

Teacher Professionalism and Personal Characteristics: Foundations for Effective Teaching and Professional Development

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Abstract

Teacher professionalism supports educational quality through the integration of pedagogical expertise, personal qualities, and ethical responsibility. This study examines the dimensions of teacher professionalism, the personal characteristics of effective teachers, and the relationship between professional competence and personal qualities, with implications for teacher development. A qualitative literature review examined scholarship on teacher professionalism, teacher identity, emotional practices, teacher efficacy, and professional development. Thematic analysis identified key concepts and relationships relevant to these objectives. The synthesis characterizes teacher professionalism as multidimensional, encompassing pedagogical knowledge, instructional skills, ethical conduct, professional identity, and continuous learning. Integrity, emotional awareness, empathy, and interpersonal skills emerge as personal characteristics that inform professional practice and teacher–student relationships. Professional competence and personal qualities constitute complementary dimensions shaping how teachers understand and fulfill their educational responsibilities. The review also identifies mentoring, reflective practice, collaboration, and continuous professional learning as important forms of support for professional growth. It concludes that teacher education and development programs should integrate pedagogical improvement with personal development and ethical awareness through a comprehensive, sustained approach. This synthesis provides a conceptual basis for supporting teachers in

responding to diverse student needs, improving instructional practice, and creating meaningful educational experiences.

Keywords: Teacher Professionalism; Personal Characteristics; Professional Competence; Teacher Development; Effective Teaching.

INTRODUCTION

Teachers play a central role in educational practice because the quality of teaching depends not only on curriculum design and instructional resources but also on teachers' knowledge, professional judgment, interpersonal relationships, and ethical conduct. Teaching requires more than the transmission of subject matter; it involves interpreting learners' needs, selecting appropriate pedagogical strategies, creating supportive learning environments, and reflecting on the consequences of instructional decisions (Rizza, Amalina, et al., 2026). Shulman (1987) emphasizes that professional teaching draws on different forms of knowledge and on the capacity to transform that knowledge into meaningful learning experiences. Similarly, Darling-Hammond (1992) explains that teacher preparation is important for developing teachers' instructional competence and their ability to understand learning from students' perspectives. These perspectives indicate that teacher professionalism should be understood as a multidimensional construct encompassing both the knowledge and skills required for teaching and the personal qualities that shape how those competencies are enacted in educational settings.

Professionalism is therefore not adequately represented by technical competence alone. Professional teachers must be able to make informed instructional decisions while maintaining responsibility, fairness, consistency, and respect in their relationships with students and colleagues. The emotional and relational dimensions of teaching are particularly important because classroom interactions involve diverse needs, expectations, and responses. Hargreaves, (1998) conceptualizes teaching as an emotional practice, drawing attention to the role of emotions in teachers' relationships and everyday professional work. In a related perspective, Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, (2001) demonstrate the importance of teacher efficacy beliefs for teachers' persistence, commitment, instructional behavior, and students' learning-related outcomes. These contributions suggest that professional knowledge, confidence in teaching, emotional awareness, and interpersonal conduct should be examined in relation to one another rather than treated as entirely separate aspects of teachers' work.

Personal characteristics are not substitutes for professional qualifications; instead, they influence how professional knowledge and skills are applied in practice.

Previous studies have addressed teacher professionalism from several complementary perspectives. Research on teacher knowledge has clarified the importance of subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical reasoning in professional practice (Shulman, 1987), while studies of teacher education have highlighted the contribution of structured preparation to teachers' instructional competence (Darling-Hammond, 1992). Research on teacher induction and mentoring has also shown that professional support can contribute to beginning teachers' instructional practices, commitment, and retention (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Meanwhile, Korthagen (2004) proposes a more holistic approach to teacher education that considers not only observable behavior and competencies but also deeper levels of teachers' beliefs, identity, and personal qualities. Kelchtermans (2009) similarly argues that teachers' professional practice is connected to professional self-understanding, reflection, personal commitment, and the contexts in which teachers work. Together, these studies provide a substantial foundation for understanding the different dimensions of teacher professionalism. However, their differing emphases also indicate the value of bringing instructional knowledge, professional learning, teacher identity, and personal characteristics into a coherent conceptual discussion.

