



RESEARCH PAPER

The Impact of Continuing Professional Development on Teaching Practices among Secondary School Teachers in the Larkana Division, Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the influence of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on the teaching practices of secondary school teachers in the Larkana Division, Sindh, Pakistan. The primary objective was to evaluate CPD implementation and assess its effectiveness in enhancing teaching methodologies and pedagogical techniques. Employing a descriptive survey design with a mixed-methods approach, data were collected through questionnaires, interviews, and classroom observations. The sample comprised 637 secondary school students, 488 teachers, and 21 head teachers, selected through simple random sampling. Regression analysis (SPSS .26) tested hypotheses related to key variables, professional skills, and quality of education. Results indicated that CPD significantly improved professional skills ($\beta = 0.713$) and positively contributed to educational quality ($\beta = 0.569$). Findings confirm a sufficient positive correlation between CPD engagement and better teaching practices, which leads to the consequences of student learning. Research advocates for extending to continuous professional development programs to enhance the skills of teachers, encourage reflective teaching practices and pursue educational quality. Findings provide significant insights for policy makers and educational planners in preparing effective CPD framework to increase the quality of teaching in secondary schools, especially in deprived areas.

KEYWORDS Continuing Professional Development, Teaching Practices, Secondary Education, Teacher Training, Larkana Division

Introduction

Continuous Professional Development (CPD) has become an important component in improving the efficacy of teaching and learning, especially in secondary education. In modern educational systems, teachers serve not only as transmitters of knowledge but also as important agents of change, fostering critical thinking, creativity, and the cultivation of lifelong learning in students. His capacity to effectively assume these roles is largely collateral to his ongoing professional development. In the absence of continuous professional development, teachers' instructional methodologies may become antiquated, thereby diminishing pedagogical efficacy and adversely affecting students (Chachar et al., 2023; Choudhry, et. Al., 2016).

Globally, studies highlight on that effective professional development for teachers is an important determinant in increasing educational results. The education system in Pakistan faces various challenges that affect educational quality (Ullah and Almani, 2022; Gasky, 2002). This development includes organized activities aimed at promoting teachers' subject matter expertise, improving their teaching skills, and promoting reflective practice (Ullah et al., 2024). Levin (2014) has recently point out the transition to professional development from professional development, ongoing,

cooperative and reference-specific development initiatives that directly address the results of student learning.

In Pakistan, especially in rural and semi-urban areas such as Larkana Division, the challenge to ensure effective educational practices is complicated by limited resources, insufficient access to quality training programs and the absence of systematic follow-up on professional learning initiative. While CPD programs are held at different levels, the extent they translate into better classrooms remain without thinking. This difference is important because the success of educational reforms in such areas is accidental to implement innovative teaching strategies on the ability of teachers, integrate technology and to be compatible with the demands of changing courses.

Therefore, this study wants to examine the impact of CPD on teaching practices among teachers of secondary school in Larkana division. By examining the nature, quality and results of professional learning experiences, the purpose of research is to determine how these initiatives affect instructional methods, class management and student engagement. Teachers will contribute to the increasing form of literature on professional development in developing references and provide evidence-based recommendations to policy makers and educational authorities to increase the effectiveness of CPD programs in Pakistan.

Literature Review

Concept and Scope of Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) includes a wide range of professional teaching activities that teachers engage during their careers to increase directional quality and increase student learning results. These activities include formal and informal learning opportunities that directly affect classrooms, increase subject knowledge, and promote professional development. The primary objective of CPD is to increase the performance of teachers, improve educational skills and equip them to meet the changing requirements of education. Effective CPD programs immerse teachers in learning experiences that parallel the strategies they employ in their own classrooms, thereby promoting reflective practice, collaboration, and pedagogical innovation (Ullah et al., 2024; Ghunio & Shaikh, 2023).

Modern educational discourse increasingly conceptualizes schools as learning organizations environments in which educators actively exchange professional expertise, teaching strategies, and classroom experiences to enhance collective capacity, (Chachar, Ullah, & Ujjan, 2023). This paradigm marks a shift from remote, short-term workshops toward continuous, interactive, and contextually relevant professional learning initiatives.

