

RESEARCH ARTICLE	Pedagogical Training for Primary School Teachers: Between Formality and Actual Implementation
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Abstract The teacher is the cornerstone of the educational process, being primarily responsible for the implementation and supervision of curricula with high precision. If we aim for advanced and high-quality education, we must ensure optimal teacher preparation, equipping them with a fully integrated personality across all psychological and professional dimensions. Teacher preparation and professional development are foundational to educational improvement, as they significantly influence teaching performance. Whether through initial pedagogical training or continuous professional development, these processes are essential for equipping teachers with the academic and professional competencies they need. This can be achieved through structured training programs or self-directed learning methods.	
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Introduction:

Education is a fundamental tool for renewal, reform, development, and adaptation to modern technological and scientific changes. As such, educational systems worldwide have undergone extensive reforms over the past two decades, driven by various political, scientific, economic, and social factors. These reforms have expanded educational stages, diversified specializations, clarified goals, and highlighted the pivotal role of education in all life domains. Consequently, societal demand and confidence in education have significantly increased, especially in systems grounded in principles of universality, free access, and democracy.

Algeria, like many nations, has engaged in broad reform initiatives across various sectors under the umbrella of globalization. Recognizing the importance of human capital, Algeria has focused on developing its educational system as a strategic priority. (Zararka and Zararka, D.T, p.26)

Studies have consistently emphasized the role of training in enhancing human resource performance, noting its impact on productivity, skills development, morale, and job stability. Consequently, training has become integral to national and international policy agendas aimed at achieving effective and flexible workforce performance.

Despite differences in methodology and content, societies globally converge on the critical importance of education and training in driving development and economic growth. Effective training ensures high-quality outcomes within educational systems, which in turn contribute positively to national economic expansion. (Ben Ammar, 2009, pp. 08-09)

Research Problem:

The education sector plays a vital role in societal advancement, influencing development across social, cultural, and economic domains. As such, countries prioritize educational reform, aiming to align with global progress.

Primary school teachers, in particular, face immense challenges due to the diversity of their roles and responsibilities in shaping the foundational personalities of future generations. Teachers often encounter obstacles that only those in the field truly understand. (Kabash, 2017, p.11)

Education and training are the primary mechanisms for human capital development and are considered strategic investments. Through well-designed curricula, nations can fulfill labor market needs and support national development efforts.

Pedagogical training for teachers is grounded in systematic scientific principles aimed at aligning with modern educational changes and enhancing system effectiveness. The success of educational reform is intricately linked to the teacher's role, as they are fundamental in shaping the quality of education. High-quality teaching requires comprehensive training that enables teachers to grasp the competency-based approach a prerequisite for effective classroom performance. (Maacho and Qalish, 2017, p.22)

Training is a central element in human resource development, enabling individuals to adapt to evolving knowledge and technologies. It plays a key role in strengthening institutional resilience amid competitive and developmental pressures. Training helps create competent administrative structures, which is why both developed and developing nations prioritize it. (Al-Attawi, 2010, p.03)

Continuous in-service training, in particular, is critical for maintaining high-performance standards, fostering employee confidence, enhancing work quality, and promoting professional belonging and motivation.

Algeria has made efforts since independence to revamp its teacher training system in response to global transformations. Recognizing the teacher as the cornerstone of educational quality, the Ministry of National Education has emphasized in-service training as essential for the success of educational reforms. (Bougatif, 2014, pp. 07-11)

Effective teacher performance is thus a primary goal for educational institutions. Elevating teachers' competencies, offering supportive frameworks, and addressing school-based factors are key to enhancing teaching quality.

In Algeria, the academic training of primary teachers is pivotal for equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary for improved performance, thereby enhancing the overall efficacy of the education system. This study addresses the following central question: **What is the reality of academic training for primary school teachers in the Algerian education system?**

To address this, the study aims to:

- ✓ Assert that training is a continuous process.
- ✓ Define the principles and objectives of training.
- ✓ Highlight the importance and impact of training on teachers' professional careers.
- ✓ Examine the current state of teacher training.

Definition of Study Terminology:

1. Academic Training:

The term training evokes a variety of meanings often associated with related concepts such as: preparation, qualification, education, professional readiness, and trainer development. According to Bishara Gabriel, educators and professionals commonly use overlapping terms like preparation, qualification, training, and formation to refer to related processes. (Sedkaoui, 2011, pp. 02-03)

Linguistically, formation implies structuring or shaping enacting a series of changes according to a specific methodology to move an individual from a current state to a more desired one, based on predefined standards. In this sense, training equips individuals with functional thinking and behavioral skills that enable them to carry out assigned tasks effectively.