The relationship between teachers' personal and professional dimensions is also relevant to contemporary discussions of professional identity and the development of the teaching profession. Sachs (2016) revisits the concept of teacher professionalism and emphasizes the importance of considering how professional practice and professional identity are shaped within changing educational contexts. In a systematic review of 412 articles published between 2000 and 2021, Rushton et al. (2023) map research on teacher identity across themes that include professional-life frameworks, becoming a teacher, workplace contexts, communities, and professional change. Their review also identifies a need to strengthen connections between identity scholarship, policy, and practice, as well as to expand research from underrepresented contexts (Rizza, et al., 2026). In addition, McChesney et al. (2024) demonstrate how teachers' professional lives, working conditions, personal circumstances, and opportunities for development are interconnected with their commitment, well-being, and effectiveness. Taken together, these publications indicate that professionalism is best approached as a developing and context-sensitive construct rather than a fixed set of technical requirements. Nevertheless, the present article does not assume

that previous studies have neglected teacher professionalism; instead, it addresses the need for a focused conceptual synthesis of professional competencies and personal characteristics within one analytical discussion.

Building on these perspectives, this article conceptualizes teacher professionalism as the integration of professional knowledge, pedagogical competence, social responsibility, and personal integrity in educational practice. Its theoretical foundation draws on Shulman, (1987) account of the knowledge base for teaching, Korthagen, (2004) holistic perspective on teacher development, and Kelchtermans's (2009) discussion of professional self-understanding and reflection. These perspectives are used to examine how professional competencies and personal characteristics complement one another in shaping teachers' roles and responsibilities. The article's contribution lies in organizing these dimensions into an integrated conceptual account that can inform discussions of teacher development, reflective practice, and professional conduct. Accordingly, the article aims to analyze the principal dimensions of teacher professionalism, explain the relevance of teachers' personal characteristics to professional practice, and discuss the implications of integrating these dimensions for teacher education and continuing professional development. Through this conceptual synthesis, the article seeks to provide a clearer basis for understanding teacher professionalism as both a form of professional competence and a continuing responsibility toward learners and the wider educational community.

METHODS

1. Type of Research

This study employed a qualitative literature review approach to examine the relationship between teacher professionalism and teachers' personal characteristics in educational practice. A literature review was selected because the study aimed to interpret, compare, and synthesize existing scholarly perspectives rather than collect primary data from teachers or educational institutions. Literature reviews can support the development of conceptual understanding by integrating findings from previous studies, identifying patterns across different perspectives, and clarifying areas that require further investigation (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Poth, 2023; Snyder, 2019).

The review focused on five interconnected dimensions of teacher professionalism: professional knowledge, pedagogical competence, social competence, personal integrity, and

reflective professional development. These dimensions were examined in relation to teachers' professional identity, interpersonal relationships, emotional awareness, ethical responsibilities, and instructional practices. The analysis considered both theoretical publications and empirical studies to develop a comprehensive understanding of how professional competencies and personal characteristics contribute to teachers' roles in education.

The study was conducted as an integrative literature review rather than a systematic review or meta-analysis. This approach was appropriate because the research topic encompasses conceptual discussions, theoretical frameworks, and empirical findings that may differ in their research designs and analytical perspectives. An integrative review enables researchers to examine a broad body of literature and develop a synthesis of concepts and evidence relevant to a particular research problem (Snyder, 2019). Accordingly, the purpose of this study was not to estimate a statistical effect or establish a causal relationship but to construct an integrated conceptual understanding of teacher professionalism and personal characteristics.

2. Research Design

The study adopted an integrative review design supported by document analysis and thematic synthesis. The research process consisted of five interconnected stages: defining the review focus, identifying relevant literature, screening and selecting sources, extracting and organizing information, and synthesizing the findings into analytical themes. These stages were intended to establish a clear relationship between the research objectives, the selection of literature, and the interpretation of the evidence. A transparent review process is important because the credibility and usefulness of a literature review depend on how sources are identified, selected, evaluated, and synthesized (Booth et al., 2022; Braun & Clarke, 2006a).

