

Zahid Hussain Sahito<sup>1</sup>

## EFFECTS OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) ON TEACHERS' SKILLS IN PREPARING APPROPRIATE CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

### Abstract

*The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in case of teachers' competence of planning appropriate learning activity for the students. The conceptual framework of the study includes the variables like CPD and subject knowledge of teachers, CPD and appropriate learning activities, CPD and professional practices, and CPD and organizational perceptions. For the current study quantitative research design was used. The population was the school heads and experts'/ teachers' trainers. Survey method was used to determine the impact of CPD on the practices of teachers. Population was selected through stratified random sampling. Two different close-ended questionnaires were constructed to get the views of the respondents. One was given to the heads/principals while another was given to the teacher trainers/experts. The responses were then analyzed statically using SPSS Version 22. Based on concrete findings, it was concluded that Continuous Professional Development (CPD) has good impact on the performance of teachers.*

**Keywords:** Continuous Professional Development (CPD), Competency, and Learning Activity

---

<sup>1</sup>Asst. Professor, Dept. of Teacher education, Shah Abdul Latif University, Sindh. [Zahid.sahito@salu.edu.pk](mailto:Zahid.sahito@salu.edu.pk)

We are living in an era marked by changes, innovations and advancements that are impacting each sphere of life. Every day emerging changes have new demands that individuals need to fulfill for their successful survival in the modern world. Without coming up to required and set standards an individual cannot find his/her desired place anywhere. As the world is under-going rapid changes, our social and professional lives are getting affected day by day. Each sector of life exposes new challenges and demands for the individuals. These changes have influenced the field of education as well. Education is indeed important for individuals as it trains them to cope with challenges and to enjoy a better life. The researches in the domain of education have introduced any new areas for effective education. If we go through the recent researches and studies, we will come to know that a majority of researchers have concluded that education is a constant process. Therefore, in order to fulfill the growing demands of society individuals need to improve their knowledge and skills. The acquaintance with the latest concepts and methodologies is must for successful social and professional survival. The new tendencies have changed the concepts of people regarding teaching and learning. In present era like other professionals, teachers also need to keep themselves updated with new concepts and methods that may help them in their professional development and grooming. A teacher cannot perform his/her tasks efficiently unless he/she is professionally groomed. That's why; teachers need to go through professional development programs on regular basis (Sequeira, 2012). Smith (2014) supports the professional development of teachers. He also expressed his views about

the need of CPD of tutors. As the needs and demands of time are changing, teachers need to improve their expertise and knowledge according to the need of the time. CPD means continuous improvements in expertise and keeping of professional skills, competencies and experiences. CPD refers commitment to humanize, uphold and enlargement of subject knowledge and abilities that's required in associations. Professional development training programs are helpful for both employees and management. These programs help the employees to learn to perform their tasks efficiently. At the same time these programs provide the management and high professional authorities with valuable tips to manage and deal with staff (Aslam, 2013).

Teachers evaluate the needs of the students using their observations and results. They put their efforts to solve the problems students have in learning. This results in students' success and achievements McLaughlin (2012). Continuous Professional Development (CPD) helps teachers to equip themselves with the latest teaching techniques and boosts their confidence to deal with the class environment. A professionally trained teacher is found to be successful in his targets like communications of lesson, dealing with the students, handling of issues and problems etc. However, the achievement of the students can only be ensured if the teacher is laced with the modern teaching competencies (Kong, 2015). CPD of teachers is very effective for teachers. This motivates them to make their practices more effective to impart quality education. Guskey (2000) expresses that CPD is systematic process that develops teachers professionally and alters their skills and attitude towards quality improvement of the students. Tremendous technological

advancements and globalization have transformed the society. Teaching that used to be taken as a simple instructional process, has become a challenging profession. To meet the challenges in education, teachers need to undergo professional develop and constant professional development. Without constantly working on learning the emerging needs and ways to deal with the matter's teachers can not enjoy long term professional success. Adagiri (2014) puts stress on the significance of CPD. He, in study, *A Comparative Study of Teachers' CPD in Nigeria and England*, set forth the importance of continuous professional development for the professionals. He concluded that professionalism cannot be attained without adequate training and CPD.

