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Continuing professional development opportunities: Teachers' motivation and perceived effectiveness

🆔 **Filomena Dayagbil[1]**
🆔 **Rivika Alda[2+]**

[1,2]*College of Teacher Education, Cebu Normal University, Philippines.*
[1]*Email: dayagbilf@cnu.edu.ph*
[2]*Email: aldar@cnu.edu.ph*

(+ Corresponding author)

ABSTRACT

Continuing professional development (CPD) ensures that learning is an ongoing process and that professionals should continuously upgrade their craft throughout their careers. This study explored the perceived effectiveness of professional development (PD) activities on teachers' competence, aiming to answer questions about what PD activities teachers participate in, what motivates and hinders their participation, and how effective they are perceived to be in terms of improving teaching competence and enhancing student learning. The study utilized a quantitative approach, collecting data through a survey instrument from 1,063 teachers from Central Visayas, which is Region 7 in the Philippines. The results showed that teachers engaged in a variety of activities for their own personal and professional development to enhance their instructional strategies and to meet professional standards. However, hindering factors included lack of time, funding, and workload. Teachers believed that high-quality and needs-based PD activities enhance teaching competence and practice and impact student learning. In conclusion, the study highlights the importance of needs-based CPD programs to support teachers' ongoing professional development and enhancing their effectiveness in the classroom. By addressing the motivating and hindering factors identified in this study and prioritizing responsive CPD opportunities, educators and educational institutions can create a culture of continuous learning and improvement, resulting in positive outcomes for both teachers and students.

Contribution/Originality: This study offers a unique synthesis that fills a critical gap in understanding the dynamics shaping educators' professional growth, which will serve as a basis for policy recommendations in the design and implementation of CPD activities and programs among educational institutions in the Philippines.

1. INTRODUCTION

There have been reform initiatives by several institutions in the country to ensure better, equitable, and quality education. One reform is stipulated in Republic Act No. 10912, otherwise known as the "Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Act of 2016," which aims to strengthen and sustain the career advancement and development of all professionals. CPD is described as the continuing education of professionals after complying with the profession's initial registration and admission. This initiative mandates that educators be conscious and proactive of the new developments in instructional approaches, learning methodologies, content, and standards to ensure student success. Although several factors contribute to student success, teachers' continuing professional development is a vital component of this endeavor. Professional development (PD) is important to close skill gaps

among beginning teachers and strengthen their expertise (Evers, Van der Heijden, & Kreijns, 2016). As the front line in education, it is essential that teachers keep abreast of the continuously changing roles, practices, and student needs. Moreover, in these activities, teachers are expected to be active learners and innovators. They have to come up with relevant ideas, techniques, and skill sets to improve their teaching practices and, in turn, improve student learning outcomes.

Research has also pointed out several frameworks for assessing teaching effectiveness. The research of Simonson, Earl, and Frary (2022) emphasized a multidimensional framework made up of the following four components: learner-centeredness, scholarly teaching, course design, and professional development. It also demonstrates how these four components of effective teaching interact with each other in terms of beliefs, attributes, tasks, dimensions, and criteria. Professional development is seen as critical for teaching practitioners to prepare for the educational changes and the challenges that come with them. Exemplary teachers are self-reflective professionals who regularly hone their teaching skills and knowledge using feedback from a range of sources (Simonson et al., 2022). Moreover, continuing professional development promotes competence and confidence in teaching (Girvan, Conneely, & Tangney, 2016; Omar, 2017; Yurkofsky, Blum-Smith, & Brennan, 2019) and shows more sustained instructional improvement (Fischer et al., 2018; Richter, leinknecht, & Groschner, 2019). For teaching and learning to be meaningful, a teacher must be competent (Nbina, 2012). In the Philippines, the Department of Education (DepEd) affirms the importance of professional standards for teacher improvement which, in turn, raises student achievement. As the department recognizes the importance of producing highly competent teachers in effecting quality learning, it has also strengthened its support in providing continuing professional development and advancement to teachers. The relationship between teaching and student achievement has been supported by several works, although others would also question the tangible evidence for it. However, many researchers would also agree that one powerful factor that influences student success is the teacher.