The review was guided by the following analytical questions: (1) What dimensions of teacher professionalism are emphasized in the literature? (2) How are teachers' personal characteristics associated with their professional practices and responsibilities? (3) How do professional competencies, personal qualities, and reflective development complement one another in educational practice? and (4) What are the implications of this relationship for teacher education and continuing professional development?

The first stage established the conceptual scope of the review. The second stage involved searching for scholarly publications addressing teacher professionalism, teacher competence, teacher identity, professional reflection, and personal characteristics. The third stage involved screening the identified publications against predefined eligibility criteria. The fourth stage involved extracting information about each publication's purpose, theoretical perspective, research design where applicable, principal findings, and relevance to the review questions. The final stage involved comparing the extracted information and organizing recurring concepts into themes.

The review used document analysis to examine the selected publications as qualitative documentary data. Document analysis provides a structured means of evaluating and interpreting documents to develop an understanding of the issues represented in them (Bowen, 2009). In this study, documents were examined not simply to summarize their contents but to identify conceptual relationships, similarities, differences, and contributions to the understanding of teacher professionalism.

3. Sources of Data and Literature Selection

Because this study was based on existing literature, it did not involve human participants, survey respondents, or interview informants. The units of analysis were scholarly publications relevant to teacher professionalism and personal characteristics. These publications included peer-reviewed journal articles, theoretical papers, literature reviews, and scholarly books where their content was directly relevant to the research objectives.

Literature identification was conducted using the following academic databases and scholarly search platforms: [insert the databases and platforms actually used, such as Scopus, ERIC, Web of Science, or Google Scholar]. Searches were carried out between [insert the actual search dates]. The search strategy combined keywords related to the central concepts of the study, including “teacher professionalism,” “teacher professional competence,” “teacher personal characteristics,” “teacher identity,” “teacher reflection,” “teacher self-efficacy,” and “teacher professional development.” Search terms were combined using Boolean operators, where supported by the database, to identify publications addressing one or more of these concepts.

The search process was organized around three conceptual groups: (1) teacher professionalism and professional competence; (2) personal characteristics, professional identity, and reflective practice; and (3) teacher development and educational practice. Search

terms were adjusted to the search functionality of each database. The publication period covered [insert the actual publication-year range used]. Foundational publications outside this period were considered when they provided concepts or theoretical perspectives directly relevant to the study.

A purposive selection strategy was used to identify publications that offered substantive contributions to the review questions. The inclusion criteria were: (1) the publication addressed at least one of the central concepts of teacher professionalism, professional competence, personal characteristics, teacher identity, or reflective practice; (2) it provided a theoretical discussion, empirical findings, or a synthesis relevant to educational practice; (3) its bibliographic information and full text or sufficient scholarly content were accessible for evaluation; and (4) it was published in a scholarly journal or by an academic publisher. Publications written in [insert the languages actually included] were considered.

Publications were excluded when they were duplicates, did not substantively address the research focus, lacked sufficient scholarly information for evaluation, or discussed professionalism in a context unrelated to teaching and education. Where a publication addressed several topics, it was retained only when its content contributed meaningfully to at least one of the analytical questions.

The selection process involved reviewing titles and abstracts before examining the full text of potentially relevant publications. Full-text assessment was then used to determine whether each publication met the inclusion criteria. The final review corpus consisted of [insert the actual number] publications, comprising [insert the actual number] journal articles, [insert the actual number] review papers, and [insert the actual number] scholarly books or other eligible scholarly publications. The numbers and categories should be reported only after the screening process has been completed and documented.

