

Continuous Professional Development Needs for In-service English Language Teachers (INSELTs) at Tertiary Level: An Integrative Review

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Abstract

This article presents an integrative review of the literature pertaining to the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) regarding the needs of in-service English language teachers (INSELTs) at the tertiary level. The review encompasses Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods previous studies related to CPD for INSELTs. Full texts were screened in the review process. The review brings together multiple themes of literature convened around three themes: (1) construct of CPD, (a) areas and principles of CPD, (2) need of CPD of INSELTs' training, (3) support for CPD programmes. The key findings of the review illustrate the research gap, to address English language teachers' needs in providing CPD training and professional learning opportunities to in-service teachers at tertiary level. This approach improvises the quality of teaching and learning needs of INSELTs. The results of the review demonstrate that; high quality professional development is considered as the soul of teaching practices. The review put forth recommendations that Education Leadership and Management (ELM) should plan Annual Mentoring Programmes (AMP) at different levels of teachers' training inland and abroad in terms of enhancing their professional competence of INSELTs. The study contributes theoretically with empirical findings in the field of applied linguistics. Additionally, article concludes a need to work on teacher education programmes at tertiary level.

Keywords: Continuous Professional Development, In-service English language teachers, teachers' professional learning, Teachers' strategic training, Teaching-learning Process.

Introduction

Professional development is an important foundational element to enhance the teaching-learning process, where it develops the teachers' capability, quality, and professionalism (Al Asmari, 2016; Luke & McArdle, 2009). In the recent past, CPD programmes have been emerging and progressing at a reasonable pace. It is worth mentioning that many educational institutions started to develop and some few took the lead and initiated their own CPD programmes so as to meet the teachers' training needs, especially for those teachers who are new to the field of teaching (Alan, 2015). Recently, the importance of professional development has increased manifold because of dynamic changes and demand for raising and improving the standard of quality education. CPD refers to the process of teachers' professional refinement that improves competencies and teaching skills (Altun, 2011). CPD activities imply the provision of opportunities that transform teachers to be well versed in their subjects in view of the context (Kelly, 2006). The notion of CPD refers to the idea of growth and serves as a long-term goal in facilitating the teachers' standing about understanding the pedagogical skills (Richard & Farrell, 2005). Guskey (2002) study on professional development and teacher change has stressed the significance of high-quality professional developmental opportunities in improving the education standards. Moreover, programmes related to professional development are considered to be the systematic effort in improving the teachers' classroom practices, belief, attitudes and achieving Students Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Likewise, the studies also stressed the need of training of in-service teachers for their professional development (Balbay et al., 2018; Borg, 2011; Collinson & Ono, 2001; Guskey, 2002; Hargreaves, 2000; Ifanti & Fotopoulou, 2011; Meng & Tajarosensuk, 2013). National studies also highlighted the need of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) of English language teachers. Dayoub and Bashiruddin (2012) have reported that in developing countries, there is a need for in-service teacher education for English language teachers. Similarly, Westbrook et al. (2014) have also informed a need to improve the understanding and teaching practices of English language teachers. In the similar manner, Azam (2009) identified that teachers' professional development is taken as the first step in terms of assuring quality teaching at higher level of education. As far as higher education in public sector organizations is concerned, these do not provide formal qualifications or training to English language teachers. Additionally, Zafar (2009) research also provided significant input for provision of in-service education to ELTs in the developing countries. Besides this, Mann (2005) reported the limited access of in-service teachers training. In addition to considering the teachers' learning, Bourn et al. (2023) and Shuja et al. (2022) research identified the need of professional development programmes and commitment to professional learning. There is little published data that explores English teacher's individual journey related to professional development in the developing countries like Pakistan (Dayoub & Bashiruddin, 2012). Considering the gaps as highlighted above regarding improving the pedagogical practices; expanding the knowledge of teaching skills; assuring quality in education; and

improving teaching practices, the present study will bridge this research gap by exploring and providing the theoretical construct for the need of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) at tertiary level in-service English language teachers. The findings of the study will be helpful in terms of evaluating the impact of CPD programmes. It also gives an insight to individual participants that how CPD programmes will be modified in future at tertiary level.