Training is thus a programmed set of learning activities designed to provide individuals or groups with knowledge, skills, and attitudes that support adaptation to the professional and social environment while enhancing the effectiveness of the institutions they serve.

According to Abdel Baqi (2000), training is:

“A planned activity aimed at providing individuals with a set of information and skills that enhance their performance at work.”

Other definitions emphasize psychological and behavioral shifts, stressing that **training:**

Enhances individual attitudes toward work,

Raises technical competencies,

Improves cognitive and practical abilities,

Alters behaviors positively.

Lorsi Abdelkader describes training as a preparatory process through which a teacher acquires the skills and competencies necessary to perform effectively having both a scientific and human dimension.

Three essential components of the training process:

- ✓ **Trainer (Formateur):** The individual responsible for instructing and supervising.
- ✓ **Trainee (Apprenant):** The recipient of training who benefits from theoretical and practical knowledge.

Training Program: The framework linking trainer and trainee.

2. Primary School Teacher:

According to Mohamed Ziyane Hamdan:

“The teacher is the craftsman and main executor of instruction. Teaching is a craft and an art that requires specific personal and professional characteristics, including leadership, organization, evaluation, and innovation.”

In educational institutions, the teacher is viewed as a vital human resource. They are not merely conveyors of information but active contributors to intellectual development, requiring continuous investment through training and support to ensure educational quality.

As Salah Abdel Rahman (2010) notes:

“The teacher represents the central resource in educational institutions one upon whom the effectiveness and efficiency of educational objectives rest.”

Principles of Training

The success of training programs depends on the understanding and implementation of the following principles:

Information Delivery:

Goals and success factors should be clearly communicated before training begins.

Tasks should be broken into simple components and presented from easiest to most complex.

Learning can occur anywhere, not just in formal institutions.

Role of the Trainer

Must be knowledgeable and emotionally stable.

Should define objectives, content sequence, and timeframes.

Understanding trainees' levels and needs helps tailor delivery.

Trainee Characteristics.

Trainees differ not only in learning speed but also in emotional and cognitive states.

Motivation varies (internal vs. external), so identifying personal needs is crucial.

Prior knowledge influences learning potential and responsiveness (Boussaada, 2011, pp. 301-302)

General Objectives of Training:

Training aims to improve educational quality by enhancing the competencies of teaching and administrative staff.
Main objectives include:

Enabling teachers to understand national educational goals, teaching systems, and pedagogical methods.

Developing teachers' understanding of child development physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially.

Enhancing awareness of societal issues and educational challenges.

Familiarizing teachers with recent developments in educational tools, ICT, and digital learning.

According to Pierre Casse, the goal of training is:

"A precise diagnosis of the pedagogical context to optimize learning outcomes."

This requires that:

- ✓ Training actions are aligned with improvement needs.
- ✓ Training goals are clearly defined.
- ✓ Stakeholders (trainers, learners, supervisors) share a common understanding of expected outcomes.
- ✓ The Importance of Training in the Contemporary Era
- ✓ Training today is a multidimensional and complex necessity, closely tied to broader historical and social contexts. The 20th century is often referred to as "The Century of Training" due to its transformative impact on human capital.
- ✓ Training has become a fundamental process for securing both professional and social recognition. As Dauber & Verne argue, the motto is now:

(Learn to become):

Teachers are considered the "intervening variable" their performance determines the quality of educational outputs. However, several criticisms remain:

Lack of clearly defined teaching competencies,

Disconnect between training curricula and actual classroom needs,

Failure to provide teachers with updated, relevant knowledge due to poor planning.

Addressing these shortcomings requires serious, ongoing, and effective training aligned with contemporary challenges and educational demands.

(Next Sections to Follow):

- ✓ Teacher Training and Professional Development.
- ✓ In-Service Training.
- ✓ Challenges in Implementing Educational Reforms.
- ✓ Trainer Preparation.
- ✓ Modernization Strategies and ICT Integration.
- ✓ Conclusion and Recommendations.

Teacher Training and Professional Development

Achieving the goals of educational reform cannot be separated from improving teacher performance and training. Teachers must be equipped to keep pace with advancements and respond to evolving work demands. They must be capable of assuming new roles and mastering modern techniques in managing educational processes.

Distance training has gained prominence in the 21st century due to its capacity to educate large numbers of teachers and educators.

