



## The Current Situation and Problems of Teachers' professional Development from an International Perspective and Its Enlightenment to China: Based on the Results of TALIS 2018

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**Abstract:** The third cycle of TALIS was conducted by OECD in 2019 and survey more than 150000 teachers in 47 countries and economies. The OECD released a survey report on the global professional development of teachers in June. Through the analysis of the survey report and data information, it is found that the participation of international teachers' professional development is very high, and the content of professional development is diverse. The ways of international teachers' professional development mainly focus on the improvement of discipline knowledge and discipline teaching ability. However, international teachers also face problems such as the conflict between work and professional development, insufficient policy support and so on. The Enlightenment of the above research findings to the professional development of Chinese teachers are: paying attention to the needs of teachers, providing diversified development methods, providing on-site training, providing policy support, and improving the incentive mechanism

**Keywords:** TALIS, Teacher professional development, Enlightenment

### Introduction

The progress of big data, information technology, interactive experience and other technologies has led to profound changes in the education system. Teaching concepts and methods such as "student center", "online and offline Hybrid Teaching", "virtual simulation experiment teaching" are widely impacting the traditional classroom. Social problems such as labor shortage, aging population and the global economic community are also redefining the needs of society. In the face of these changes, teachers must constantly update their skills and knowledge to help students better adapt to society and become competitive and innovative talents. In 2019, the CPC Central Committee and the State Council issued "2035 of China's educational modernization" and "implementation plan for accelerating educational modernization (2018-2022)", which clearly listed "building a high-quality professional and innovative teacher team" as one of the ten strategic tasks. In the past decade, both the government and the society have realized that the quality of teachers is the basic guarantee for the quality of education, and the development of teachers is the basic guarantee for promoting the development of education. The development of teachers has received unprecedented attention.

In fact, this is also the consensus of the international community. As an intergovernmental international economic organization composed of 38 market economy countries, OECD has always attached importance to education. OECD began to carry out an international survey on Teachers' work and development every five years in 2008, and conducted the third "Teaching and Learning International Survey" (TALIS) in 2018<sup>[1]</sup>. Compared with 2008, the number of participating countries and economies increased from 24 to 47, with the participation of the United States, Japan, Canada and other countries, the scope of the sample further expanded and the validity of the survey data was further confirmed. TALIS examined their working environment and development from the perspective of teachers themselves and surveyed 154000 junior middle school teachers in 15000 schools. In June 2019, OECD released the latest survey report - "teachers and school leaders as lifelong learners". The report focuses on Teachers' "continuous professional development" (hereinafter referred to as "professional development"). By investigating



the participation of in-service training, the ways of teachers' development, the obstacles of teachers' professional development, etc., we can examine their development from the perspective of teachers themselves.

This study takes teachers from OECD countries and economies as the main research objects. By analyzing the talis2018 survey report and survey data, it summarizes and refines the status and existing problems of the professional development of teachers in OECD. On this basis, it puts forward enlightenment and suggestions for the professional development of teachers in China from the Perspective of international comparison.

The framework of TALIS teacher professional development survey is shown in Table 1

**Table 1**

Role positioning	Investigation contents
Lifelong-learner	<p>Current situation: participation degree of teachers' professional development, mode, content and demand of professional development</p> <p>Problems: obstacles to teachers' professional development and lack of support for professional development</p>

### Literature Review

The research on Teachers' professional development began around 1960. The early research focused on the change of teachers' psychological structure in the whole career cycle, divided teachers' professional development into pre service, post service, retirement and other stages, and explored the development needs of teachers in different stages and the improvement of their own abilities.<sup>[2-3]</sup>In 1975, William H. Bergquist and Steven R. Phillips proposed a three-dimensional theoretical model of teacher development in Colleges and Universities: personal development, teaching development and organizational development.<sup>[4]</sup>For a long time, people often equate its connotation with teacher teaching development when discussing teacher development. In 1987, blankman put forward the concept of learner, and defined teacher development as: no matter the changes of times or environment, teachers can maintain the posture and state of learning, and restrict themselves according to the requirements of learners.<sup>[5]</sup>After the 1990s, the concept of teachers as lifelong learners has been fixed. By sorting out the literature, we can define teachers' professional development as: Teachers' professional development runs through their career. Teachers must constantly enrich their theoretical level, improve their educational and teaching knowledge system, and continuously improve their educational and teaching ability through teaching practice.

