

## Perspectives of Students and Teachers Form Continuing Professional Development: Challenge And Obstacle

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### ABSTRACT

Continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers is crucial for enhancing their professional capabilities, particularly in pedagogical skills. Despite its importance, several barriers and challenges impede the effective development of the teaching profession. This study aims to investigate these obstacles through the perceptions of elementary school students and teachers, providing insights into the current state of CPD in education. A survey method was used to gather data from 150 participants, including students and teachers, to explore their perceptions of CPD. The survey focused on various aspects of CPD, including educational practices, learning processes, professional development activities, and supporting mechanisms. The findings revealed significant differences in perceptions between students and teachers across the examined aspects. Teachers predominantly prioritized the learning process in their professional development efforts. Major obstacles identified included a lack of motivation and insufficient intervention for practicing teachers. Additionally, a critical challenge for teachers was the deficiency of high-quality resources necessary to conduct effective research in learning methodologies. The disparity in perceptions between students and teachers highlights the need for more targeted CPD programs that address the specific needs of educators. Enhancing motivation and providing adequate support and resources are essential for overcoming these barriers. Addressing these challenges can lead to more effective teaching practices and ultimately improve the quality of education. This study underscores the importance of understanding the barriers and challenges to CPD from both students' and teachers' perspectives. By prioritizing the learning process and addressing motivational and resource-related issues, stakeholders can better support the professional development of teachers, leading to improved pedagogical outcomes.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

At this time, teacher professional development is very important to improve the quality of student learning, but there are many challenges and obstacles. Continuous professional development is a process that is always gradual for the development of teacher competence, which is carried out according to needs, gradually and continuously to improve professionalism (Guskey, 2002; Zhang, Admiraal, Saab, 2016). Over the past 20 years, empirical research has focused on the issue of what qualities of professional development (PD) aid teachers in their efforts to increase their knowledge, change their views, and enhance their professional practices (Borko, Jacobs & Koellner, 2010; Xin et al. 1, 2021). According to the literature, there are two basic strategies for teacher professional development. The formal approach and the informal approach are made up of these. Educational programs that focus on particular subjects are part of the formal approach to teacher professional development. The informal strategy typically involves self-initiative and self-direction. The choice of training areas is pertinent to and depends upon teachers' requirements and interests using this unstructured method. Such an informal technique might be used by teacher educators to support teachers' professional development (Meyer, Kleinknecht, Richter, 2023).

The problem is what is actually the cause of some teachers not trying to know or develop the profession in a sustainable manner. The problem in Indonesia is that the government has held various teacher professionalism development programs for four decades, but has yet to get optimal results. Professional and pedagogical competence or Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPCK) of teachers is still below standard (World Bank, 2015). The involvement of teachers in participating in PKB activities has not been maximized; this can be seen from the implementation of education and training which only resulted in a 12% increase in the scientific publication category and 58% was ineffective (Anif, 2009; Girvan, Conneely & Tangney, 2016). The results of other studies revealed that the implementation of PKB had not been effective because there was no measurement and evaluation related to PKB. Activities only develop CBA by holding workshops and other methods (McMillan, McConnell, O'Sullivan, 2016). CPD has a fleeting impact on teachers' motivation to participate in workshop activities to increase knowledge, but has not yet produced a quality portfolio product (Kastawi & Yuliejantingsih, 2019). Another observation shows that the impact on learning outcomes is not significant because student learning outcomes are still low.

The results of the latest Program for International Student Assessment (PISA) show that the ability of Indonesian children is at the bottom; their reading skills in 2018 were at the same level as in 2000. In fact, between 2000 and 2014, Indonesian children's basic numeracy skills showed a decline (Arthur, 2006; Beatty et al., 2021). The quality of education in Indonesia stagnated when the government implemented various policies and increased investment in education. Adult learning theories claim that in order for teachers' views, knowledge, and practices to change in a significant way during professional development, they must actively interact with new learning materials and professional techniques (Trotter, 2006). In this study, we looked into the quality factor known as cognitive activation, which is connected to teachers' active learning in professional development activities (Bragg, Walsh, & Heyeres, 2021; Borko, Jacobs & Koellner, 2010). Cognitive activation is a concept that originally derived from research on instructional quality in the classroom. Learning tasks are cognitively activating when they take learners' prior knowledge into account and encourage learners to engage with new information that goes beyond the scope of their established beliefs, knowledge, or practices (Praetorius, et al, 2018; Reeves, & Pedulla, 2011)