Training aligns with the philosophy of lifelong learning not merely for the sake of training but as a means of continuous development. Given that teachers are the central axis of any educational system, the quality of both education and training largely depends on their competence, sense of responsibility, and professional and human attributes.

In Arabic, the word training stems from the verb to shape or form, and it implies structural and behavioral transformation. In Latin, it corresponds to *Formare*, meaning to shape persons or things.

UNESCO defines training as:

“A tangible and structured educational process that encompasses the acquisition of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and competencies necessary for fulfilling the roles and responsibilities assigned to the trainees. As an educational process, its central element is learning, which brings about changes in the trainees and elevates their competence—not only in knowledge but also in attitudes and behaviors.” (Zerarga & Zerarga, n.d., pp. 19–20)

In-Service Training:

This is one of the most widespread and essential types of training implemented in educational institutions due to its ongoing nature. It is intended for individuals who already possess field experience and is conducted during the course of their professional careers, regardless of their seniority or previous training level.

In-service training:

Compensates for shortcomings in initial academic preparation.

Qualifies teachers who lack formal pedagogical training.

Updates and deepens teachers’ academic knowledge.

Stimulates a culture of self-directed professional development.

Prepares teachers for upcoming reforms and changes within the educational system.

In essence, in-service training is:

“The training received by a teacher from the moment of permanent appointment until retirement aimed at continuous improvement and mastery.” (Ben Zaf, 2013, p. 193)

Effective in-service training requires:

- ✓ Clear goals tailored to professional needs.
- ✓ A flexible format (short or long-term, continuous or intermittent).
- ✓ Trainers selected based on specific institutional needs.

As Algeria evolves its educational strategies, in-service training has become an imperative to support both educational quality and systemic reform.

Challenges in Implementing Educational Reform

As with any reform, educational reform efforts often face obstacles due to poor planning or insufficient consideration of surrounding socio-economic and cultural issues.

The Algerian educational system has undergone multiple reforms since independence. Despite sincere efforts, several obstacles persist, including:

- ✓ Social and cultural resistance.
- ✓ Lack of pedagogical resources.
- ✓ Discrepancy between intended outcomes and actual implementation.
- ✓ Even current reforms, though aimed at resolving past gaps, are still hindered by practical constraints. Teachers and inspectors report major difficulties related to:
 - ✓ The quality and relevance of textbooks,
 - ✓ Curriculum coherence.
 - ✓ Trainer preparation.
 - ✓ Implementation of competency-based approaches.
 - ✓ Trainer Preparation.
- ✓ Trainer preparation is a crucial determinant in the success or failure of any educational reform. Despite awareness campaigns and general consensus
- ✓ **the importance of training, several shortcomings persist:**
 - ✓ Insufficient foundational knowledge to understand updated curricula, especially in scientific subjects.
 - ✓ Age-related challenges in adapting to new training content.
 - ✓ Resistance to changing long-established teaching habits.
 - ✓ Lack of material and moral incentives, leading to decreased motivation and professional engagement.
 - ✓ Over-reliance on lectures, which result in theoretical redundancy.
 - ✓ Scarcity of qualified training specialists.

Poor attendance due to logistical and scheduling issues.

Relying solely on formal, programmed training will not suffice. Instead, a shift toward self-directed, lifelong learning is required, especially given the time and effort needed to bridge competency gaps in the long term. (Zerarga & Zerarga, n.d, pp. 24-25)

Teacher Qualification in Light of Recent Reforms

Algeria's education reform program emphasizes the development of pedagogical and administrative staff, focusing on:

- A new in-service training system for primary and middle school teachers.
- Improving initial teacher training to align with international standards.
- Continuous training of all education personnel to effectively implement reforms.

The Education and Training Regulation Act in Algeria, Article 49, states:

"Training is a continuous process for all educators at all levels. It aims to provide technical skills, promote high levels of competency and culture, and instill full awareness of the educator's mission."

The Ministry's current approach is twofold:

Raising recruitment standards, requiring higher academic and cultural qualifications and reviewing training institutions' roles to meet present and future needs.

Requalifying current teachers lacking essential scientific and pedagogical knowledge especially those hired in response to urgent demand in previous years. In-service training is currently managed by educational inspectors through on-site training workshops.

Looking ahead, the policy aims to integrate ICTs (Information and Communication Technologies) to enhance the quality and accessibility of teach

Pedagogical Training: Between Formality and Implementation

There is a widespread misconception that subject mastery alone qualifies someone to teach. However, research emphasizes that effective instruction depends heavily on the pedagogical approach employed by the teacher.