What is the status of teachers' professional development? How do teachers participate in professional development? What is the participation rate of teachers in professional development? By analyzing the TALIS survey report and survey data, this paper summarizes and refines the participation and existing problems of teachers' professional development, and on this basis, puts forward suggestions for teachers' professional development in China.

### 1. Analysis of teachers' participation in professional development

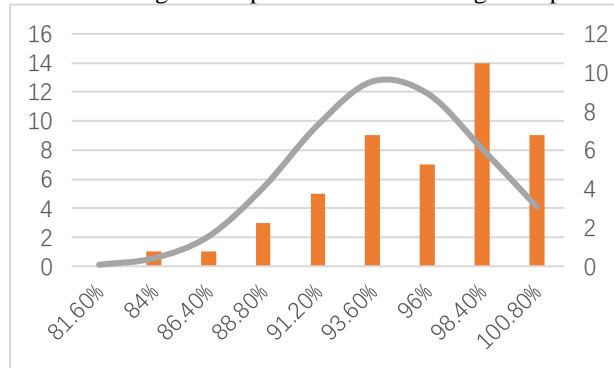
Various types of on-the-job training provide teachers with opportunities to further improve their professional ability. The proportion of teachers participating in training reflects the opportunities for teachers' professional development, and also reflects the importance attached by various countries or economies to professional development.

In the TALIS 2018 survey, OCED used the percentage of teachers in the survey countries who participated in in-service training in the past 12 months as an important indicator to investigate the participation of teachers in professional development. List 10 kinds of on-the-job training: courses/seminars attended in person; online course/seminars; education conferences; formal qualification programs; observation visits to other schools; observation visits to business premises; peer and/or self-observation and coaching; participation in a network of teachers; reading professional literature; other types of professional development activities<sup>[6]</sup>.

Using TALIS survey data, the proportion of teachers participating in on-the-job training in 50 countries is tested for normal distribution. Figure 1 shows the overall distribution of teachers' participation in teacher development in OCED countries. The average number of teachers who have participated in on-the-job training at least once in the past year is 94.5%, which means that all countries participating in the survey have a very high degree of participation in Teachers' professional development, and the internal proportion is balanced. Among them, the participation rate of Lithuanian teachers is the highest, reaching 99.4%, and Shanghai and Australia rank second, both reaching 99.3%. Even countries with low participation rates, such as

Chile and France, have reached 86.9% and 82.6% respectively, showing a high level of participation. From the perspective of distribution, there are only 5 countries whose participation in teacher professional development is less than 90%, and 33 countries whose participation is higher than the average.

Through data analysis, we can find that all countries around the world attach great importance to teachers' professional development, and believe that teachers are lifelong learners, which need to improve teachers' theoretical knowledge and practical teaching ability through various trainings. The school supports teachers to participate in the training from the policy or financial aspects, and teachers are also willing to accept all kinds of training to improve knowledge and skills subjectively.