Regarding teachers' actual engagement in CPD, different nations have varying procedures. Depending on the traditions, cultural conventions, legislation, and educational arrangements of a particular nation, contextual background elements interact with teachers' learning needs in different ways (Avalos, 2011). In the literature analysis, there are several gaps that much research has been done on teacher perceptions of CPD, only focusing on motivation and inhibiting factors (McMillan, McConnell, O'Sullivan, 2016; Walsh, 2022; Xin, et all, 2021). The novelty of this study is the diversity of participants, namely teachers, Elementary School Teacher Education students, post graduate students who take part in teacher professional development programs. Therefore, the urgency of this study requires ongoing research to upgrade information about the implementation of CPD. Based on gap research, the aims of

this research are: 1) What are the views of elementary school teachers and prospective teachers on the implementation of CPD?, 2) What are the views of elementary school teachers and prospective teachers on the challenges in implementing CPD? The research is supported by learning theory, social constructivism, qualitative data analysis this qualitative multi-case study utilized within-case and cross-case analysis (Miles & Huberman, Saldana, 2014) and quantitative (Creswell, 2013).

## 2. METHODS

### 2.1 Research Design

To combine quantitative and qualitative data, the study adopts a mixed method technique. The research paradigm entails the collecting and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data to provide a better understanding of the research topics examined in the study (Malik & Hamied, 2016). Researchers collect qualitative and quantitative data simultaneously and then compare them to see whether there are similarities, differences, and convergences (Creswell, 2014). This descriptive case study uses grounded theory techniques (Glaser & Strauss, 1967) to analyze participants' perceptions of their views on the constraints and challenges to the development of the teaching profession in Indonesia.

### 2.2 Participant

The total number of 51 participants in this study consisted of 15 elementary school teachers, 28 6th semester PGSD students, and 18 teacher professional improvement program (PPG) students. PPG students come from various universities with teaching experience between 1-15 years, who are currently attending teacher professional development training at Sebelas Maret University. Teacher participants came from teachers who taught public schools and private schools. (for in- service teachers) or the tutor (for pre-service teachers). All the teachers participating in the study voluntarily and participating in the surveys had no bearing on any aspect of the course activities or assessment as shown in the demographics of the participants (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Demographics of CPD implementation participants

Participants	Age	Teaching experience	Level of education
Semester 5-8 students	19-21 th	0	Under graduate
Pre-service Teacher Professional Education Students	21-30 th	0 – 1 th	S1
In-service Teacher Professional Education Students	25-58 th	3 – 25 th	S1 /S2
Teacher	30 – 60 th	3 – 25 th	S2/ S2

### 2.3 Data collection techniques

Quantitative data was collected using a questionnaire assisted by a Google form which was distributed to participants between April and July 2023. The questionnaire was developed and simplified from earlier research (Manowong, 2016). The questions from the questionnaire describe the views of the participants on the obstacles and challenges of implementing CPD in elementary schools. The questions consist of 12 items with choices of (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Agree, and (4) Strongly agree. Then there are 3 free questions to find out the participants' answers.

Data collection was a qualitative study involving focus group discussions (FGD) with small groups of students. Focus groups are frequently employed in academic research, according to Gibbs (2000), to study attitudes, feelings, experiences, and reactions in a way that would not be possible with one-on-one

interviews, observations, or surveys. Focus group settings encourage students to respond and expand on one another's ideas, or to "think synergistically in a group setting" (Klein, Tellefsen, & Herskovitz, 2007, p. 2117). Focus groups are therefore thought to be the best way to achieve the goal of the study. The focus groups' participation by students was voluntary. Each focus group lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. Without lecturers present, the sessions were held at the students' universities. Each participant in a focus group signed a consent form approving their participation in the study. The questions in the discussion are: 1) What do you do if the learning tools in elementary school are not in accordance with the requirements of the applicable curriculum?, 2) What do you do if there are colleagues/teachers at school and if they do not meet the professional competence of the teacher?, 3) What are your challenges in participating in CPD in terms of yourself and school policies?, 4) What will you do to develop yourself according to the needs of the times? Group discussions were recorded with audio and transcribed manually. For anonymity purposes, students are identified using group numbers for discussion in order of seating. The researcher read out the rules for the large group discussion by asking a number of questions, which were then discussed in the small group to be responded to by the group members. The results of the small group discussions were presented to the large group. The next researcher leads and monitors the course of the discussion.