CPD in the Context of Developing Countries

In developing countries such as Pakistan, structural and systemic challenges significantly hinder effective CPD implementation. Johnson, (2020), highlight that these challenges include shortages of qualified educators, inadequate infrastructure, and limited access to sustained professional learning opportunities. While Pakistan's policy framework includes provisions for in-service teacher training, the availability and quality of CPD remain inconsistent and insufficient to meet the demands of modern education (Ullah et al., 2024). Some progress has been made at the provincial level, most

notably in Punjab, where the directorate of staff development now the Quaid-e-Azam academy for educational development has established a comprehensive CPD framework. This includes induction training for novice teachers and short in-service courses for experienced educators. However, these structured programs are not uniformly available nationwide, and rural areas such as the Larkana division often face more pronounced limitations in terms of accessibility, quality, and continuity of CPD.

Higher Education and CPD: Lessons for School Education

In Pakistan's higher education sector, pre-service training is not mandatory for university faculty positions, and there is no standardized set of instructional competencies for academic staff (Saleem, Masrur & Afzal, 2014; Muzaffar, 2016). The absence of dedicated human resource structures within most educational institution limits their capacity to design and deliver systematic professional development programs ((Ullah, Das, Khoso, & Nawaz, 2024). To address these gaps, the higher education commission (HEC) established the learning innovation division (LID) to provide short- and long-term faculty development initiatives aimed at improving subject expertise, pedagogical skills, and instructional strategies. Despite these developments, participation remains voluntary, which significantly restricts the reach and impact of these programs. While the majority of CPD research in Pakistan focuses on higher education faculty (Saleem, Masrur & Afzal, 2014; Aslam, 2011), studies on school teachers' professional development (Gujjar et al., 2010; Hussain, 2004) reveal parallel challenges: insufficient access to training, inadequate follow-up support, and weak alignment between training content and classroom realities.

Impact of CPD on Teaching Approaches

Comprehensive empirical evidence indicates that Continuing Professional Development (CPD) significantly impacts teachers' instructional design, classroom management, and assessment practices. Opfer and Pedder (2011) emphasize that continuous, well-organized professional development enhances teachers' capacity to design effective lessons, manage diverse classrooms, and utilize a variety of assessment methods. Darling-Hammond, Hyler, and Gardner (2017) assert that high-quality continuing professional development (CPD) encourages the implementation of student-centered pedagogies, aids in the incorporation of innovative instructional methods, and enhances the effective utilization of formative assessment to encourage learning.

Factors Influencing Teachers' Participation in CPD

Participation in CPD (Continuing Professional Development) programs by teachers is influenced by personal and system-wide factors. Avalos (2011) defines CPD as a holistic and ongoing process of a teacher's growth in professional competence, knowing, pedagogical skills, and other skills relevant in modern day education. Desimone and Garet (2015) argue that efficient CPD (Continuing Professional Development) programs empowers educators to stay up to date with new pedagogical and technological innovations, ensuring their teaching and all instructional strategies remain relevant and effective.

Moreover, instructional and teaching skills CPD increases a teacher's identity, personal development, and professional welfare. As Jensen, Sandoval-Hernandez, Knoll, and Gonzalez (2012) explain, a teacher has to be able to access a range of teaching approaches and resources in order to be able to create inclusive, interesting, and learner-

centered class and lesson. In a more focused approach, Day and Sachs (2004) state that CPD helps in the development of reflective practice and communication, mentoring, and, in general, holistic learner-based teaching and support. In addition, Slegers, et al., (2014) illustrate that acknowledgment of CPD achievements has a positive impact on teacher's motivation, occupational stress, and increases commitment towards professional, institutional development and networking opportunities.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD), its organized application, especially in the rural and resource-scarce regions of Pakistan, still lags behind. Very little research has been done in the Larkana Division concerning the CPD activities and the subsequent changes in the teaching practices of secondary school teachers. Due to the specific socio-educational dynamics of the region, there is a need for research on the nature, availability, and impact of CPD programs on secondary school teachers. Identifying the research gap in the context of Larkana is essential to ensure that there is a tangible impact on the quality of teaching and innovation in the pedagogy and learning among students.