Although teachers' competence is a product of so many undertakings related to personal and professional preparation and experiences, active participation in CPD programs and activities ensures the updating and strengthening of teachers' competence. Richardson (2003), cited in Badri, Alnuaimi, and Mohaidat (2016), mentioned that PD activities should be intensive and continual to see an improvement in teaching. Richter et al. (2019) added that the positive influence of PD is evident when the training is high quality. It must also be collaborative, long-term, and content-driven (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). According to Fischer et al. (2018), professional development should be planned so that it places content in practice, focuses on student learning, models effective teaching methods, supports active learning, fosters professional learning communities, aligns goals with educational environments, and offers ongoing and sustainable learning opportunities. Teachers are also expected to share what they know and what they want to know (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995) through engaging in communities of practice. Lave and Wenger (1991) described a community of practice (CoP) as a theoretical framework about how professional practitioners, with shared or similar roles, concerns, problems, or interests, come together and learn to solve workplace problems. In CoPs, teachers are given the opportunity to echo what they have learned from seminars and trainings, share resources, content and practices, and create solutions for classroom problems. Zhao, Yang, Long, and Zhao (2019) purport that CoPs improved teachers' professional development by "providing networks for teachers to share experiences and engage in collaborative practices."

The tangible and observable outcomes of teachers' participation in CPD programs and activities are seen and appraised through their ability to innovate and update content, pedagogy, technological beliefs, and practices. Some teachers have pointed out that it is not the quantity of training they have participated in but the quality and the impact it had on them. For some, even if they want to give their full attention to these seminars and trainings, they are also conflicted with other responsibilities and deliverables that they still have to accomplish. One concern of DepEd teachers has been the overwhelming paperwork and ancillary assignments given to them. Instead of spending their free time preparing lessons or attending PD activities, they spend it filling in forms and fulfilling the

ancillary services, such as being the guidance counselor or the school librarian. Dayagbil, Palompon, Garcia, and Olvido (2021) mentioned that completing deliverables and other administrative and ancillary services makes it difficult for teachers to actively engage in and commit to their professional development activities. The Philippine Institute for Development Studies (PIDS) informed DepEd of the result of their study, which shows that teachers' actual teaching hours have been pushed aside by other responsibilities (Philippine Institute for Development Studies, 2019). Teachers have also been vocal about being given too many deliverables and that sometimes they are demotivated to actively participate in PD activities. Participation in these activities becomes more for compliance purposes rather than for personal and professional growth.

The adoption of learning opportunities is dependent on institutional and contextual factors, individual prerequisites, and teachers' willingness to engage in professional development, according to a modified PD model developed by Richter et al. (2019). A study by Prenger et al. (2017), cited in Richter et al. (2019), emphasizes that teachers' motivation plays a fundamental role at all levels of their personal development. On the other hand, Sancar, Atal, and Deryakulu (2021) stated that teachers' motivation may increase if they feel that the purpose of the CPD activities is to reinforce and value their characteristics and when they see that these activities address their specific teaching needs and interests (Sahagun, Matriano, & Bueno, 2019). Moreover, Temperly et al. (2007), cited in Dayagbil et al. (2021), claimed that teachers who have access to highly effective, research-based professional learning and development can have a significant impact on student learning outcomes. Teachers must have access to the resources they need to develop instructional strategies and concepts that will help them impact student accomplishment. They also need to be able to participate in active learning that supports the development of environments that encourage the usage of innovative ideas (Goodnough, Azam, & Wells, 2019). Teachers may grow more passionate about integrating innovative ideas in their classes as they become more comfortable with the process (Hunzicker, 2011).