## 2.4 Data analysis

The data from students' closed-ended questionnaire was statistically computed to find out the percentage of each statement and then was interpreted descriptively. The interview data were all transcribed and analyzed for repeating key features which were related to the use of online learning platforms in the classroom. Glesne (2006) posited that interviewing teachers at more than one site enhances the theme of trustworthiness during data analysis. Participants were involved in interpreting and reviewing experiences following CPD. The first author analyzed the six transcripts manually and created minor and major codes that were further analyzed and categorized into emerging themes (Marshall & Rossman, 1999). Quantitative data analysis using percentages (Creswell, 2014)

## 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

From the observations, qualitative and quantitative data were obtained about the participants' perceptions of the challenges and obstacles in the implementation of CPD. There is a participant code for undergraduate students (S), postgraduate students participating in teacher professional development programs (SP), and teachers (T) (Table 2).

**Table 2.** Results of the questionnaire on the perceptions of challenges and barriers to participation in CPD implementation (in percentage)

Questions	% Participant		
	Student	SP	T
1. Understand the concept of the material to be taught, by mapping KD, indicators and making Concept Maps in learning according to the curriculum	83	92	87
2. I always attend curriculum development seminars/workshops more than once a month	15	80	70
3. I use technology/internet in learning for evaluation and game learning	71	95	80
4. The school always holds teacher training activities	10	55	62
5. I always carry out learning research every year, followed by writing articles	60	78	55
6. My participation in the Teacher Working Group is only as a resource person	15	80	66
7. I create innovative works of self-learning media	45	85	40

8. Your perception of participating in training/workshop activities for sustainable professional development is to add insight and make friends	85	75	84
9. I make a self-evaluation with authentic assessment	65	83	70
10. I develop worksheets according to subjects independently	64	84	58
Amount	60.3	81.2	69.2

Based on table 2, it is obtained that the perception of students (S) is 60.3%, students (SP) score 81.2% and teachers (69.2%). Student participation (S) is low in self-development in curriculum workshops and teacher development activities because the participants are still students and have not been in continuous contact with school agencies. However, students (S) are highly involved as participants in workshop activities with the motivation to add insight and friends. Student participants (SP) in understanding the concept of higher learning devices, utilizing technology in learning, creating innovative work and self-development. Student involvement (SP) is high due to real demands and outcomes from teacher professional development projects. Teacher participants (T) are still low in making innovative works such as making learning media and evaluation questions, because they are used to using instruments that already exist in schools even though they are not necessarily in accordance with graduate learning outcomes. Not all teachers are motivated to take part in self-development workshops due to several obstacles. Teacher participation in writing articles is not optimal, only 55%, while for students (S) there is 60% and students participating in the teacher professional development program are 78%. From the results of the questionnaire followed by interviews (Table 3). Based on the interview, there are several forms of participant answers as follows:

**Table 3.** Forms of participant answers

Question	Forms of participant answers		
	Semester student5-8 (S)	Pre-service Teacher Professional Education Students (SP)	Teacher (T)
What do you do if the learning tools in elementary school are not in accordance with the requirements of the applicable curriculum?	-The form of a normative answer is limited to the theory, not yet applied	-Answers in more detail explain parts of learning tools such as: semester learning plans, media, teaching materials, evaluation, worksheets	-Waiting for instructions from the school principal or policies from the education office -Answers are more action-oriented or directly improve learning devices on their own initiative
What do you do if you have colleagues/teachers at school and if you don't meet the teacher's professional competence?	-Provide solutions/suggestions without specifying activities or types of workshops to increase teacher professionalism	-Provide suggestions with more detail on the types of workshops or training that teachers must attend, for example teacher work groups -Try to set an example or act as an agent of change in school institutions to achieve professional competence.	-Take the initiative to provide peer advice to improve teacher competence Trying to invite peers to participate in self-improvement activities -Involve the school principal to get further support from the problem. Then follow up on the results obtained after