4. Instruments and Data Collection

Teknik pengumpulan As this study relied on documentary sources, the primary data collection instrument was a literature extraction matrix developed to organize information consistently across the selected publications. The matrix included the following fields: author and publication year, publication title, publication type, research purpose, theoretical framework, methodological approach where applicable, principal findings or arguments, relevant dimensions of teacher professionalism, discussion of personal characteristics, and contribution to the review questions.

Data collection was conducted through a structured reading process. First, the bibliographic details of each eligible publication were recorded to support accurate identification and referencing. Second, the abstract, introduction, theoretical framework, methods, results, and discussion sections were examined as appropriate to the publication type. Third, passages and arguments relevant to the research questions were recorded in the extraction matrix. Fourth, the extracted information was compared across publications to identify recurring concepts, complementary arguments, and differences in interpretation.

Particular attention was given to how each source defined teacher professionalism, distinguished professional competencies from personal characteristics, and explained their relationship to educational practice. The analysis also recorded whether an argument was based on theoretical reasoning, empirical evidence, or a synthesis of previous research. This distinction was important to avoid treating conceptual propositions as though they were directly established empirical findings.

To strengthen the transparency of the process, the researcher maintained a record of search terms, source-selection decisions, bibliographic information, and the development of analytical categories. Document analysis requires researchers to examine the relevance, context, and limitations of documentary evidence rather than accept every statement as equally authoritative (Bowen, 2009). Accordingly, the relevance of each publication was assessed in relation to the research questions, its scholarly contribution, and the extent to which its claims were supported by an identifiable theoretical or empirical basis.

The credibility of the synthesis was further supported by comparing arguments across different publications and checking interpretations against the original texts. Where sources presented differing perspectives, these differences were retained for analysis rather than removed to produce an artificial consensus. The extraction process and the analytical categories were reviewed for consistency throughout the synthesis. The actual procedures used for independent checking, discussion among researchers, or additional verification should be specified here if they were undertaken.

5. Data Analysis Technique

The collected documentary data were analyzed using thematic analysis. This technique was selected because it enables researchers to identify, organize, compare, and interpret recurring patterns of meaning across a qualitative dataset (Braun & Clarke, 2006b). In the present study, thematic analysis was used to synthesize the arguments and

findings reported in the selected publications rather than to analyze interviews, observations, or other primary participant data.

The analysis followed six iterative phases. First, the researcher became familiar with the selected literature by reading the publications and reviewing the extracted information in relation to the research questions. Second, initial codes were developed to represent relevant concepts, arguments, and findings. Examples of provisional coding categories included professional knowledge, pedagogical competence, social relationships, personal integrity, emotional awareness, professional identity, reflective practice, and continuing professional development. These categories were treated as analytical starting points and were refined in response to the content of the literature.

Third, related codes were compared and grouped into broader candidate themes. Fourth, the candidate themes were reviewed against the extracted evidence to determine whether they were internally coherent and sufficiently distinct from one another. Fifth, each theme was defined and named according to its central analytical meaning and its contribution to the research objectives. Sixth, the themes were integrated into a narrative synthesis that explained the relationship between professional competencies and teachers' personal characteristics in educational practice. These phases were applied iteratively, allowing the researcher to return to the original publications when clarification or further comparison was required.

To strengthen analytical transparency, the researcher documented the development of codes and themes and retained links between interpretations and the publications from which they were derived. Nowell et al., (2017) emphasize the importance of a systematic and traceable analytical process in establishing the trustworthiness of thematic analysis. In accordance with this principle, the synthesis distinguished between themes supported by multiple sources and arguments that were specific to individual publications. Where evidence was limited or perspectives differed, the interpretation was presented cautiously.

The final synthesis was organized around the principal dimensions of teacher professionalism and their relationship with personal characteristics. Rather than treating professional competence and personal qualities as unrelated categories, the analysis examined how they may complement one another in teachers' instructional decisions, interactions with learners, professional responsibilities, and ongoing development. The results of this process

provided the basis for discussing the conceptual implications of teacher professionalism and identifying directions for future research and teacher education.