However, as there have been many current professional development activities for teachers, there is less monitoring of the effects of these activities. Considering teachers' situation and concerns, there have been very few published studies in the country that point out the effectiveness of PD programs and activities on teachers' competence and practices. Research on this topic should also identify key features of effective CPD activities which will serve as a basis for policy recommendations in the design and implementation of CPD activities and programs among educational institutions in the country.

1.1. Statement of the Problem

In light of the concerns mentioned above, this research explores the perceived effectiveness of PD activities on teachers' competence. Specifically, it seeks to answer the following:

1. What professional development activities do teachers participate in?

2. What motivates teachers to participate in PD activities, and what hinders them?

3. How effective are PD activities, as perceived by teachers, in terms of improving teaching competence and enhancing student learning?

2. METHOD

This study employed a quantitative approach utilizing a questionnaire to collect data, which was statistically evaluated to describe trends regarding the responses.

The participants are teachers from the Department of Education – Region 7. A total of 1,063 teacher-respondents were selected who fit the following criteria: must have taught in DepEd – Region 7 for at least two years; must have attended PD activities, whether formal, non-formal, and/or self-directed; and must be willing to participate in the study. Further, an informed consent form was provided to the participants in addition to the formal letter sent to the administrators of the schools. Anonymity and confidentiality were maintained throughout

the study. The participants were not asked for their personal information nor were they linked to any identifiable information. Likewise, appropriate tests were undertaken to ensure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire. Each parameter of the questionnaire was subjected to a descriptive analysis, which involves calculating the weighted mean of the replies. The results were then analyzed and interpreted.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Teachers' Professional Development Activities

Education is an ongoing process. As teachers' demands in multicultural settings increase, so does the emphasis on providing relevant and engaging 21st-century techno-classrooms. Educational institutions, therefore, seek to afford more opportunities for in-service professional development. Table 1 shows the PD activities that teachers have participated in for the past three years.

Table 1. Professional development activities that teachers engaged in for the past three years (N = 1,063).

PD activity	Percentage of engagement
1. Learning action cell sessions	85.5%
2. Lesson study	32.5%
3. Seminars/training programs sponsored by the national education academy of the Philippines (NEAP)	38.9%
4. Seminars/training programs sponsored by the region/division/private companies	74.1%
5. Webinars and online training	79.6%
6. Action research	17.8%
7. MOOCs (Massive open online courses)	8.8%
8. Scholarships or fellowships for six months or more	7%
9. Pursuing master's/doctorate degrees	47.4%
10. National certification program	16.6%

The majority of the teachers (85.5%) stated that they had participated in Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions. LAC is a school-based activity wherein a group of teachers engages in collaborative learning sessions to solve shared challenges encountered in school. The conduct of LAC in schools is supported by the Department of Education per DepEd Order No. 32 s 2011. Since LAC is school-based and sessions are monitored by the school administrators, more teachers have the chance to participate in this activity. Other professional development opportunities that teachers engaged in included webinars and training. Even when schools were closed due to the pandemic in 2021, most teachers (79.6%) attended virtual webinars and online training courses to acquire new competencies to meet the challenges of teaching and learning amidst and beyond the pandemic. Moreover, 74.1% of the teachers attended face-to-face training and conferences sponsored by their respective regions and divisions. Other teachers pursued their master's and doctorate degrees. Teachers have been able to seize the opportunity to pursue their graduate studies since most universities have shifted to online modality.

While there are various modalities in the conduct of professional development for teachers, self-directed professional learning initiatives, such as attending massive open online learning courses (MOOCs), national certification programs, scholarships and fellowships, were seldom engaged in by the teachers. The use of technology in professional development activities is evident in MOOCs, national certifications, and fellowships. However, teachers with poor information and communication technology (ICT) skills may not attend professional development activities that require the use of technology. A study conducted by Chou (2019) found that teachers with poor ICT skills were less likely to attend professional development activities that required the use of technology. The study also found that teachers who received ICT training were more likely to attend professional development activities that involved the use of technology.