CPD is a multifaceted process. A teacher requires to stay involved, individually and collectively for the cognitive and emotional development. A teacher must have willingness to examine himself/herself in term of convictions and beliefs. By examining his/her position, he/she can work on improvement (Armour, 2011). It is a well-accepted fact that personal example is one of the best approaches for improvement. Therefore, teachers always intend to develop professionally valuable competencies and realize that their accumulation determines the teacher's competence. That's why; CPD is an important aspect of teacher training. Jerome Bruner once said: "A teacher should be an effective model of competence" (Kobalia, 2010). Effective learning and achievements of students depend on teachers. Teachers must have competence to support learning with their knowledge, skills, attitude and practice. A teacher is supposed to possess deep knowledge of the subject along with good competence

to help students to learn effectively. For this teacher should be provided the chances for constant development periodically through teachers' training programs and workshops. The main purpose of CPD programs is to help teachers to enhance their practices and reflect more and more efficiently in imparting education. Another purpose of CPD is to encourage teachers to acquire complete knowledge and adopt ground-breaking teaching-learning strategies for their classrooms. This research includes four competencies of teachers. Such as classroom management, subject knowledge, plan and design of activities and professional practices. A professionally trained teacher can change the environment of classroom and make it student centered. The studies have revealed that those classrooms are more effective in case of learning in which students are involved in the activities as compared to mere teacher-centered classrooms where a teacher just enjoys authority and learning is rare. However, Effective classroom depends on teachers' ability to maintain successful environment that encourages and sustains learning (Tahir, 2012). A professionally trained teacher makes the maximum use of all the available resources. He/she works to arrange additional materials that may increase students' learning (Commission, 2013). A teacher should prepare, plan and design the daily activities. Continuous development courses guide the teachers about planning and designing material and other resources for effective teaching. That results in effective learning and best students' achievements. Catahen (2015), in this connection, writes that lesson plan provides a guide to teachers for creating effective learning environment. A number of effective and valuable classroom activities that a

teacher plans in his/her lesson plan help in effective teaching/learning process. If the teachers support their students' achievements and high outcomes, they have needed a wide range of different skills and attitudes. Understanding the pedagogical process and subject matter to develop the understanding that is required in classroom. A teacher cannot be successful unless he/she is professionally groomed. Nevertheless, continuous professional development courses impact teachers' competencies in to provide the most meaningful experience possible (Heggart, 2016). If we want to have learning in the class then teachers need to involve students in the activities they have to come with innovative activities and have to over-plan their lesson they need to come with number of activities and in case if one activity is finished and they find more time than they could start the other one (Hasan Tanang, 2014).

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Education sector is highly drastically influenced by technologies like other fields across the world. The effective and emerging technologies are widely used in teaching and training by most of the advanced nations for the professional grooming of the teachers and educators. Professionally trained and groomed teachers/educators have become one of the important needs of the countries in this competitive and challenging era where nations need the lead of competent youth to contribute to its economy that is the backbone of any nation. But in Pakistan the education system is still going through severe crisis. Though technologies have impacted all the industries of Pakistan,

the development process is very slow. As far as development of education system is concerned, this area is very less focused. Teachers are still using traditional methods with limited and no resources. Teachers training is also less focused. Though in some institutions teachers without professional qualification are not entertained, but PD or CPD is ignored.

### **OBJECTIVE**

The objective of this research study was to detect the impact of continuous professional development (CPD) on competencies of teachers.

### **RESEARCH QUESTION**

Do Professional Development Courses (CPD) improve teachers' abilities to plan or design appropriate learning activities for their students?