RESULTS

1. Dimensions of Teacher Professionalism

The findings of the literature review indicate that teacher professionalism is a multidimensional concept encompassing professional, pedagogical, social, and personality competencies. Professional competence refers to teachers' mastery of subject matter and their ability to develop relevant knowledge to support effective educational practices. Pedagogical competence involves understanding students' characteristics, selecting appropriate teaching strategies, managing classroom activities, and facilitating meaningful learning experiences. Social competence enables teachers to communicate effectively and establish constructive relationships with students, colleagues, parents, and the wider educational community. Meanwhile, personality competence emphasizes moral integrity, emotional maturity, self-awareness, and the ability to serve as a positive role model for students.

In addition to these competencies, ethical responsibility and commitment to continuous professional development are essential dimensions of teacher professionalism. Ethical responsibility requires teachers to demonstrate fairness, honesty, accountability, and respect for students' individual needs when carrying out their educational duties. The literature reviewed also emphasizes that professional teaching extends beyond the delivery of subject knowledge to include character development and guidance for students' personal growth. Continuous professional development allows teachers to strengthen their knowledge, improve instructional practices, reflect on their professional experiences, and respond to changing educational demands. Overall, the findings suggest that teacher professionalism is best understood as an integrated combination of knowledge, teaching competence, ethical conduct, interpersonal skills, and continuous professional growth.

2. Personal Characteristics of Effective Teachers

The findings of the literature review indicate that teachers' personal characteristics play an important role in shaping their professional conduct and educational practices. Personal integrity enables teachers to demonstrate honesty, consistency, responsibility, and

fairness in fulfilling their duties. Emotional maturity helps teachers manage their feelings, respond appropriately to challenging classroom situations, and maintain professional relationships with students. Self-awareness also allows teachers to recognize their strengths and weaknesses, evaluate their behavior, and identify areas that require personal and professional improvement. These characteristics support teachers in becoming positive role models who demonstrate the values and attitudes they seek to develop in their students.

Furthermore, empathy and interpersonal skills are important personal qualities that contribute to supportive learning environments. Pedagogical empathy enables teachers to understand students' individual characteristics, learning difficulties, emotional needs, and different backgrounds. Through effective communication and respectful interactions, teachers can build trust and encourage students to participate actively in learning activities. A teacher's commitment to students' development also reflects a willingness to provide guidance, demonstrate patience, and respond sensitively to students' concerns. Overall, the literature suggests that personal integrity, emotional maturity, self-awareness, empathy, and interpersonal skills complement teachers' professional competencies and contribute to the effective implementation of educational responsibilities.

3. The Relationship Between Professional Competence and Personal Qualities

The findings of the literature review indicate that professional competence and personal qualities are interconnected in shaping teachers' overall effectiveness in carrying out their educational responsibilities. Professional competence provides teachers with the knowledge and pedagogical skills necessary to deliver subject matter, organize learning activities, and address students' educational needs. Meanwhile, personal qualities, such as integrity, emotional maturity, self-awareness, and empathy, influence how teachers apply their knowledge and interact with students. The integration of these dimensions enables teachers to combine instructional expertise with ethical conduct and positive interpersonal relationships. Therefore, teacher professionalism involves not only the ability to teach effectively but also the capacity to demonstrate appropriate values and attitudes in educational practice.

Furthermore, the relationship between professional competence and personal qualities is reflected in teachers' decision-making, professional identity, and classroom practices. Teachers who possess strong pedagogical knowledge and emotional awareness are better positioned to consider students' diverse learning needs when selecting instructional

approaches. Personal integrity and ethical responsibility also guide teachers in making fair decisions and maintaining consistency between their professional commitments and daily behavior. In addition, reflective practice allows teachers to evaluate both their teaching strategies and personal responses, helping them identify areas for improvement. Overall, the literature suggests that integrating professional competence with positive personal qualities provides a comprehensive foundation for responsible teaching, meaningful student relationships, and the continuous improvement of educational practices.