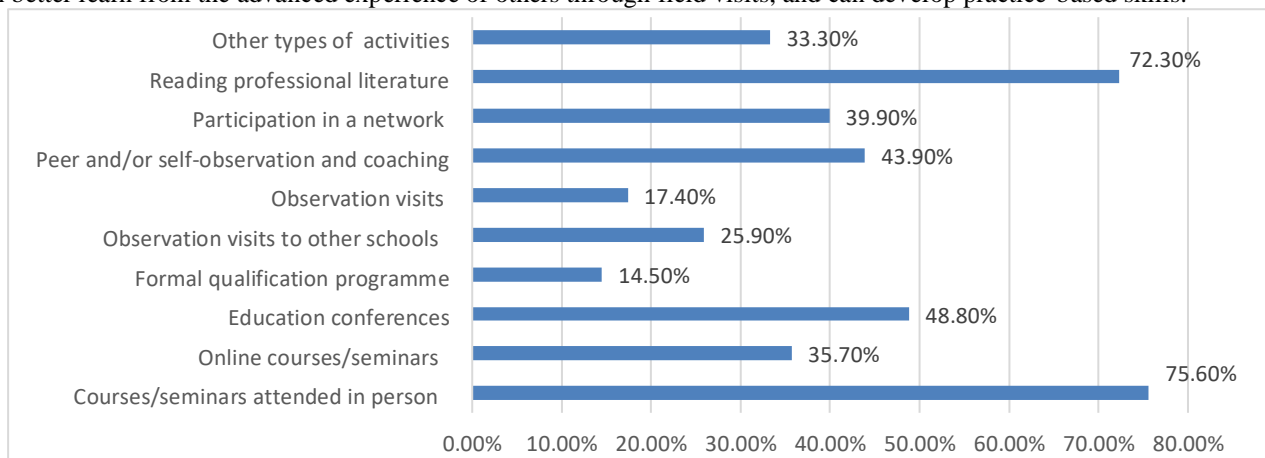


**Fig.1** Distribution of teachers' participation in professional development in OECD countries

## 2. Analysis of the ways in which teachers participate in professional development

Diversified professional development methods help to improve teachers' abilities in all aspects and enhance the efficiency of professional development. At present, the participation methods of international teachers' professional development are diversified. The forms of teachers' participation in training include formal activities such as meetings, as well as informal activities such as reading literature, as shown in Figure 2.

It can be seen that the diversity of participation methods widens the possibility of teachers' participation in time and space, improves the efficiency of teachers' professional development, and meets different professional development needs. For example, "courses/seminars attended in person" can help teachers understand the latest cutting-edge trends and develop knowledge-based skills. "Online courses/seminars" also broadens the space for teachers to participate in training, so that teachers' participation in development can be free from the restrictions of location. "Observation visits to business premises" can better learn from the advanced experience of others through field visits, and can develop practice-based skills.



**Fig.2** Ways of teachers' professional development participation

In terms of the types of training, teachers from OECD countries have participated in an average of four types of professional development activities in the past year. Among them, teachers from Lithuania, Russia and Shanghai have the most types of activities, reaching or even exceeding six, and less than three from Chile, France and Portugal. In terms of specific activities, there are great differences in the participation rate of different activities. According to the descending order of the average value of OECD, "courses/seminars attended in person" is the teacher development mode in which teachers from all countries

participate most, accounting for 75.6%, followed by reading professional literature, accounting for 72.3%. This shows that international teachers pay attention to on-site discussion and exchange and training based on professional knowledge and skills.

### 3. Analysis of themes and needs of teachers' participation in professional development activities

Professional development and educational reform are inseparable. Educational reform often brings changes in subject knowledge and teaching content, which are reflected in the content of professional development. TALIS investigated the topics or contents covered by teachers' professional development activities, as shown in Figure 3, including 14 aspects such as "ICT skills for teaching". In daily teaching, teachers will find that outdated subject knowledge and teaching methods can not meet the needs of students, so the proportion of teachers participating in subject knowledge and subject teaching ability is the highest, reaching 76% and 72.8% respectively, followed by curriculum knowledge, student evaluation and information technology teaching ability. More than half of teachers have participated in such teacher professional development activities. Education is mostly local oriented education. Due to economic conditions and policy reasons, cross-cultural communication and learning, as one of the contents of teachers' professional development, are not carried out much. The survey shows that the proportion of multicultural communication and multicultural teaching participation is the lowest, 19.3% and 21.9% respectively. However, the proportion of participating in Teachers' professional development is not in direct proportion to the actual needs of teachers. Teachers' demand for subject knowledge and subject teaching ability is only 9.4% and 10.2%. According to the data reported by TALIS2018, among the "high demand" of teachers in OECD countries, the top three are: Teaching for special children, information technology teaching and teaching in multiculturalism, with the proportion of teachers being 22.2%, 17.7% and 15% respectively. This shows that international teachers pay more attention to the educational needs of vulnerable children, pay attention to educational equity, and have higher learning needs for teaching in different environments such as information technology environment and cultural environment. International teachers have a relatively high demand for personalized learning methods, student behavior and classroom management, which shows that international teachers generally have self-development motivation, have a strong desire to carry out targeted learning according to their own needs, and pay attention to the improvement of student behavior and classroom management ability<sup>[7]</sup>.