Pedagogical training is crucial for primary school teachers. It reflects:

The degree to which a teacher possesses key professional traits.

Their ability to apply acquired competencies in real classroom settings.

Key areas of pedagogical competence include:

- ✓ Classroom management.
- ✓ Instructional delivery.
- ✓ Assessment techniques.
- ✓ Application of educational theory and legislation.
- ✓ Understanding student psychology and differentiated instruction.

However, the current reality shows:

- ✓ No national policy guiding the preparation of new or veteran teachers.
- ✓ Significant disparities in trainer quality, with many lacking formal qualifications.
- ✓ Weak teaching methods and lack of up-to-date content or documentation.
- ✓ Overreliance on lectures, often irrelevant to field needs.
- ✓ No clear learning objectives, insufficient planning, and lack of follow-up.
- ✓ Poor balance between theory and practice.
- ✓ Disconnect between theoretical training and classroom realities.
- ✓ Initial training alone is insufficient; it must be supported by continuous professional development. Investing in such training is not a luxury but a strategic necessity.
- ✓ The Need for Continuous Training in the Digital Age
- ✓ Amid rapid digital transformations, continuous professional development is no longer optional but essential. Technology is now a structural component of education.

Teachers must:

- ✓ Acquire digital and pedagogical skills.
- ✓ Utilize digital resources effectively.
- ✓ Deliver engaging and diverse content suited to digital learners. As Zaghl (2016, p. 89) asserts:

Integrating technology into pedagogy requires a specific set of digital and pedagogical competencies that can only be acquired through ongoing and targeted training programs.”

Likewise, Faraj Abdel Qader Taha (2003, p. 134) emphasizes:

“Continuous teacher training in educational technology is a fundamental dimension in modernizing education and enhancing its outcomes, as it fosters interactive and engaging learning environments.

Conclusion:

In today’s knowledge-driven society, nations must prioritize credible institutions that can keep pace with rapid scientific progress. Educational policy must evolve to support improved pedagogical practices and modern training methods.

This paper serves as a starting point for rethinking and reforming teacher training programs at all levels reassessing the role of the teacher and aligning training with real classroom demands.

Recommendations:

Pedagogical training and development represent a vital pillar of the educational reform program. This can be operationalized through several practical measures, including:

- ✓ Developing a national policy for preparing both new and experienced teachers, with the goal of innovation and continuous professional elevation.
- ✓ Encouraging teachers to re-evaluate their practices and abandon outdated thinking and routines in favor of more effective approaches.
- ✓ Linking training programs to real-world pedagogical challenges and applying them directly in classroom settings, supported by structured internships and mentoring.
- ✓ Promoting individual preparation for self-directed learning as a fundamental part of professional growth.
- ✓ Paying closer attention to curriculum design in the distribution of training hours and content.
- ✓ Involving teachers in the design and planning of training programs to ensure relevance and engagement.
- ✓ Prioritizing continuous training as a key factor in improving educational performance and system outcomes.
- ✓ The Necessity of Teacher Training in the Face of Technological Advancement
- ✓ In the context of accelerated transformations in the digital age, continuous training for teachers has become an urgent necessity. Educational technology is no longer a mere tool it is a foundational component of the modern educational system.
- ✓ Thus, training in educational technology:
- ✓ Enhances teacher competence,
- ✓ Facilitates effective use of digital resources,
- ✓ Enables the delivery of engaging, student-centered content aligned with contemporary learning styles.

Researchers affirm that integrating technology into pedagogical practice requires a high level of digital-pedagogical proficiency, achievable only through permanent, well-structured training. (Zaghl, 2016, p. 89)

As Faraj Abdel Qader Taha (2003, p. 134) explains:

“Ongoing teacher training in educational technology is a central pillar in the modernization of teaching and the enhancement of learning outcomes. It fosters interactive and stimulating educational environments.”

Conclusion

In the broader context of the educational process, societies striving for global relevance must develop credible institutions capable of adapting to the exponential growth of knowledge across disciplines.

Achieving this necessitates:

- ✓ Updating educational policies.
- ✓ Enhancing pedagogical practices.
- ✓ Activating innovative teaching and training methods.
- ✓ This work proposes a foundation for discussion on: Reforming and modernizing teacher training programs at all educational levels,
- ✓ Re-evaluating the role of the teacher.
- ✓ Improving the assessment of teacher performance.

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