the format provided by the NIE may consumed lots of printing materials and spend lots of time to meet with the focus groups to get data on whole school problems. Therefore, they used their own methods to conduct needs assessment phase".

2. The design phase of the PD programs

It has been revealed that most of government schools in Male' city have been designing PD programs based on the format provided by the NIE in the PD coordinators' handbook as a framework.

2.1 The problems identied in the design phase

The major problem identied in the designing phase is that the PD coordinators have done design phase incompletely. Although they have done designing by using the format of pre-workshop proposal, they do not follow the format exactly as it is in the handbook. Some of the PD coordinators have expressed that "when do designing, always follow pre-workshop proposal, but always include the information which is required for the particular PD programs. Therefore, it is not necessary to follow the format exactly as it is in the handbook". The following quotation of the leadings teachers conrms that they have done designing phase incompletely. They said that, "in some situation all three PD days have been conducted the same type of PD programs and due to that the same PD plan are being utilized for whole year to save the available resources in the school".

2.2 The causes of problems in the design phase

The rst cause identied in the design phase is, the incomplete need assessment phase became a major cause of problem existing in the design phase. It has been identied that the design phase cannot be continued as mentioned in the handbook with the existing data taken from improperly done needs assessment phase.

Another cause identied in is the lack of time from the PD coordinators to engage in PD designing. The PD coordinators are not only assigned in HRD duties, but they have many other academic responsibilities as leading teachers. Therefore, they are unable to give the maximum participation to design PD programs, hence, it leading to conduct PD programs with an incomplete designing phase. It has been identied that the lack of resources also has a great impact on the design phase.

3. The implementation phase of the PD programs

According to the discussions in the interview, most of the respondents have agreed that the training intervention of PD is solely depends on the design phase as the implementation of training could be carried out by following the plan prepared in the design phase.

3.1 The problems identied in the implementation phase

According to the PD coordinators "most of the times PD programs are required to make many changes on the original plan to t for the present situation. Mostly it has to be done to resolve the unexpected problems in the implementation phase. When the problems arise, the original plan was taken back for redesigning to solve the existing problems". According to the Leading teachers "the changing of original plan always causes the mismatch between the programs implemented and the actual needs of PD training assessed in the needs assessment phase".

3.2 The causes of problems in the implementation phase

According to the PD coordinators, they have failed to implement the original PD plan as prepared in the design phase due to many reasons.

As revealed by the PD coordinators "lack of human resource is one of the major reason to alter the original PD plan. In many instances the ideal trainer which the school wished to have may not be available on time as planned".

According to the PD coordinators "the lack of professional support and assistance is one of the causes to alter the original PD plan".

According to the PD coordinators "the lack of physical resources are also known as the one of major causes to change the original PD plan".

The evaluation phase of the PD programs

As revealed by the respondents, the government schools in Male' city are following the Donald Kirkpatrick's four-level evaluation model in the PD evaluation phase, but most of the PD coordinators are not concerned about having to apply it fully considering all the levels stated in the model.

3. The problems identied in the evaluation phase

As revealed by most of the respondents, the job behaviour and result levels of evaluations were not included in the PD evaluation phase, instead they did reaction and learning levels of evaluations only.

The PD coordinators only do the evaluation to prepare the Post-event report. Therefore, they used summative evaluation in post-test approach as it takes place at the end of the PD programs. Also the evaluation results are not been considered as an important element for renewal of teaching licence. As revealed by the leading teachers "the PD coordinators are more concerned to mark the attendance of the teachers, rather than doing effective delivery of useful competencies which will enhance teaching and learning process in the school".

3.4 The causes of problems in the evaluation phase

As revealed by the teacher educator coordinator "the reporting procedures are not effectively implemented as the PD coordinators always busy with other duties and responsibilities in the schools. Hence, they failed to send reports to their superiors regularly and the superiors seldom review the progress of whole PD systems".