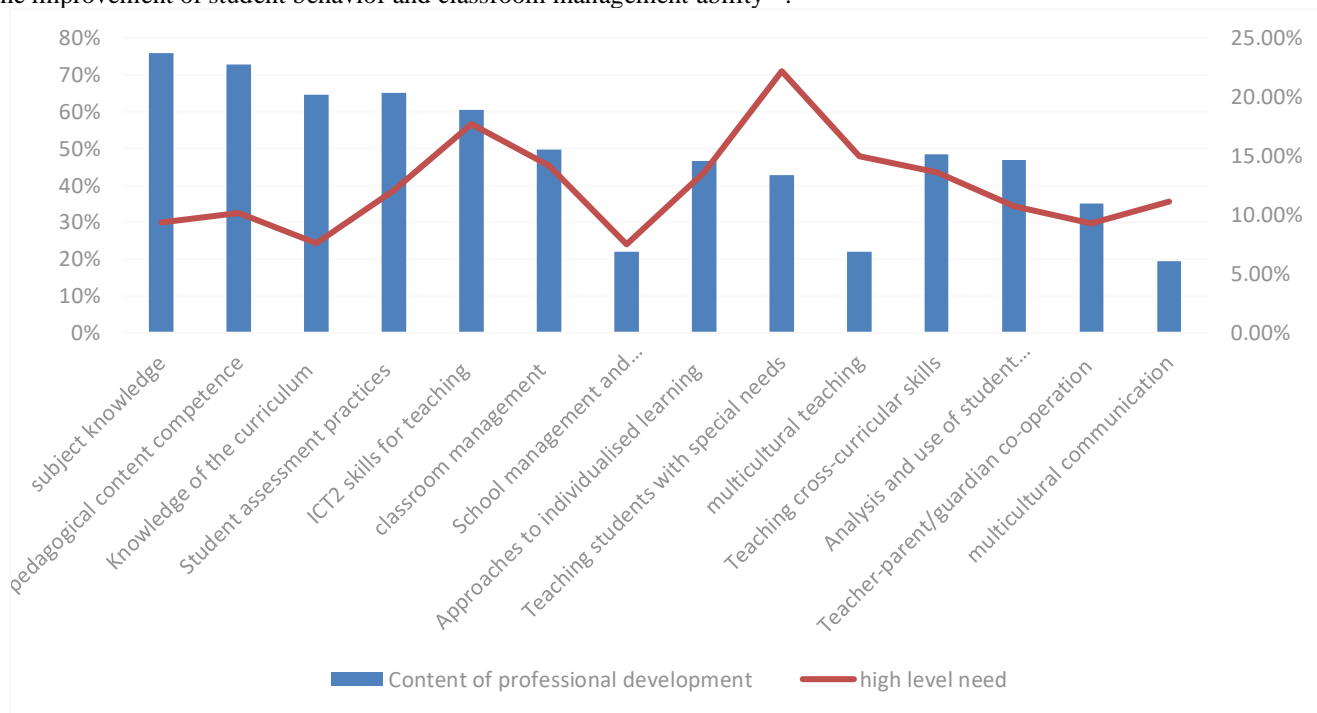


Fig.3 The theme of teachers' participation in professional development and the degree of demand for each theme