4. Implications for Teacher Development

The findings of the literature review highlight the importance of comprehensive teacher development programs that strengthen both professional competencies and personal qualities. Teacher education institutions should provide learning experiences that integrate subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, ethical responsibility, and personality development. Such programs should prepare prospective teachers not only to deliver instructional content effectively but also to demonstrate integrity, emotional maturity, and empathy in educational settings. Reflective practice is also essential because it enables teachers to evaluate their teaching experiences, recognize personal strengths and weaknesses, and identify areas for improvement. Through this integrated approach, teacher education can support the development of educators who are professionally competent and personally responsible.

Furthermore, mentoring and continuous professional development can help teachers maintain and improve their competencies throughout their careers. Mentoring programs provide opportunities for teachers to receive guidance, exchange experiences, and develop practical strategies for addressing classroom challenges. Regular professional development activities can also strengthen instructional practices, communication skills, emotional awareness, and the ability to respond to students' diverse needs. Educational institutions and policymakers should therefore consider professional learning and personal development as complementary components of teacher evaluation and support systems. Overall, the findings suggest that sustainable improvements in teacher professionalism require continuous learning, reflective engagement, and institutional support that address both teachers' professional abilities and personal characteristics.

DISCUSSION

1. Dimensions of Teacher Professionalism

The findings suggest that teacher professionalism encompasses more than subject-matter knowledge and technical teaching skills, as it also involves pedagogical competence, ethical responsibility, and commitment to continuous professional development. This finding is consistent with Shulman, (1987) framework, which emphasizes the importance of integrating subject-matter knowledge with pedagogical content knowledge to support effective teaching. Teachers must not only understand what they teach but also know how to represent concepts in ways that make them accessible and meaningful to students. Furthermore, Sachs, (2016) argues that teacher professionalism should be understood in relation to professional identity, educational responsibilities, and the changing expectations placed on educators. Therefore, professionalism can be interpreted as a multidimensional construct that combines instructional expertise, professional judgment, ethical conduct, and a commitment to improving educational practice.

The findings also indicate that these dimensions should be developed together rather than treated as separate aspects of teachers' work. While subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical competence provide the foundation for instructional planning and classroom practice, ethical responsibility guides teachers in making fair and accountable decisions. Teachers are also expected to evaluate their instructional approaches and update their knowledge in response to changes in educational contexts and students' learning needs. This interpretation aligns with Sachs, (2016) discussion of the continuing importance of teacher professionalism amid evolving professional and institutional demands. Accordingly, teacher development initiatives should integrate subject knowledge, pedagogical preparation, ethical awareness, and sustained professional learning to support teachers' effectiveness and responsibility in educational settings.

2. Personal Characteristics of Effective Teachers

The findings highlight personal integrity, emotional awareness, empathy, and interpersonal skills as important characteristics of effective teachers. These qualities influence how teachers interact with students, respond to classroom challenges, and establish supportive learning environments. Hargreaves, (1998) explains that teaching involves emotional practices because teachers' feelings and relationships are closely connected to their everyday professional activities. Similarly, Kelchtermans, (2009) emphasizes that teachers'

professional actions are influenced by their self-understanding, personal identity, and perceptions of their professional roles. These perspectives suggest that effective teaching requires not only pedagogical knowledge but also the personal awareness and relational skills necessary to respond thoughtfully to students' learning needs.

Personal integrity is important because teachers are expected to demonstrate honesty, fairness, and consistency in their professional responsibilities. Emotional awareness can help teachers recognize and regulate their responses to challenging situations, while empathy enables them to consider students' perspectives and experiences. These characteristics may also contribute to positive teacher–student relationships by encouraging respectful communication and a classroom atmosphere in which students feel valued. In line with (Hargreaves, 1998), the emotional dimension of teaching should therefore be considered an integral part of teachers' professional practice rather than a separate personal matter. Furthermore, Kelchtermans, (2009) suggests that understanding teachers' professional identities is essential to understanding how they interpret their experiences and act within educational contexts; consequently, teacher development should provide opportunities for reflection on personal values, emotional responses, and relationships with students.