According to the PD coordinators "the PD policy does not have any terms and clause about the achievement that the teachers must achieve when they come for the process of renewing teaching license".

The consistency of the results

As aforementioned, the quantitative phase of the research has been conducted to check the consistency of the results collected by the qualitative phase of the research.

The level of HRD problems in the 4 phases of PD training conducted by the government schools in the Maldives.

Table 2 Level and ranking of HRD process

HRD process	Mean	SD	Level	Ranking
Needs Assessment (Process 1)	2.16	0.51	Disagree	4
Designing (Process 2)	2.40	0.62	Disagree	3
Implementation (Process 3)	2.49	1.04	Disagree	1
Evaluation (Process 4)	2.47	0.57	Disagree	2

Table 2 presents the mean, standard deviation, level and ranking of items used to test the problems in the four phases of HRD process in the government schools of the capital city Male'. All the processes in the four phases of HRD fell in the range 1.81-2.60. This range represents the level of "Disagree" in the measurements used in this research as aforementioned. The implementation process got the highest point 2.49 mean, whereas the needs assessment process got the rating in lowest 2.16 mean. Therefore, it can be concluded that

the majority of the respondents disagreed that the 4 phases of HRD process in PD training in the government schools of Maldives are applied appropriately as same as it revealed by the qualitative phase, hence, it is the evidence that the general analysis of both phases indicated consistency in the result.

As this research mainly consists of two major research questions, question one focuses to know the problems in 4 phases of PD process, whereas question 2 focuses to know the causes which associate with the problems identied in 4 phases of HRD process. Therefore, the following data was analysed to answer the research question one.

1. **The training problems of PD programs conducted by the government schools in the Maldives.**

Table 3 Mean, standard deviation and expected levels of HRD problems in the 4 phases of PD training programs.

Problems occurs in the 4 phases of HRD process in PD	Mean	SD	Level
1. We always achieved the objectives of the PD programs as planned.	1.99	0.63	Disagree
2. We always complete needs assessment phase before we enter the designing phase of the PD programs.	2.04	0.67	Disagree
3. We always examine the organization's environment when we conduct organization analysis in the needs assessment phase.	2.15	0.70	Disagree
4. We always examine the organization's strategies when we conduct organization analysis in the needs assessment phase.	2.13	0.51	Disagree
5. We always examine the organization's resources when we conduct organization analysis in the needs assessment phase.	2.26	0.66	Disagree
6. We always identify the employees' need when we conduct person analysis in the needs assessment phase.	2.25	0.72	Disagree
7. We always identify the gap between the current and expected performance level of the employees when we conduct person analysis in the needs assessment phase.	2.19	0.65	Disagree
8. We always prioritize needs after completing the needs assessment.	2.14	0.65	Disagree
9. We always do the designing of the PD programs by using the data which we collected in the need assessment phase.	2.21	0.71	Disagree
10. We always clearly define the objectives of the PD programs.	2.38	0.84	Disagree
11. We always develop detailed lesson plan for the PD programs.	2.24	0.80	Disagree
12. We always develop appropriate materials for the PD programs.	2.45	0.92	Disagree
13. We always select ideal trainer for the PD programs from the employees of our school.	2.43	0.95	Disagree

Table 3 (Cont.)

Problems occurs in the 4 phases of HRD process in PD	Mean	SD	Level
14. We always select ideal trainer for the PD programs from outside.	2.44	0.99	Disagree
15. We always design the best methods and techniques to conduct PD programs.	2.45	0.78	Disagree
16. We always prepare detailed program schedule before we begin PD implementation phase.	2.59	1.04	Disagree
17. We always do implementation of the PD programs by following the schedule as prepared in the designing phase.	2.49	1.04	Disagree
18. We always carry out evaluation during the training programs.	3.22	1.02	Neutral
19. We always carry out evaluation at the beginning of training programs.	2.29	0.82	Disagree
20. We always carry out evaluation when the teachers start working after the training programs.	1.90	0.76	Disagree