3.2. Teachers' Motivation and Demotivation in Engaging in PD activities

Engagement in professional development activities is important to continuously stay relevant and updated in terms of skills, knowledge, and instructional practices, which ultimately impact student learning outcomes. However, various motivating and demotivating factors influence teachers' participation in professional development activities. Identifying these factors is critical to designing effective professional development programs to increase motivation and engagement among teachers. Motivation is a critical component of professional development activities because teachers must be motivated and responsible in ensuring that they do not stagnate in the profession. Participating in PD activities can provide teachers with an excellent opportunity to improve their knowledge, skills and attitudes, which can lead to increased job satisfaction, better instructional practices, and higher student achievement (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). Figure 1 shows teachers' perceived motivations for participating in PD activities.
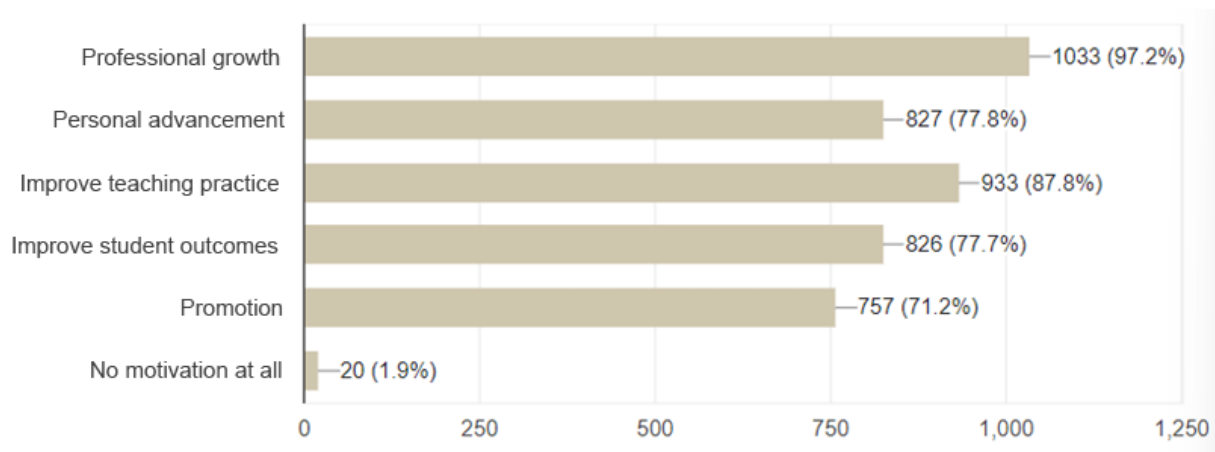

Figure 1. Motivations to participate in PD activities.

Studies on teacher participation in professional development have repeatedly revealed that teachers vary greatly in the amount of time they devote to these activities (Richter et al., 2019; Rotermund, DeRoche, & Ottem, 2017). Figure 1 shows that the motivations of teachers are professional growth, personal advancement, improved teaching practice, improved student outcomes, and promotion. A few of the respondents also revealed other motivations that include incentives such as leave credits, monetary benefits, access to the speakers' materials, and collaboration with other teacher-participants from other places captured in the open-ended response of the questionnaire. While most of the teacher-respondents join PD activities for professional growth and to improve teaching practice, others do so for personal advancement and promotion.

Primarily, teachers participate in professional development activities to seek professional growth. Professional growth refers to the process of expanding one's knowledge, skills and expertise to enhance teaching practices and student learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond, Wei, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2009). Education is a constantly changing field, with new research, innovations and strategies emerging all the time. As a result, teachers must stay informed of the latest trends and techniques to provide their students with a high-quality education. Teachers can learn about new teaching approaches, incorporate new technologies, and implement evidence-based teaching strategies by participating in professional development courses.

Another motivation for teachers to participate in professional development is to improve their practice. Professional development allows teachers to improve their pedagogical knowledge in areas such as classroom management, assessment, and instructional design. These abilities allow teachers to create lessons that engage and challenge their students, resulting in better learning outcomes. As teachers see the impact of these improvements in their classrooms, they are more motivated to seek out additional opportunities for professional development.