### 4. Obstacles to teachers' professional development

The factors that hinder teachers' professional development come from teachers' own reasons, but also from external factors such as system and culture. For teachers themselves, 'satisfaction with the status quo', 'job burnout' and 'lack of courage to innovate and break through' are internal factors hindering teachers' professional development. Figure 4 discusses the factors that hinder teachers' professional development, it can be seen that the biggest obstacle lies in the lack of time, with the

proportion of conflict with working time reaching 54.4%. Excessive teaching tasks and complicated administrative work will cause teachers' fatigue, resulting in no time to participate in professional development. The proportion of people who have no time because of family burden is 37.3%. Nearly half (47.6%) of the teachers believe that professional development activities lack incentives, 38.2% of the teachers believe that the lack of support from schools or principals also affects their participation in professional development activities, and 44.6% of the teachers believe that participation in professional development activities is too expensive. This factor can be attributed to the lack of institutional safeguards. It can be seen that the lack of time, incentives and institutional funding are the main factors that hinder teachers from participating in professional development activities.

In further analysis, it can be found that conflicts with working hours, lack of support, lack of incentives, and lack of financial security can be summarized as schools or educational administrative departments do not pay enough attention to teachers' professional development, and there is no detailed and complete plan to support teachers' professional development activities. Teachers' professional development should be included in the overall plan of education, increase optional professional development activities, and provide professional development opportunities for teachers with different teaching ages and identities, so that teachers can flexibly choose appropriate professional development activities according to their own needs and interests. At the same time, more policy and economic support should be given to improve teachers' enthusiasm to participate in professional development activities.



**Fig.4** Obstacles to teachers' professional development

### 5. Enlightenment for teachers' professional development in China

Professional development is increasingly valued internationally<sup>[8]</sup>. Teachers' ways of participating in professional development are increasing, and their willingness to participate in professional development is increasing. However, due to their own and environmental reasons, there are still some obstacles. Professional development is not only the individual responsibility of teachers, but also the responsibility of the whole education system and education administrators. The current situation and problems of teachers' professional development presented from the international perspective can provide important experience enlightenment and breakthrough paths for Chinese education policy makers, professional development providers and school administrators. The current situation and problems of teachers' professional development from an international perspective can provide important experience hool managers and so on.

#### **Pay attention to teachers' needs and provide diversified professional development methods.**

Figure 3 shows the imbalance between the content of teachers' professional development and their own needs, that is, the imbalance between supply and demand. At present, the content of professional development provided can not meet the needs of teachers themselves. Schools or organizers only pay attention to what qualities teachers should have and provide corresponding professional development activities, without considering the real needs of teachers and the development characteristics of teachers at different stages. It is easy to turn teachers' professional development into a passive task-based activity, which greatly reduces the initiative of teachers' participation. This enlightens us to provide teachers with diversified professional development activities and contents, and cultivate and expand teachers' internal needs. Secondly, from the

statistical data of TALIS, there are significant differences in personal needs of teachers of different ages, genders and teaching ages. For example, in terms of the demand for "teaching special children", from the perspective of age difference and teaching age difference, the demand for teachers under the age of 30 and novice teachers is higher, 29.6% and 30% respectively, and the demand for teachers over the age of 50 and experienced teachers is relatively low, 18.6% and 23.6% respectively. From the perspective of gender differences, female teachers' demand for "multicultural teaching" is higher than male teachers. Therefore, we should provide different teachers with professional development content that meets their personalized needs according to their gender and teaching age. In the selection of professional development content, we should take into account gender, teaching age and other factors, provide a variety of professional development content for teachers to choose according to their own needs and interests.

#### **Provide on-site training to improve the stickiness of professional development**

According to the TALIS data report, in Shanghai, the proportion of teachers who choose to participate in "online courses / seminars" is 95.4%, which is far higher than the average of OECD (35.7%), while the proportion of teachers who participate in "on-site courses / seminars" is only 73.6%, which is lower than the average of OECD (75.6%), which reflects that technological changes brought about by information technology have facilitated educational reform, and more and more teachers choose to carry out professional development on the Internet. Online learning can solve the problem of shortage of educational resources. However, due to the lack of on-site guidance and supervision, for learners with poor self-discipline and learning ability, they spend less time in online learning, have a poor grasp of knowledge, and have low learning efficiency. On-site courses / seminars are activities in which educational experts publish research results or focus on a problem for in-depth discussion. The on-site interaction scene of this activity gives participants a space for in-depth thinking and reflection, which can enable participants to continuously reflect and Research on a certain problem. Peer communication can also enable participants to conduct in-depth communication on practical problems, thereby increasing the viscosity of professional development, Improve teachers' enthusiasm to participate in professional development.

