

**CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) OF
TEACHERS IN GHANA: AN EXPLORATION OF BASIC SCHOOL
TEACHERS' PRACTICES AND EXPERIENCES**

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CERTIFICATE OF ORIGINAL AUTHORSHIP

I, Ellen Abakah declare that this thesis, is submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the award of Doctor of Philosophy degree, in the School of Education at the University of Technology Sydney.

This thesis is wholly my own work unless otherwise referenced or acknowledged. In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis. This document has not been submitted for qualifications at any other academic institution.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my late dad, Mr Thomas Keg Abakah. Dad, I feel accomplished having finished what you could not do because of your unfortunate demise. Wherever you are, I know you are proud of my achievement.

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GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Terms	Meanings
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
PD	Professional Development
INSET	In-service Training
SCT	Sociocultural Theory
ZPD	Zone of Proximal Development
PCK	Pedagogical Content Knowledge
TLMs	Teaching and Learning Materials
MOE	Ministry of Education
GES	Ghana Education Service
CoE	College of Education
UTDBE	Untrained Teachers Diploma in Basic Education
PTPDM	Pre-Tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management
CMPTR	Cabinet Memorandum on Policy on Teacher Education Reform
JHS	Junior High School
BECE	Basic Education Certificate Examinations
GNAT	Ghana National Association of Teachers
NAGRAT	National Association of Graduate Teachers

ABSTRACT

Enhancing teacher quality through continuing professional development (CPD) currently remains at the heart of many educational reforms and efforts to ensure quality education. However, in Ghana, there is little policy interest in CPD as a means of enhancing educational quality. The result has been that CPD available for Ghanaian teachers consists of fragmented practices, which attract limited teacher participation. This study thus sought to investigate the current CPD practices and experiences of basic schoolteachers, that is, teachers of students from grade 1 to grade 9 in the Central region of Ghana to provide evidence-based recommendations for the improvement and expansion of practice.

Sociocultural theory was used as the theoretical framework for this research, and I used constructivism as the research paradigm. I adopted a nested mixed method research design wherein a survey instrument was used within a much broader qualitative study. There were 522 teacher participants and nine key informants in this study. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data on the general CPD situations within the schools, while in-depth qualitative interviews were used to interrogate further teachers' CPD practices and experiences. The quantitative data were analysed using SPSS software and the qualitative data assessed using a thematic analysis approach.

It emerged from the study that continuing education, workshops, and in-service training dominated CPD practices of Ghanaian teachers. Though there was sufficient evidence of teachers' involvement in informal learning activities, such practices lacked recognition and hence rarely expanded into a broader notion of teacher professional development. Teachers also had varied learning needs for their development, including pedagogical content knowledge and ICT skills both for personal growth and for use in classrooms. While participation in CPD increased teachers' learning, some participants on the other hand, expressed discontent with programs that did not match their development needs. Effective CPD experiences were reported as ones that enabled integration of new knowledge in classroom practice, allowed active learning, increased self-directedness, and addressed significantly specific learning needs of teachers.

In its conclusion, the study proposes guidelines for the development of effective CPD for basic schoolteachers in Ghana, where teacher consultation and learning needs feature significantly. The study thus recommends the enactment and implementation of a more coherent CPD policy to guide teachers' practice. CPD for Ghanaian teachers must integrate more sociocultural models that foster collaboration and social interaction in learning.