Further, professional development can help teachers feel more accomplished and recognized, as well as boost their confidence and self-efficacy. Teachers are more likely to enjoy and feel fulfilled in their jobs as they gain competence and effectiveness in their roles. Professional development can also lead to advancement and promotion opportunities. Teachers, for example, are promoted to higher ranks in the Department of Education based on specific criteria that include active participation in PD activities. Along with promotion, rewards and incentives can serve as effective inducements for teachers to take part in PD programs. The opportunity to collaborate with colleagues is another factor that can motivate teachers to participate in PD activities. Collaboration with other educators can promote a sense of belonging and support, as well as provide opportunities for educators to exchange knowledge and best practice (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). In an environment where teachers are encouraged to reflect on and refine their teaching methods, collaborative learning can also aid in fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Teachers' motivation to participate in PD activities can be influenced by intrinsic motivation. Teachers who are enthusiastic about teaching and learning may be intrinsically motivated to participate in these activities to improve their knowledge and skills and serve their students better (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Teachers' motivation is an essential component of effective PD activities. By understanding the elements that encourage or demotivate teachers to participate in professional development, schools and divisions may create more effective programs that fulfill the needs of their teachers and eventually improve students' results. Consequently, the teachers were also asked about possible reasons for them to be demotivated to participate in PD activities. Figure 2 shows the clustered demotivating factors that may le ad to teachers' non-participation in PD activities.
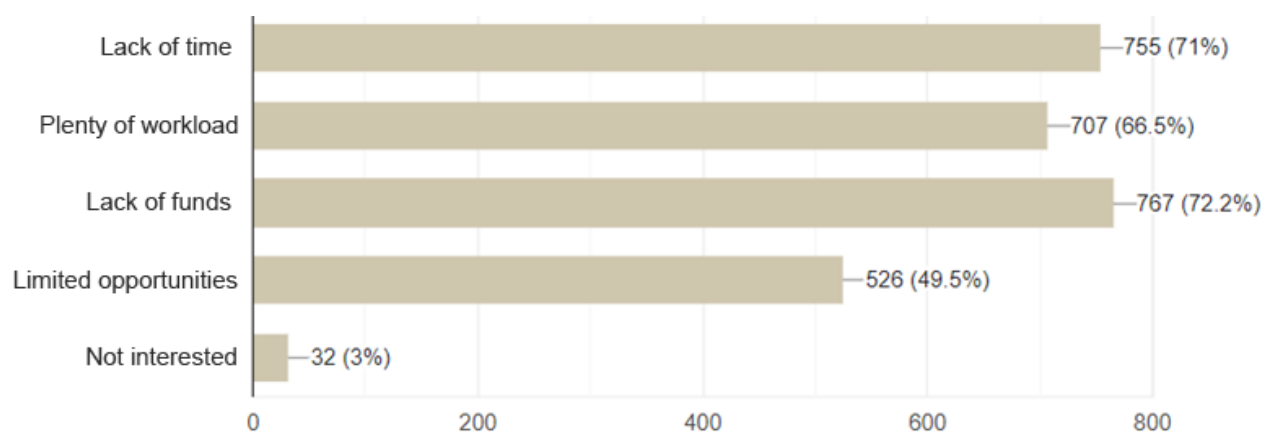

Figure 2. Reasons for not engaging in PD activities.