#### **Provide policy guarantee to ensure teachers' learning time.**

The effectiveness of teachers' professional development needs time to ensure. As shown in Figure 4, the lack of time has become the primary factor hindering teachers' professional development. In China, all teachers are required to have 150 hours of continuing education and training every year. The training is qualified, and the performance assessment of that year is qualified, and the training is also an important basis for professional title evaluation. However, schools or educational administrative departments have no corresponding policies to ensure that teachers participate in the study of professional development during normal working hours. They only take training as the obligation of teachers' professional development, but do not guarantee the time of teachers' professional development study from the perspective of rights. In the TALIS survey report, 54.4% of teachers believe that professional development conflicts with working hours, and 37.3% of teachers believe that professional development conflicts with dealing with family affairs without time. Therefore, education policy makers should fully consider the power of teachers' professional development, give teachers a certain amount of continuous time for professional development during working hours, and ensure that teachers have a certain amount of professional learning and research time during working days every semester in the corresponding policy documents.

#### **Improve the incentive mechanism and improve teachers' participation enthusiasm.**

In recent years, China has paid more and more attention to teachers' professional development training, and education and teaching development research institutes and teacher development centers have been established in various regions to build a teacher development system through the integration of resources and the sharing of advantages. Eastern regions with developed educational resources, such as Shanghai, provide various forms of training for teachers' professional development. According to the TALIS data report, the proportion of teachers in Shanghai Participating in various types of training is 99.3%, higher than the average of OECD. However, the quality of teacher development can not be ignored, among which the biggest influencing factor is the incentive mechanism. 47.6% of teachers believed that professional development activities lacked incentives, which led to the majority of teachers participating in professional development activities to complete tasks, without in-depth thinking and Reflection on issues related to their own professional development. In view of this, in order to promote teachers' professional development and improve the quality of development, schools and education departments should give teachers some material support for professional development, which can be included in their performance wages. Because some teachers who participate in professional development activities or training are pursuing high-level development, while others are passive coping. How to reverse the latter's attitude towards professional development activities, the most direct way is to give teachers salary subsidies, otherwise professional development will slowly become a form.

## **6.Results and Discussion**

China has always been committed to training high-quality teachers. However, at the present time when the pace of social change is accelerating, what kind of teachers do we need? How should the education system support teachers and provide them with sufficient opportunities to learn and innovate? How should teachers innovate to adapt to the complex and changeable classroom teaching? All these problems deserve our consideration and reflection. The experience of teachers' professional development in various countries participating in the TALIS 2018 survey can be used for reference for teachers' professional development in China.

In order to understand the current situation of teachers' professional development in various countries, the researchers analyzed the degree of participation in Teachers' professional development, the mode of participation in professional development, the content of professional development and the needs of professional development, and analyzed the obstacles existing in Teachers' professional development according to the survey data. Based on the analysis of the current situation and problems of teachers' professional development in the international perspective, specific suggestions are put forward for the professional development of teachers in China. The researchers believe that building a systematic support mode is an important way to ensure the professional development of teachers.

First of all, we should provide diversified support methods for teachers' professional development, and provide personalized and refined support according to the specific problems faced by different teachers. Secondly, we should provide support methods that are highly matched with the obstacles of teachers' professional development. The survey data shows that "conflict with working time" is the primary obstacle to teachers' professional development. Therefore, providing time support for teachers is an efficient way to solve the common problems faced by teachers. Finally, some incentive measures should be provided to improve the enthusiasm and initiative of teachers to participate in professional development.

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