Table 3 presents the mean, standard deviation, level and ranking of items used to test the HRD problems in the 4 phases of Professional Development training programs conducted by the government schools in the capital city Male'. This section consists of 20 statements, out of them 19 statements fell in the range 1.81-2.60 which represents the expected level "Disagree" in range. The statement 18 fells in the range 2.61-3.40 by representing the expected level "Neutral" in range. Therefore, it can be concluded that the overall mean of the respondents on statement 18 are neutral, neither agreed nor disagreed. Also the overall means of the respondents on the rest of the statements in this section are disagreed.

As 20 statements were formulated by considering the 4 phases of HRD process model, all the statements were asked to know whether they agreed or disagreed and how much they agreed or disagreed about the statements. Therefore, considering the overall means of statement 1 to statement 20 indicated that the government schools in the capital city Male' did not follow the 4 phases of HRD process model properly when they conduct professional development training programs in the schools. Therefore, it can be concluded that the ndings of problems in the survey indicated consistency with the data interpreted in the qualitative phase of the research. Considering the highest and lowest means, statement 18 got 3.22 as highest and the statement 20 got 1.90 as lowest mean.

As the research question two implies, the second part of the quantitative questionnaire aimed to know the causes which associate with the problems highlighted in rst part of the questionnaire. Therefore, the following data was analysed to answer the research question two.

2. **The causes for existing problems of PD programs conducted by the government schools in the Maldives.**

Table 4 Mean, standard deviation and expected levels of general causes of problems in the PD training programs.

Potential causes of problems in HRD process in general	Mean	SD	Level
1. I believe that the lack of time of PD Coordinators to conduct training programs is one of the causes for existing PD problems in our school.	4.02	0.86	Agree
2. I believe that the lack of funds for organizing training programs is one of the causes for existing PD problems in our school.	3.99	1.22	Agree
3. I believe that the unavailability of qualified trainers is one of the causes for existing PD problems in our school.	4.01	0.81	Agree
4. I believe that the unavailability of qualified HRD specialist in our school is one of the causes for existing PD problems in our school.	3.03	0.77	Neutral
5. I believe that the lack of materials to conduct PD programs is one of the causes for existing PD problems in our school.	3.64	0.89	Agree
6. I believe that the lack of ICT resources is one of the causes for existing PD problems in our school.	3.61	0.97	Agree
7. I believe that the lack of monitoring by the Principal is one of the causes for existing PD problems in our school.	3.59	1.04	Agree
8. I believe that the lack of cooperation by the SMT is one of the causes for existing PD problems in our school.	3.72	0.89	Agree

Table 4 presents the mean, standard deviation, level and ranking of items used to test the causes which associated with the HRD problems in the 4 phases of Professional Development training process conducted by the government schools in the capital city Male'. This section consists of 8 statements based on the general causes of HRD problems, out of them, 7 statements fell in the range 3.41-4.20 which represents the expected level "Agree" in range. The statement 4 fells in the range 2.61-3.40 representing the expected level "Neutral" and which means they neither agreed nor disagreed.

These 8 statements were formulated considering the general causes of the problems highlighted by the respondents in the interview. These causes are generally linked with all the types of physical and human resources, monitoring and evaluation, as well as the support and cooperation given by higher authorities. As the statements in the questionnaire were asked positively to know whether they agree or disagree about the statements and how much they agree or disagree. Therefore, considering the overall means of statement 1 to statement 8, it can be concluded that the government schools in the capital city Male' are facing lots of problems due to the lack of physical and human resources, lack of time of PD coordinators to organize training, lack of professional support by NIE and lack of monitoring by the responsible authorities.

Therefore, it can be concluded that the ndings of causes in the survey also indicated consistency with the data interpreted in the qualitative phase of the research. Considering the highest and lowest means, statement 1 got 4.02 as highest and statement 4 got 3.03 as lowest mean among all 8 statements in this section.