The reasons for demotivation among teachers include the lack of time, heavy workload, lack of funds, and limited opportunities. Some teachers also included the location of the training, lack of a support system, poor ICT background, and repeated or nonspecialized topics. The results show that the most significant demotivating factor for teachers in participating in professional development activities is the lack of funds. These activities can be costly, and many schools and districts may not have the resources to cover the expenses. Teachers also cited lack of funding as the second most common reason for them not participating in professional development activities (National Education Association, 2020). The lack of funds can limit the types of professional development activities that teachers can participate in, further limiting their motivation to engage in these activities. Riente and Thompson (2020) investigated how funding can be used to support early childhood educators' professional development in the United States. According to these authors, targeted funding, such as grants or scholarships, can be an effective way to help educators who may not have the financial resources to participate in professional development activities. The study also emphasized the importance of funding for ongoing professional development. These studies, among others, support the finding in this study that funding continues to be a significant factor in

determining teachers' participation in professional development activities, both in the Philippines and globally. As such, providing equitable access to funding for professional development should be a key consideration for policymakers and school leaders who wish to support the ongoing development of their teachers.

Another significant demotivating factor for teachers in attending professional development activities is the lack of time, which is also related to a heavy workload. As observed, teachers have a heavy workload, with responsibilities that extend beyond teaching, such as lesson planning, grading, and administrative duties. Leshem and Trafford (2007) purported that workload is one of teachers' primary reasons for not engaging in professional development activities, as they felt they did not have the time or energy to commit to additional learning opportunities. Finding time for professional development can be challenging. In addition, teachers may also have personal responsibilities outside of work, which further limits their availability for professional development. In a study conducted by García-Santillán, Guzmán-Valenzuela, and Rojas-Corona (2021), teachers also reported lack of time as a reason for not participating in professional development activities.

Hoffman, Huzinec, Taylor, and Carter (2019) discovered that teachers in urban schools were more likely to prioritize classroom instruction over professional development, citing time constraints as a major barrier. Schools can encourage teacher participation, according to Alismail and McGuire (2015), by providing opportunities for job-embedded professional development, which allows teachers to learn new skills while continuing to work. Teachers' participation in professional learning communities (PLCs) was also influenced by time constraints. The teachers expressed that they are less likely to participate in PLCs because of limited time, even if they are aware of the potential benefits of these collaborative learning experiences. According to a University of Colorado study, teachers who had a high workload reported lower levels of motivation and job satisfaction (Sebastian, 2015). Thus, the lack of time and heavy workload are significant barriers to teachers' participation in professional development activities. Finding ways to reduce time pressure and prioritize professional development within teachers' busy schedules is crucial to ensuring that all teachers have access to the ongoing learning opportunities they need to improve their practice. Further, providing targeted support and opportunities for job-embedded professional development can help alleviate the workload and allow teachers to engage in the ongoing learning they need to improve their practice. Consequently, limited opportunities for professional development can be a demotivating factor for teachers. Many teachers may not have access to professional development opportunities that align with their needs or interests. In a study conducted by the Learning Policy Institute, it was found that low-income schools and schools with a high percentage of minority students had fewer opportunities for high-quality professional development (Wei, Darling-Hammond, Andree, Richardson, & Orphanos, 2018). Limited opportunities for professional development can lead to a lack of motivation and a sense of disengagement among teachers.

Other reasons mentioned in the study were the location of the training, lack of a support system, poor ICT background, and repeated and nonspecialized topics. Several studies have reported that teachers may not attend professional development activities because of the distance they have to travel to the training venue. A study conducted by Musa and Marzuki (2020) found that teachers preferred to attend professional development activities that were located closer to their schools. Teachers also reported that the cost of transportation and accommodation were the main reasons for not attending professional development activities located further away. Moreso, teachers may not attend PD activities because of the lack of support from their colleagues, school administrators, or even the government. According to Jamil, Razak, Raju, and Mohamed (2011), teachers were more inclined to engage in professional development activities when they had support from their coworkers and school administration. Lastly, Kılıç and Kaymakcı (2019) concluded that instructors chose professional development activities that were specialized and relevant to their teaching methods. Although instructors receive capacity-building training and seminars to give them the necessary content and pedagogical abilities, a study by Bacus and Alda (2022) found that some teachers still feel that need-specific training is insufficient. Teachers also reported that repeated topics were not beneficial to their teaching practices, and they were, therefore, less likely to attend such activities.