			training and support from superiors
What are your challenges in participating in CPD in terms of yourself and school policies?	-Didn't know about the importance of CPD -still having trouble managing time, lack of motivation within	-Difficulty dividing time between schoolwork and training -Limitation of costs due to lack of budget from agencies	-The training method is not quite right. -No increase in welfare especially small private schools -Limitation of technological competence mastered by teachers so that partial understanding - Limited budget of the agency -Lack of support from the principal
What will you do to develop yourself according to the needs of the times to participate in training, scientific publications and innovative works?	The answers are still normative, more theoretical without disclosing in more detail the types of activities for self- development	More able to detail various activities to enhance self- development digitally, developing while remaining open to learning either through online courses, books, seminars or platforms. Participate in training programs that develop skills and knowledge according to trend issues	Normative answer, following instructions and support from the principal. -Follow the policies that apply in the agency regarding the details of any programs that can increase teacher professionalism.

Drawing the data above on the interview shows that some of the participant's questions and answers to the obstacles in implementing CPD:

Question: "What do you do if the learning tools in elementary school are not in accordance with the requirements of the applicable curriculum?"

Answer:

(S): "The first step that can be taken is to communicate with the school or teacher to convey the problem. Furthermore, finding and compiling learning materials that are in accordance with the applicable curriculum for use in learning at home and at school. If necessary, you can also discuss with related parties such as the school committee or the education office to find other solutions."

(SP): "I first conducted a needs analysis by identifying parts of the curriculum that were not in accordance with the existing learning tools. Furthermore, detailing the parts of learning tools such as learning designs, teaching materials, evaluation questions and learning media."

(T): "What I do if the learning tools are not in accordance with the requirements of the applicable curriculum by making learning devices that are adapted to the applicable curriculum."

"I will wait for instructions from the principal to revise learning tools with my colleagues according to the curriculum needs. I continue to teach as usual using existing learning tools."

Question: "What do you do if you have a colleague/teacher at school and if you don't meet the professional competence of the teacher?"

Answer:

(S): "As a colleague, I will first discuss with the person concerned to find out what deficiencies or obstacles he is facing related to professional competence issues so that later I can provide input that is appropriate to the problem at hand."

(SP): "I communicate with the curriculum team at school by involving teachers, principals, and teams involved in making or adapting learning tools, for example participating in teacher work groups, lesson study."

(T): "What I do is suggest to immediately take further education in accordance with what is being taught, as well as fulfilling competence as well as the basis for a teacher's career."

Some of the participants' answers to the challenges in implementing CPD:

Question: What are your challenges in taking CPD in terms of yourself and school policies?

Answer:

(S): "I don't understand why I have to take CPD."

(SP): "Our challenge is to divide our time between our duties as educators, homework and CPD. The school's policy is to reduce the rights of students to receive teaching and education from a teacher who takes part in CPD"

(T): "In my opinion, the challenge in following CPD (Continuous Professional Development) from a personal point of view is limited time, costs, motivation, and school policies such as time availability, limited budget, dense curriculum, administrative challenges, and other priorities. "

Question: "What will you do to develop yourself according to the needs of the times?" Answer:

(S): "Education has developed hand in hand with technological developments. What I will do is attend training. Read articles as additional knowledge so that you can update your inner abilities. After graduating, they will take part in the Ministry of Education and Culture program, namely PPG."

(SP): "What I will do is be open, adaptive, and curious. I need to have this attitude because this behavior is the gateway to new knowledge. In addition, this will motivate themselves to always move to learn new things to support self-development which will have an impact on the learning activities that are presented to students. Following the PPG program from the government"

(T): "What I will do is follow any new information about the fast changing times, learn new technologies, attend PPG, seminars and training for self-development, share knowledge and share" with colleagues.

Based on table 3, the results show that there are differences in the form of participants' answers to CPD in terms of obstacles and challenges. Participant answers from students (S) are still limited to generally normative theories. This is because the participants are still studying elementary school teachers and there are no demands from work agencies to develop themselves. In addition, their knowledge is still limited because there is no empirical experience. According to Steyn (2005), the attitude and commitment of teachers is at the center of change. There is a strong relationship between how teachers view themselves and how they view others.