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Quantitative research approach was adopted as it provides more comprehensive evidence for analyzing the research questions (Creswell and Clark, 2011). To investigate whether PD/CPD is effective for teachers or not, the researcher personally visited head teachers, and teacher trainers for getting their point of view or to collect required data. The detail of sample universe is as under:

Head teachers/Principals: 60

Experts/teacher trainers: 10

Two different questionnaires based on the research agenda were constructed that were comprising of closed-ended items. The copies of one questionnaire were given to Head Teachers/Principal and the other one was given to the selected experts/teacher trainers to get their views regarding

the matter mentioned. Frequencies and percentages of the obtained data was analyzed using SPSS.

### **Data Analysis**

#### **Techers' Trainers**

Item wise analysis of the responses of teacher trainers.

**Item-1** What types of courses are being offered by your institutions?

It is found from the collected data that most of the institutions offer degrees and diploma type of courses.

**Item-2** What is the normal duration of the courses offered by your organization?

The data reveals that normally degree or diploma programs offered by the organizations are spread over the years or months

**Item-3** Do you offer same course to all subject teachers?

The responses reflect that mostly degrees or diplomas are for all subject teachers no such programs are designed for each subject.

**Item-4** Do you think such courses are beneficial for teacher?

The purpose of this question was to find teachers trainers own opinions about the courses offered by them. The responses:

No.	Options	Responses
1.	S Agree	13
2.	Agree	06
3.	N	01
4.	D	00
5.	S D	00

**Item-5** Do you up-date your courses' contents regularly?

The responses reveal that the programs offered are not up-dated regularly.

**Item-6** Do the teachers come by themselves to join the short-courses offered by you or school administration send them for a particular course?

The purpose of this question was to measure the level of interest of the participants, the responses reflect that most of the participants are recommended by the school administration.

**Item-7** Do teachers recommended by the administration take interest in the course?

The responses reveal that most of the teachers take the opportunity causally.

### **Teachers' Trainers**

After collecting data from teacher trainers, data was collected from the heads/principals and the purpose was to verify the effectiveness of the courses offered by the teachers training institutions.

Item wise analysis of the responses of headteachers/principals.

**Item-1** CPD courses/ programs help teachers to engage students in learning the subject by planning interesting activities for them. In this regard responses of heads are:

No.	Options	NR	%
1.	S Agree	06	10%
2.	Agree	15	25%
3.	N	33	55%

4.	D	02	3.3%
5.	S D	04	6.6%
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>

The responses in the above table reveal that more than half (55%) of the responded used the option 'N' means neutral no opinion, while only 25% responded used the option 'Agree'.

**Item-2** Professionally trained teachers identify students' talents and engage them in multiple activities to boost their confidence. The responses of heads are:

No.	Options	NR	%
1.	S Agree	35	58%
2.	Agree	22	36.66%
3.	N	03	5%
4.	D	00	0%
5.	S D	00	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>

In this regard, 58% used the option 'Strongly Agreed' while 36.6% used 'Agreed'.

**Item-3** Professionally trained teachers guide students to know the application of concept. The responses of heads are:

No.	Options	NR	%
1.	S Agree	00	0%
2.	Agree	02	3%
3.	N	41	5%
4.	D	15	68.33%
5.	S D	02	3%

<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>
--------------	-----------	-------------

In response to this question, most of the respondents showed disagreement, 68.33% used the option 'Disagree', while 3% used 'Strongly Disagree'.

**Item-4** CPD courses/ programs help teachers in improving decision-making ability of the students.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Options</b>	<b>NR</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	S Agree	23	38%
2.	Agree	16	26.66%
3.	N	12	20%
4.	D	06	10%
5.	S D	03	5%
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>

Most of the respondents showed agreement, 38% (Strongly agreed) while 26.66% (Agree)

**Item-5** Professionally trained teachers make students creative enough to solve problems using their own knowledge and understanding. This helps them in their academic and professional success.

<b>No.</b>	<b>Options</b>	<b>NR</b>	<b>%</b>
1.	S Agree	26	63.33%
2.	Agree	18	30%

3.	N	12	20%
4.	D	04	6.66%
5.	S D	00	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>

Majority showed agreement for the asked question  
Do Professional Development Courses (CPD) improve teachers' abilities to plan or design appropriate learning activities for their students?