The findings of this study revealed that the lack of time, heavy workload, lack of funds, and limited opportunity are significant demotivating factors for teachers to participate in professional development activities. Schools and districts need to address these factors to increase teacher motivation and engagement in professional development. Providing adequate resources, time, and opportunities for professional development can help teachers enhance their skills and improve the quality of instruction in their classrooms. Therefore, it is essential to consider these factors when planning PD activities to ensure that they suit the needs and preferences of teachers.

3.3. Teachers' Perceived Effectiveness of PD Activities in Terms of Improving Teaching Competence and Practice and Enhancing Student Learning

Professional development is an unending learning process that teachers willingly participate in to enhance their practice and to best tailor their teacher processes to meet the learning needs of their students (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003). Table 2 shows the effectiveness of PD activities as perceived by teachers in terms of improving teaching competence.

Table 2. Perceived effectiveness of professional development activities in terms of improving teaching competence.

PD activity	Frequency and percentage	Very effective	Effective	Less effective	Not effective at all
Learning action cell (LAC) sessions	f	513	519	37	11
	%	48.26	48.82	3.48	1.03
Lesson study	f	373	617	48	38
	%	35.09	58.04	4.52	3.57
Seminars/training programs sponsored by the national education academy of the Philippines (NEAP)	f	414	582	44	41
	%	38.95	54.75	4.14	3.86
Seminars/training programmes sponsored by the region/division/private companies	f	546	489	26	21
	%	51.36	46	2.45	1.98
Webinars and online training	f	442	558	64	14
	%	41.58	52.49	6.02	1.32
Action research	f	315	630	82	47
	%	29.63	59.27	7.71	4.42
MOOCs (Massive open online courses)	f	262	635	113	63
	%	24.65	59.74	10.63	5.93
Scholarships or fellowships for six months or more	f	298	626	81	69
	%	28.03	58.89	7.62	6.49
Pursuing master's/doctorate degrees	f	484	530	35	27
	%	45.53	49.86	3.29	2.54
National certification program	f	371	599	61	49
	%	34.9	56.35	5.74	4.61

Note: f = Frequency of responses; % = Percentage of the responses.

The results further revealed that among the PD activities, seminars and training programs sponsored by the region/division or other private sectors are seen to be the most effective when it comes to improving teaching competence. This can be explained by the conduct of regular in-service training among schools and divisions. In-service training is mandatory for all public school teachers in the country. DepEd requires teachers to undergo at least 24 hours of in-service training every year. This requirement is stipulated in the DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2012, which sets out the policies and guidelines for the implementation of in-service training for public school teachers.

Other than participation in training and seminars, the teachers also believed that LAC sessions, which include coaching and feedback, opportunities for collaboration and reflection, and ongoing support, had a big impact on improved teaching competence. LAC is part of the mandate of the Department of Education translated through DepEd order 35 s 2016 "The Learning Action Cell as a K to 12 Basic Education Program School-Based Continuing Professional Development Strategy for the Improvement of Teaching and Learning". Depending on the needs of the teachers, each school may have a variety of learning action cells. The groupings can be by grade level, subject

area, discipline, or determined strategically by the teachers and the school (Department of Education, 2016). The least participated in, and the least effective, is teachers' engagement in MOOCs (massive open online courses). In recent years, MOOCs have grown in popularity in the Philippines. MOOCs provide learners with the ability to access high-quality educational content from some of the world's leading universities and institutions without the need for formal enrollment or attendance in a physical classroom. For instance, the Department of Education has partnered with several institutions, such as SEAMEO INNOTECH, to offer MOOCs for public school teachers. These courses cover a range of topics, such as curriculum development, teaching strategies, assessment, and classroom management. Although MOOCs provide promising opportunities for teachers, it can be argued that they have not been fully explored to their potential.