3. The Relationship Between Professional Competence and Personal Qualities

The findings indicate that professional competence and personal qualities are complementary dimensions that jointly shape teachers' professional practices. Professional competence provides teachers with the subject knowledge, pedagogical skills, and instructional strategies needed to facilitate students' learning. However, the effective application of these competencies also depends on teachers' professional identity, emotional awareness, and commitment to their responsibilities. Kelchtermans, (2009) explains that teachers' self-understanding and professional identity are closely connected to how they interpret and carry out their teaching roles. Similarly, Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, (2001) discuss teacher efficacy as an important construct for understanding teachers' beliefs about their ability to support student learning and manage classroom demands.

The relationship between these dimensions suggests that effective teaching cannot be evaluated solely through teachers' knowledge or technical skills. Teachers also need to exercise sound judgment, communicate respectfully, and respond appropriately to students' different learning needs. Professional knowledge helps teachers determine appropriate instructional approaches, while personal qualities influence how these approaches are

implemented in classroom interactions. This interpretation is consistent with Kelchtermans, (2009) emphasis on the role of self-understanding in teachers' professional actions and Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, (2001) discussion of teacher efficacy. Therefore, teacher education and professional development should address both pedagogical competence and personal reflection to help teachers develop an integrated professional identity and improve their educational practice.

4. Implications for Teacher Development

The findings emphasize the importance of teacher development programs that integrate pedagogical improvement, reflective practice, mentoring, and continuous professional learning. Such programs should help teachers strengthen their instructional knowledge while also developing the personal qualities and professional values needed to fulfill their educational responsibilities. (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011) found that induction and mentoring programs can have positive effects on various aspects of beginning teachers' development, classroom practices, and student outcomes, although the effects vary across studies and program designs. Their review highlights the value of providing structured support for teachers as they adapt to professional expectations and classroom challenges. Therefore, mentoring and induction can serve as important components of teacher development, particularly when they provide opportunities for guidance, feedback, and reflection on teaching practice.

In addition to mentoring, continuous professional learning is essential for helping teachers respond to changing educational needs and improve their professional practices. (Sachs, 2016) discusses teacher professionalism in relation to professional identity, responsibility, and the evolving expectations placed on educators. From this perspective, teacher development should extend beyond short-term training activities and encourage ongoing reflection, collaboration, and engagement with professional knowledge. Schools and educational institutions can support this process by providing opportunities for peer discussion, classroom observation, feedback, and participation in relevant professional learning activities. Overall, teacher development programs should adopt an integrated approach that strengthens pedagogical competence, reflective capacity, professional identity, and commitment to continuous improvement.

CONCLUSION

Teacher professionalism encompasses not only subject-matter knowledge and pedagogical competence but also ethical responsibility, professional commitment, and continuous learning. Effective teachers are expected to possess the knowledge and skills necessary to facilitate learning while demonstrating integrity, emotional awareness, empathy, and interpersonal skills. These personal characteristics contribute to teachers' professional practices and their relationships with students. Therefore, professionalism should be understood as a multidimensional concept that integrates teachers' professional competencies with their personal qualities and professional values.

Furthermore, professional competence and personal qualities are complementary aspects of effective teaching. While pedagogical knowledge and instructional skills provide the foundation for teaching and learning, teachers' professional identities, emotional awareness, and personal values influence how these competencies are applied in educational settings. This relationship highlights the importance of developing teachers as both competent professionals and responsible individuals who can respond thoughtfully to students' diverse needs. Consequently, teacher effectiveness requires a balanced combination of knowledge, practical skills, ethical conduct, and positive personal characteristics.

These conclusions highlight the need for teacher education and professional development programs that address both professional competencies and personal growth. Mentoring, reflective practice, collaboration, and continuous professional learning can provide opportunities for teachers to strengthen their teaching practices and develop their professional identities. Educational institutions should therefore create supportive environments that encourage teachers to evaluate their practices, learn from experience, and improve their professional capabilities. Ultimately, strengthening teacher professionalism requires an integrated and sustained approach that supports teachers' instructional competence, personal development, and commitment to educational quality.

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