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of professional skills on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training at the secondary school level in Larkana Division.

H₀₂: There is no significant impact of quality education on Continuing Professional Development (CPD) training at the secondary school level in Larkana Division.

Material and Methods

This research analyzes the degree to which Continuing Professional Development (CPD) influences the educational practices of secondary school teachers in Larkana Division, Sindh, in Pakistan. A cross-sectional survey design captured data in a systematic manner to understand the breadth and depth of CPD's influence. The population of interest was secondary school teachers in several tehsils of the Larkana Division. A representative sample was obtained through stratified random sampling while ensuring a wide range of school and teacher type and their locations. Collection of data was through a self-administered questionnaire which included both open and closed questions. The tool aimed to capture information about teachers' involvement in CPD, the nature and frequency of the programs, and their impacts on teaching practices including lesson planning and classroom management and teaching. Respondent's and CPD trends were summarized using descriptive statistics, while inferential analyses, including regression, were performed to understand the engagement and teaching practices relationships.

In the present study, ethical integrity was maintained by obtaining informed consent, ensuring voluntary participation, and safeguarding participants' confidentiality. The outcomes are proposed to offer evidence-based recommendations for setting CPD initiatives and improving pedagogical quality in secondary schools across the Larkana Division.

Validity and Reliability

Establishing the validity and reliability of research tools is essential for ensuring the quality and trustworthiness of study findings. In this research, the questionnaire went through a thorough validation process that included a review by experts with

significant experience in the relevant educational field. This evaluation confirmed content validity by ensuring that the items accurately represented the concepts being examined. To check the reliability of the instrument, we calculated Cronbach's alpha coefficient to measure internal consistency. The results, shown in the accompanying table, indicate a high level of reliability across the questionnaire's scales. This means the items consistently measure the intended variables.

Result and Discussion

Teacher point of view regarding the influence of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) on the teaching approaches of secondary school teachers in Sukkur division Sindh, Pakistan.

Table 1
Teacher respondents regarding continuing professional development builds the professional skills of the teachers.

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1:Professional Development of teachers impact on teacher s attitude toward students.	488	4.07	.985
2:Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program of PITE is enhancing the professional skills of secondary School Teachers (SSTs).	488	3.98	1.007
3:CPD program helps teachers to grow as a professional.	488	4.04	1.002
4: By getting professional trainings teachers behavior is changed in a good manner.	488	4.08	.991

The descriptive statistics reveal that secondary school teachers perceive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) positively across multiple dimensions. With mean scores consistently above 3.9 on a 5-point scale, teachers generally agree that CPD programs enhance their professional skills ($M = 3.98$, $SD = 1.01$) and foster their growth as educators ($M = 4.04$, $SD = 1.00$). Notably, CPD participation is also associated with improved attitudes toward students ($M = 4.07$, $SD = 0.99$) and positive behavioral changes in teaching practice ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 0.99$). These findings underscore the constructive role of professional development initiatives in shaping teachers' pedagogical competence and professional mindset, reinforcing the value of CPD in improving educational outcomes.

Table 2
Teacher respondents regarding continuing professional development quality education on the secondary school teachers.

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1:Quality of teaching of Teachers is improved by getting Professional development trainings.	488	4.10	1.029
2:Leadership qualities are increased by getting professional trainings.	488	4.09	.993
3:Professional development days help teachers to expand their knowledge on difficult topics so quality of education may be improved.	488	4.08	.959
4:There is an opportunity to get continuous professional development trainings for male and female teachers to improve the quality of education.	488	4.09	.972
5:There is positive role of teachers to enhance the quality of education.	488	4.03	.970

6: Professional development for teaching practices at secondary level has an impact on quality of education.	488	4.07	.957
7: Problems solving skills are improved through CPD	488	3.93	1.106
8: Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program of PITE is enhancing the quality of secondary School Teachers (SSTs).	488	4.02	.959
9: ICT is enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.	488	3.98	.945
10: Creativity can be improved after CPD as a result Students are more creative in their study	488	4.07	.978