Discussion on ndings

Despite the challenges faced by the PD coordinators, it has been identied that the Professional Development (PD) Process in the government schools of Maldives includes four major phases as most of the Human Resource Development process are included. According to Ministry of Education (2009) the professional development (PD) is known as a systematic process of HRD intervention with combination of several tasks. It begins with need assessment and go for designing before implementing any PD programs. Also it ends with evaluation for effective decision making of PD training. Here summarize the ndings which have been identied in both, qualitative and quantitative approaches within the four phases of HRD process.

1. The needs assessment phase

The ndings have revealed that the people who are involved in the PD process in the schools of capital city Male' have understand the importance of conducting needs assessment phase in PD process. As almost every HRD theorists have highlighted that the training intervention cannot take place effectively without having proper needs assessment process as it is the process used to determine whether training is necessary for the organization and what type of training components are important to address the present and future job demand. The primary purpose of needs assessment is to assist organizational decision-making on HRD process by assisting to understand how training can affect individual behaviour, group and departmental targets and organizational efciency. As claimed by DeSimone and Werner (2012) needs assessment always provides clear information to input the required competencies and skills for the successful job performance of the employees and it typically involves three important elements; organization analysis, person analysis and task analysis. Bohlander and Snell (2007); DeSimone and Werner (2012) have further explained that the organization analysis is the examination of environment, strategies, and resources of the organization to determine where training emphasis should be placed. It gives clear understanding of organization in relation with HRD programs. The person analysis helps to identify specically who need training and whether the current performance or expected performance of the employees indicates a need for training. Also it helps organizations avoid the mistake of sending employees into training when someone does not need it. The task analysis is the process of determining the contents of a training program are on the basis of the study of the tasks and duties involved in the job. It gives clear understanding on the tasks or duties of the job and how much it aligns with the contents of the training which will be provided by HRD programs. Therefore, if there is no proper needs assessment process to integrate with these three important elements, the concerned authority or the people who are working in decision making cannot get the knowledge on needs of training, consequently, they cannot make effective decision on entire PD process.

In the context of Professional Development (PD) in the Maldives, the PD coordinators are following the PD guideline provided by the National Institute of Education (NIE) for entire PD process. This guideline is clearly explained in the handbook how to conduct the 4 phases of PD process. According to the guideline, the whole school training needs assessment can take different types and methods of data collection. The following explanation on needs assessment summarises the guideline given by the NIE in PD coordinators' handbook.

1. Determine the design of needs assessment

Decide on the methods i.e. interview of focus group, observation, survey, etc. by assessing advantages and disadvantages for methods.

2. Collect data

Conduct interview of focus group, administer survey and questionnaires or observe lessons.

3. Analyse data

Conduct qualitative or quantitative analysis and determine solutions and recommendations.

4. Provide feedback

Write report and make oral presentation.

5. Develop action plan

Use results as the basis for training design, implementation and evaluation.

According to Rizwan (2010) it is also necessary to recognise the ndings in relation to the availability of resources (both human and physical) for addressing the needs. This process is called prioritizing of needs and it requires the PD coordinator to address the PD needs and to present the PD needs report in a comprehensible manner to the concerned authorities.

Although the information given in the guideline are well structured to have comprehensive needs assessment phase, the ndings have revealed that the PD coordinators in Male' schools are normally following their own way to do needs assessment process by omitting very important components, such as the organization analysis and person analysis. The PD coordinators have argued that they have done incomplete needs assessment due to scarcity of resources. However, the leading teachers and SMT members have different argument on this matter. They have argued that "it does not requires to complete needs assessment by survey or by any other form of data gathering procedure. As they already have lots of data in the school which can be utilized to organize PD training for teachers. Therefore, when analysing the whole situation of the problems in needs assessment process in the Male' schools, it can be concluded that the problems identied in needs assessment occurred mainly due to lack of monitoring by the concerned authority. If the monitoring process was carried out effectively as stated in the guideline, the potential problems can be identied initially and the NIE or the school management can take correct measures to keep on track to go on with rules and regulations imposed by the NIE.