The findings of this study confirm that professional development activities are critical for improving teaching competence as perceived by the practitioners themselves. PD activities, such as in-service training, learning action cells, pursuing graduate studies, online webinars, and national certification programs, are all effective forms of professional development for improving teaching competence. These activities have been found to improve teachers' knowledge, skills, attitudes, and efficacy. However, the effectiveness of each activity may depend on various factors, such as the context and design of the activity. Furthermore, teachers were also asked about the effectiveness of these activities in enhancing learning among students. The results in Table 3 revealed that attending seminars and training programs sponsored by the region/division or other private sectors and the conduct of LAC sessions are seen as the most effective in enhancing learning among students.

Table 3. Perceived effectiveness of professional development activities in terms of enhancing learning among students.

PD activity	Frequency and percentage	Very effective	Effective	Less effective	Not effective at all
Learning action cell (LAC) sessions	f	509	526	31	10
	%	47.88	49.48	2.92	0.94
Lesson study	f	400	601	41	36
	%	37.63	56.54	3.86	3.39
Seminars/training programs sponsored by the national education academy of the Philippines (NEAP)	f	409	587	38	44
	%	38.48	55.22	3.57	4.14
Seminars/training programmes sponsored by the region/division/private companies	f	517	507	35	19
	%	48.64	47.7	3.29	1.79
Webinars and online training	f	438	565	56	17
	%	41.2	53.15	5.27	1.6
Action research	f	329	628	64	48
	%	30.95	59.08	6.02	4.52
MOOCs (Massive open online courses)	f	288	631	89	64
	%	27.09	59.36	8.37	6.02
Scholarships or fellowships for six months or more	f	306	639	63	62
	%	28.79	60.11	5.93	5.83
Pursuing master's/doctorate degrees	f	451	564	33	30
	%	42.43	53.06	3.1	2.82
National certification program	f	363	609	50	56
	%	34.15	57.29	4.7	5.27

Improving teaching competence is essential for improving learning outcomes, and teacher effectiveness is seen to be a strong predictor in improving student outcomes (Alda, Elejorde, & Alda, 2022). Teachers play an important role in the education system because they are responsible for shaping their students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Kavak, Seferoglu, and Kavak (2021) investigated the relationship between teaching competence and academic achievement in high school students. The study discovered a link between teaching competence and academic achievement, implying that teachers with higher levels of teaching competence are more effective at promoting student learning. Similarly, Fauth et al. (2019) investigated the effects of teacher competence on student outcomes and revealed that teacher competence was positively related to students' interests; self-efficacy was

positively related to student achievement. Teachers with a higher level of teaching competence were more effective in promoting student satisfaction, which led to improved student achievement, according to Iqbal, Hussain, Parveen, and Javaid (2019). The indicators used for teachers' competence in their study were content knowledge, presentation skills, student–teacher interaction, and modes of assessment. Teachers with a high level of teaching competence are better equipped to promote student learning, encourage positive learning environments, and support student diversity. Effective teaching and learning practices are critical for ensuring that students receive a high-quality education that will prepare them for success in life. Thus, prioritizing professional development activities that improve teaching competence is critical to improving student outcomes.

4. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers engage in professional development activities to equip them with the professional and personal competencies to effectively respond to the changing landscape of teaching and learning. As teachers engage in ongoing learning, they acquire knowledge, skills, and values to meet the demands of quality teaching and learning. However, the effectiveness of teachers' participation in continuing professional development (CPD) is contingent upon various factors that may affect teachers' motivation, negatively or positively, to actively engage in CPD opportunities. It is important to provide more support and adequate resources for teachers and to increase access to sustainable and needs-based professional development activities. By investing in responsive and needs-based CPD programs, educators and educational institutions can create a culture of continuous learning and improvement, resulting in positive outcomes for both teachers and students. This study is only limited to the perceived effectiveness of CPD from the perspective of the teachers who partook in the study. More collaborative research initiatives can be undertaken to identify the features, characteristics, and elements of CPD activities that have greater chances of increasing teacher learning and improving student outcomes.

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