Student participants (SP) participating in the teacher professional education program provided opinions on the obstacles and challenges of implementing CPD in more detail. Extensive knowledge and insights about the concepts and theories of teacher professional development are obtained during learning with lecturers. Participants (SP) attended teacher professional education for one year, followed by teaching practice for six months.

The form of the answer from the teacher participant (T) is more pragmatic because it relates to teaching work activities to improve student learning outcomes. The challenge of participating in CPD is related to the motivation to increase salary welfare if participating in self-development activities. In addition, participants were waiting for instructions or policies from the school principal to take part in CPD. This is reinforced by the theory of teachers who participated in CPD programs learned new information, methods, and competencies to advance their profession. While it was discovered that teachers acquired knowledge through the appropriation of CPD, the processes of teacher learning and the capacity to apply new knowledge in a variety of scenarios in practice were not observed to occur automatically (Girvan et al., 2016; Guskey, 2002).

Collaboration with coworkers both inside and outside of the school is a successful method of continuing professional development (CPD), as the advantages can lower stress and boost confidence. It also offers feedback, new ideas, and challenges, as well as greater enthusiasm for cooperation and greater commitment to changing practice, all of which have an impact on learner performance (De Vries et al., 2013).

For the purpose of documenting their sense-making narratives for the interviews, the teachers should put words to their reflections and experiences (Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner, 2017; Weick, Sutcliffe, & Obstfeld, 2005). Overall, the research findings reveal that participants' understanding of CPD was influenced by their understanding and professional practice. Participants prioritized their perceptions in providing views on the constraints and challenges of implementing CPD. In other words, they reframe CPD in terms of their own experiences, knowledge, beliefs and actions, to understand CPD according to their everyday needs. The study confirmed the value of CPD activities for teachers' professional growth. Teachers who participated in CPD programs learned new information, methodologies, and competencies to advance their profession. Through CPD, teachers learn cognitively to deepen the content of learning materials, the process of applying this new knowledge takes place continuously (Bragg, Walsh, & Heyeres, 2021; Girvan et al., 2016).

The interview procedure provides an opportunity for volunteers to imagine their experiences in order to provide opinions on the obstacles and challenges in implementing CPD. Participants use up-to-date literature to increase cognitive understanding in overcoming obstacles to implementing CPD, which impacts the completeness of student learning outcomes. The impact of developments in this research is not emphasized only on one's thought ideas, the purpose of knowledge and skills from training, but it focuses on change so that participants can practice change solutions in work units. During the practice of data collection as well as reference, evidence must be collected, analyzed, synthesized. Additionally, discover good practices, problems, barriers, and guidelines or factors that can make change successful. The most important phase of self-development is reflecting on changes to minimize obstacles and trying to face challenges in CPD. The findings about contextualizing CPD knowledge validated the study in concluding that contextualizing/implementing CPD knowledge is not linear but a complex and dialogic process in which teachers need more support to help them integrate and embed the knowledge built from CPD in classroom situations. Therefore, there is a need to assess how teachers apply the knowledge and skills built during the CPD program in real classrooms (Hinojosa, 2022; Cleary et al., 2022).

In addition, there are implications for stakeholders to consider the complex context in which PD occurs. The design and implementation features mentioned above highlight unique challenges regarding the intersectionality of technology, content, pedagogy and learners. These complexities include teacher and student characteristics, school climate, school and district leadership, as well as local and national policies. The explicit and empirical implications of this research are to contribute to the design of the CPD framework. Perceptions of teacher and student teacher candidates reveal the importance of design and implementation features, including relevance, originality, usability, collaboration and interaction, reflection, and context, thereby expanding much of the current research on CPD program evaluation.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The diverse responses from the heterogeneous teachers and student teacher candidates show that CPD is not an approach that applies to everyone. These results suggest that factors such as duration of teaching experience, skills, and prior knowledge influence perceptions of challenges and barriers in CPD. In addition, it also influences teacher design and implementation recommendations that incorporate adult learning theory. This implication is very significant because the responses coming from participants are strengthened from several literatures so that education stakeholders are obliged to consider the responses of teachers and prospective teachers when designing and implementing CPD. The accuracy of CPD implementation so that the results are optimal for teacher development and student learning outcomes. The results of this study underscore the need to examine CPD in terms of design and implementation features to better understand their impact on teacher practice and student learning outcomes. This is very important because teachers around the world face challenges and obstacles in effective CPD for self-development.

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