The findings indicate that secondary school teachers perceive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as significantly enhancing multiple dimensions of educational quality. Teachers reported that CPD positively impacts their overall teaching effectiveness ($M = 4.10$) and leadership abilities ($M = 4.09$). Professional development activities were seen as instrumental in expanding knowledge on challenging topics ($M = 4.08$) and are equitably accessible to both male and female teachers ($M = 4.09$). CPD also contributes to improving critical problem-solving skills ($M = 3.93$) and the integration of ICT in teaching practices ($M = 3.98$). Furthermore, teachers associate CPD with fostering creativity, which positively influences student learning experiences ($M = 4.07$). These results underscore the integral role of CPD in promoting teacher competence, pedagogical innovation, and ultimately, the quality of education delivered in secondary schools.

Table 3
Student respondents regarding continuing professional development builds the professional skills on the secondary school teachers.

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1: Professional Development of teachers impact on teacher s attitude toward students.	637	4.11	.946
2: Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program of PITE is enhancing the professional skills of secondary School Teachers (SSTs).	637	4.00	1.021
3: CPD program helps teachers to grow as a professional.	637	4.01	1.060
4: By getting professional trainings teachers behavior is changed in a good manner.	637	4.08	.997
Valid N (listwise)	637		

The results indicate that teachers perceive Continuing Professional Development (CPD) positively, with strong agreement that professional development improves their attitudes toward students ($M = 4.11$, $SD = 0.95$). The CPD program by PITE is seen as effective in enhancing teachers' professional skills ($M = 4.00$, $SD = 1.02$) and fostering overall professional growth ($M = 4.01$, $SD = 1.06$). Additionally, teachers report that participation in CPD leads to positive changes in their behavior ($M = 4.08$, $SD = 1.00$). These findings highlight the beneficial role of CPD in shaping teacher attitudes, skills, and professional conduct.

Table 4
Student respondents regarding continuing professional development quality education on the secondary school teachers.

Descriptive Statistics			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
1: Quality of teaching of Teachers is improved by getting Professional development trainings.	637	4.11	1.008
2: Leadership qualities are increased by getting professional trainings.	637	4.06	1.005

3: Professional development days help teachers to expand their knowledge on difficult topics so quality of education may be improved.	637	4.08	.963
4: There is an opportunity to get continuous professional development trainings for male and female teachers to improve the quality of education.	637	4.10	.982
5: There is positive role of teachers to enhance the quality of education.	637	4.01	.983
6: Professional development for teaching practices at secondary level has an impact on quality of education.	637	4.04	.972
7: Problems solving skills are improved through CPD	637	3.92	1.105
8: Continuous Professional Development (CPD) program of PITE is enhancing the quality of secondary School Teachers (SSTs).	637	4.04	.957
9: ICT is enhancing the quality of teaching and learning.	637	3.96	.970
10: Creativity can be improved after CPD as a result Students are more creative in their study	637	4.10	.982

Teachers strongly agree that professional development improves teaching quality ($M = 4.11$) and leadership skills ($M = 4.06$). CPD activities help expand knowledge on challenging topics ($M = 4.08$) and are accessible to both male and female teachers ($M = 4.10$). Teachers recognize their positive role in enhancing education quality ($M = 4.01$) and acknowledge the significant impact of CPD on teaching practices ($M = 4.04$). Problem-solving skills ($M = 3.92$) and ICT integration ($M = 3.96$) are also viewed as benefiting from CPD. Moreover, CPD is linked to fostering creativity, which contributes to more creative student learning ($M = 4.10$). These results highlight CPD's crucial role in enhancing teaching effectiveness and educational outcomes in secondary schools.

The table summarizes a linear regression analysis used to examine the relationship between professional skills (dependent variable) and participation in the CPD program of PITE (independent variable). This analysis assesses whether CPD training significantly influences teachers' professional skills.