2. The design phase

The ndings have revealed that the design phase mainly consists with preparing pre-workshop proposal provided by NIE. The guideline given in the PD coordinators' handbook has stated that the PD coordinators must prepare pre-workshop proposal before they go for the PD intervention and it has to follow the format given in the handbook. This proposal is a tool utilized in the school for designing PD training and persuade the school management. It also helps the PD coordinators to seek funding and backing for the successful implementation of the program. The proposal needs to be endorsed by the NIE and school principal before they go for implementation phase.

It has been agreed by the most respondents that generally PD coordinators have followed the guideline of pre-workshop proposal, but they always included the information which is required for the particular PD programs. Most of the PD coordinators have agreed that they cannot utilize the format as given in the handbook because it requires lots of information and the data collected in the needs assessment phase is mostly not enough to complete the proposal as guided by NIE. As DeSimone and Werner (2012) state the phases in the four phase approach model of HRD are very much connected with each other, if any phase of this approach is incomplete or improperly applied, the next phase always have obstacles and will face lots of unexpected problems in the practice of PD process.

When considering the reason why they ignored such important parts of the PD process, it has been revealed that the root cause of existing problems identied in the designing phase is the lack of time of the PD coordinators. Many respondents have highlighted that the primary duty and responsibilities of PD coordinators are to be a leading teachers. In the present context of PD system, the PD coordinator's job is an assigned job by the head of school with extra duty and responsibilities for some selected leading teachers. That is why they always have many other academic duties and responsibilities other than performing a duty on professional development training. Therefore, they are unable to give the maximum contribution for designing PD programs and it resulted to complete designing phase in easier way to go for PD implementation.

3. The implementation phase

The ndings have revealed that the PD coordinators of Male' schools have made many changes on the original plan of PD to t for the present situations. Mostly it has been done to resolve the problems faced in the implementation phase and when any problems occurred, the original plans were taken back to redesign to make it t for the present situation. Most of the respondents have agreed that the changing of original plan resulted in mismatch between the actual training programs and the needs of trainers that have been identied in the needs assessment phase. The existing problems identied in the implementation phase in Male' schools may likely be due to the lack of knowledge on the situation of the organization caused by incomplete needs assessment as the needs assessment phase was not done properly as explained in the PD coordinators' handbook and in the HRD theories.

According to DeSimone and Werner (2012) the phases in the four phase approach model of the HRD has sequencing on its process and implementation phase is the delivery of entire HRD process. As Smith (1998); Werner and DeSimone (2009) states that the primary goal of the need assessment and designing phases are to implement effective HRD intervention. Therefore, the HRD intervention cannot be done effectively if there is improper needs assessment and incomplete designing phase. As claimed by DeSimone and Werner (2012) the HRD intervention can be delivered by using the most appropriate means or methods as determined in the design phase and the whole design phase would be determined to achieve the objectives crafted by considering the result of needs assessment phase. By referring the theories of HRD, it is clear that the implementation phase of PD programs in Male' schools would face many unexpected problems due to having improper needs assessment and designing.

When analysing the causes identied in the implementation phase, the reason has been proven by some of the previous studies done on the eld of professional development training. As Danielson, Doolittle and Bradley (2007) states that the delivering any HRD program generally poses lots of challenges, but the challenges always vary from organizations to organization based on the resources and environment available in the organization. Although the challenges are vary from organization to organization, Werner and DeSimone (2009); Wei, Hammond and Adamson (2010) have claimed that there are challenges that have been noticed as common for all the organization while implementing HRD intervention. They have been further claimed that the implementing HRD programs with lack of physical and human resources are common challenges in many organizations. It includes nding a qualied trainer for program delivery, allocating suitable resources, creating an environment that enhances learning. They have concluded that the problems existing in the implementation phase can be minimized if the organization carefully completes the preliminary phases, such as needs assessment and design phase of the HRD process. Therefore, conducting a comprehensive needs assessment and design phase are crucial to go for effective PD implementation.