H<sub>0</sub>: There is strong connection between CPD of teachers and planning appropriate learning activities for students.

#### CPD and Appropriate Learning Activity

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
S D	6	12.0	-6.0
D	2	12.0	-10.0
N	33	12.0	21.0
Agree	13	12.0	1.0
S Agree	6	12.0	-6.0
Total	60		

#### Test Statistics

	CPD and Appropriate Learning Activity
Chi-Square	51.167 <sup>a</sup>
Df	4

Asymp. Sig.	.000
----------------	------

Tabulated Value = 9.488  
 Computed Value = 51.167

Referring to the table of Chi-Square (One-tailed), we find that the tabulated value is 9.488 with  $df = 4$  at  $\alpha = 0.05$  is less than the computed value 51.167. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected, and it is concluded that there is a significant relationship between continuous professional development of teachers and selection of appropriate learning activity.

### Discussion

The collected data reveals that most of the organizations are offering degree programs and diplomas of long duration, moreover are not offering courses for subject teachers, feel the offered courses are beneficial for the teachers but they are not up-dating the courses regularly as per need and changing time. Teachers are not interested in attending the courses, if administration recommend them, they take it casual. While on the other hand, the responses of the heads/principals indicate that those teachers who attend the courses they become good in planning classroom activities, plan activities as per need of the learners, help students in understanding the application of the knowledge, use such tactics which improve students' decision making ability, moreover their planned activities make students creative. The results also approve that there is strong relationship

CPD of teachers and planning appropriate learning activities for students.

### **Conclusions**

Following conclusion are drawn:

- a. CPDs are not regularly updated.
- b. Teachers do not go themselves to attend CPDs.
- c. Teachers recommended by the organizations take less interest in the courses.
- d. CPDs are helping teachers in selecting appropriate technology or activity for teaching their subject.

### **Recommendations**

- a. Independent heads/principals, top management, policy makers, and government should give reasonable incentives to the teachers for attending or taking CPD, this action will motivate teachers and ultimately teaching and learning process will become efficient because of modern/latest teaching techniques applied by the teachers.
- b. Teachers training institutes need to introduce subject related teaching courses instead of general courses moreover they should include such content in CPD which boosts teacher's morale and inculcates professionalism in the teachers.

### **REFERENCES**

- Adagiri, P. W. (2014) *State mandated testing and educational reform: context and consequences*, American Journal of Education, 95, pp.393±412.
- Armour, K. M. and Yelling, M. (2011) *Professional 'development' and professional 'learning': Bridging the gap for experienced physical education teachers*. European Educational Review, 10, 71-93.

- Commission, I. (2013) *The Wisdom of Strategic Learning* (2<sup>nd</sup> Edition). Aldershot, Hampshire: Gower.
- Catahen, M. (2015) Continuing professional development: Nurturing the expert within. *British Journal of In-Service Education*, 23 (1), 31 – 38
- Guskey, T.R. (2000) *Evaluating Professional Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Heggart, M. (2016) *Recipes for busy teachers, Knowledge: creation, diffusion, utilization*, 4, pp.478±510.
- Hasan, M. (2014) *What knowledge is of most worth to teachers? A knowledge-use perspective*, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 1, pp. 251±262.
- Kong, A. (2015) *Models of continuing professional development: A framework for analysis*. *Journal of In-Service Education*, 31 (2), 235-250.
- Kobalia, P. (2010) *A systemic approach to professional development: Learning as practice*.
- McLaughlin, M. W. and Talbert, J. (2001) *Professional Communities and the Work of High School Teaching*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Tahir (2012) *Seven types of teaching knowledge: Knowledge and teaching foundations of the new reform*. *Harvard Education Review*, 57 (1), 1-22.
- Sequeira, C.L. (2012) *Using continuous system level assessment to build school capacity*. *The American Journal of Evaluation*, 23 (3), 307-319.
- Smith, F., Hardman, F., Wall, K. and Mroz, M. (2014) *'Interactive whole class teaching in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies'*. *British Educational Research Journal*, 30 (3), 395-411.