Table 5

Regression Analysis Coefficients ^a					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	2.069	.091		22.757	.000
1 CPD Program enhance Teacher professional skills	.496	.022	.713	22.405	.000

a. Dependent Variable: PS

Linear regression analysis sees the impact of the continuous professional development (CPD) program from PITE on professional skills (PS) among teachers of secondary school in Larkana Division. The model discloses an important positive relationship between CPD partnership and professional skills, with a standardized beta coefficient of 0.713 ($T = 22.405$, $P < .001$). This means that CPD programs greatly improve the professional skills of teachers. Constant words are also important ($b = 2.069$, $p < .001$). Given these results, the disabled hypothesis (H_0 : CPD training has no significant impact on CPD training) has been rejected. This confirms that CPD has a strong and statistically significant positive effects on professional skills at the secondary school level.

The table shows the results of a linear regression analysis. It looks at the relationship between the quality of education (QE) and the days of professional development that focus on improving teachers' knowledge in challenging subjects. This analysis assesses how CPD affects educational quality, which is an important factor in teaching effectiveness and promoting student results.

Table 6
Regression Analysis

		Coefficients ^a			t	Sig.
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.752	.087		31.619	.000
	Professional development	.317	.021	.569	15.265	.000

Dependent Variable: Quality Education (QE)

Regression analysis checks how the quality of education (QE) on the day of commercial development. The model reveals a significant positive effect with standardized beta coefficient of 0.569 ($T = 15.265$, $P < .001$). This indicates that the day of professional development improves the understanding of challenging subjects of teachers, which in turn enhances educational quality. Constant words are also important ($b = 2.752$, $p < .001$). These results suggest that professional development activities are important to increase the quality of education.

Conclusion

This study highlights the strong positive impact of continuous professional development (CPD) on the teaching practices of secondary school teachers in the Larkana Division. Findings suggest that participation in CPD programs improves teachers' skills, instructional quality, leadership abilities and skills to solve the problem. Data suggests that CPD not only promotes teaching knowledge and classroom behavior, but also promotes a positive attitude towards students and supports creative and inclusive teaching methods. Additionally, professional development help teachers understand complex subjects, which directly related to better educational quality. Statistical analysis confirms a strong association between CPD participation and both professional skills and educational quality, showing an important role of ongoing teacher development programs. Despite the challenges in resource allocation and access, especially in rural areas such as Larkana, this research emphasizes the need to maintain teaching excellence and establish CPD programs to improve student results. Therefore, education policy makers and school administration should focus on expansion and constant improvement of CPD opportunities to ensure fair access and maximize their positive impact on teaching practices in the entire region. These steps are important to increase the overall quality of secondary education in similar areas.

Recommendations

- Extend access to CPD programs: Given the positive effects of CPD on professional skills and teachers competency, it is mandatory to increase the availability of continuous professional development opportunities in all secondary schools in Larkana division. Special attention should be paid to ensure similar access to teachers in rural and underscores areas.
- Institutionalize CPD as a Mandatory Component: To maximize the impact of CPD, participation must be integrated into a formal career progression structure for secondary school teachers. Constant engagement will be encouraged by making CPD mandatory and the culture of lifelong learning will be promoted among teachers.
- Increase the quality and relevance of CPD content: CPD programs should be reviewed regularly and updated to reflect specific relevant challenges for current academic research, technological progress in Larkana region. Practical teaching

strategies, class management, ICT integration and inclusive education should be emphasized.

- Promoting collaborative and reflective learning: CPD initiative should include co - worker mentoring, professional teaching communities and associate education forums such as Action Research Project to enable teachers to share the best practices and reflect seriously on their directive methods.
- Strengthen monitoring and evaluation mechanisms: Strong systems should be established to monitor the implementation of CPD programs and evaluate their effectiveness in improving teaching practices and student results. The response from teachers should be actively urged and used to inform the program improvement.
- Support Leadership Development: Considering the established correlation between Continuing Professional Development (CPD) and enhanced leadership competencies, it is essential to implement targeted leadership training programs.

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