4. The evaluation phase

In the phases of the four phase approach model of HRD, the evaluation is the nal phase for measuring the effectiveness of HRD intervention. It is the systematic collection of descriptive and judgemental information necessary to make effective training decisions related to the selection, adoption, valuation and modication of various instructional activities (Bohlander and Snell, 2007; DeSimone & Werner, 2012). However, the ndings of the evaluation phase of the PD training in Male' schools have revealed that the PD coordinators have done only summative evaluation. As claimed by DeSimone and Werner (2012) the summative evaluation only takes place at the end of the training programs and intends to assess whether training objectives have been achieved or not. Therefore, if they do the evaluation in systematic way, the formative evaluation must be carried out during the training. As the formative evaluation is to provide feedback to the trainees about how they are progressing. Also the evaluation should be designed in both Pre-test and Post-test approach to know the ability of trainees at the beginning and at the end of the PD training program. Bohlander and

Snell (2007); DeSimone and Werner (2012) state that each and every training program has expected entry criteria or expected level of ability among the trainees and this ability of trainees can be measured by pre-test approach. They further claimed that the pre-test result is very useful for the designing phase to know the variety and standard of the training contents. Instead of using both, the pre-test and post-test, the ndings have revealed that the government schools in Male' city are using post-test approach only, when they conduct PD evaluation. DeSimone and Werner (2012) state that the post-test approach can be utilized immediately after the end of training program to know the skills and competencies which had been provided in the training program. Therefore, it is crucial to have a dynamic evaluation model to know the progress of the trainees in all the aspects.

When analysing the evaluation model which is followed in Male' schools, it has been revealed that the government schools in Male' city are following the Donald Kirkpatrick's four-level evaluation model in PD, but mostly the job behaviour and result levels of evaluation are not included, instead they have done only reaction and learning levels. As claimed by DeSimone and Werner (2012) normally the behaviour and the result levels evaluation can be done when they start working in the organization after the completion of training programs. As the behaviour level determines the expected job required skills and knowledge are delivered or not and the behaviour what organization has expected from the employees are seen when they do the job after the training program. Also the results level determines the training intervention improved the organization's effectiveness in general. Therefore, if they are not included behaviour and result levels of evaluation in the PD evaluation process, it would be difcult to determine the success of Professional Development (PD) training in their responsive schools.

Theoretical implication on PD implementation

The study result found that the majority schools in capital city Male' did not conduct needs assessment and design phase completely before they go for the PD intervention. The gradual diminishing of functions in PD process in needs assessment, designing, implementation and evaluation phases became the common practice of the PD coordinators in most of the government schools in Male' city and it is likely be the root cause of all the existing problems in the PD system. It is indicated, the diminishing of important functions in the PD process resulted to conduct incomplete phases in entire PD process and consequently, the schools failed to achieve the desired objectives of the PD programs. It is also indicated that the PD coordinators are not fully abiding by the rules and regulations imposed by the regulating body to have better and effective PD system in the Maldives and they have developed their own way of doing things in the PD system in their responsible schools.

The study result also found that the whole PD process in the government school in capital city Male' is not functioning well due to lack of monitoring by the higher authorities including school principal, SMT members and Chief PD coordinator in the central level assigned by the National Institute of Education. The PD policy states the NIE is the sole responsible body for monitoring and regulating the whole PD

system in the country. Therefore, they need to formulate to apply better and effective methods to monitor the entire PD system in government schools to conrm whether the system is going on to the right direction aligning with the rules and regulations imposed by the NIE to achieve the desired objectives of the PD programs.

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