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Theses / Dissertation

Name of the researcher: Salim Ali Khalfan Al-Khayari

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Teachers'Classroom Practice

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University/department: Department of Curriculum and Instruction, College of Education, Sultan Qaboos University, Sultanate of Oman

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Abstract:

Teacher professional development (PD) has been receiving increasing attention from all concerned. This development has largely been targeted by what is called traditional professional development structures, such as workshops and seminars. Such structures seem to have little effect on teachers' classroom practice. Teacher groups are seen as an alternative effective structure for teacher professional development. This study focuses on a group of five Omani EFL teachers (called Teacher Development Group, TDG) who came together once every week for a whole semester. The study aims at investigating the impact of that group on the teachers' classroom practice as well as their perceptions of their experiences as members in the group. It also aims at finding out the difficulties that the teachers might face during the process of the group. The TDG focused on teaching phonics as a solution to remedy students' reading difficulties. The data was collected through observation of phonics sessions, teachers' journals, interviews with the teachers and the researcher's field notes. The findings reveal that there was some impact of the TDG on the practice of the teachers involved. The TDG members perceived the TDG as a great opportunity to share ideas and experiences with each other. They found the group as beneficial and gained a lot from it. They also realized the importance of cooperative work to achieve shared goals. They valued each other for their helpfulness, cooperativeness and support. As TDG members, the teachers seemed to face very little difficulties.

Keywords: professional development, teacher development group