This work began with the construct of Continuous Professional Development, where the areas of professional development, principles of formulating policies for language teachers were highlighted. Then discussion proceeded to analyse in-service English language teachers training needs. Next, the theoretical underpinning of the reviewed literature for the support of CPD programmes were provided followed by the contribution of the present study. The conclusion highlighted the need of providing quality CPD programmes for English language teachers at tertiary level.

Methods

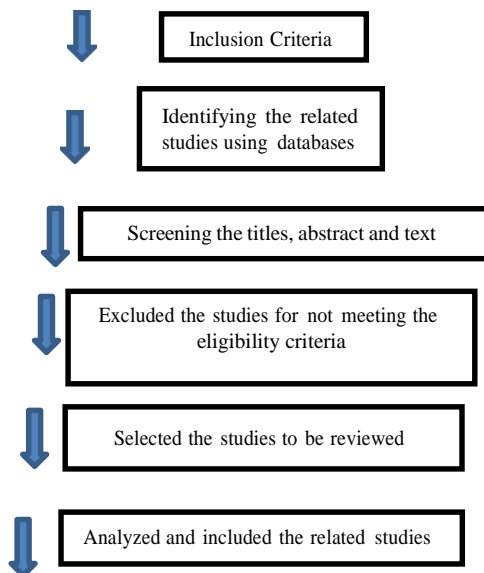
The article provided the theoretical review of studies that were summarized and synthesized following the search strategy and inclusion criteria for the data extraction.

Search strategy and inclusion criteria

The researchers search strategy was to identify and evaluate the literature of qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods that provided the analysis of the need of CPD training for INSELTs. Then, included the related studies in the reviewed paper. Additionally, the researchers independently reviewed the abstract, title and text for eligibility of the inclusion criteria of article selection as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1.

Flow Chart of the Present Study



Results

There is a considerable literature that shows a need to have better alignment in the learning process of in-service professional development programmes. A new century need is in terms of measurement and demonstration of teacher education outcome. However, there is a need of provision of teachers' professional development and learning opportunities (Balbay et al., 2018; Birenbaum & Rosenau, 2006; Cochran-Smith, 2000; Feiman-Nemser, 2001; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Plecki et al., 2012). In the literature of CPD, the relative importance of teachers' opportunities to be a part of communities that focus on professional practice. It helps in promoting professional growth and enhances teacher's learning and improves the classroom practices (Breen, 2018; Kagan, 1992; Torff & Sessions, 2008). Additionally, the paper indicates the training needs of university faculty in Pakistan, for instance: Communication Skills (CS), Classroom Management (CM), Usage of ICT, and Assessment Skills (AS). The literature review highlights challenges and limitations observed in conducting effective CPD programmes, for example the need for Long-Term Training (LT), the

Linkage between Theory and Practice (LTP), the Integration of Technology in Language Teaching (ITLT). The retrieved study result along with discussions were divided into three major themes.

Retrieved studies included in analysis and major findings

The retrieved articles were analyzed and major findings were presented in the following themes.

1. The construct of Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

The theme of teacher education in terms of professional development has been progressing in language teaching. Opportunities related to in-service teachers training are vital for the growth and development of teachers (Richard & Farrel, 2005). With reference to teacher's personal professional development, different areas of professional development are identified in Table 1. These areas improve the teacher's growth; performance skills; confidence level and helps in achieving the learner's better results.

Table 1.

Areas of Professional Development (Adapted from Richard & Farrell, 2005)

Areas of Considerations	
i.	Subject -specific knowledge.
ii.	Pedagogical skills or expertise.
iii.	Knowledge or awareness of oneself.
iv.	Learners' awareness.
v.	Expanding the knowledge of curriculum and materials.
vi.	Career-development or advancement.

To meet the 21st century demands of teaching and learning needs of learners, teachers' needs to understand and have strong foundational knowledge of CPD. It refers to the opportunities related to active learning based on improving teaching skills, learning the subject knowledge, gives opportunity in terms of collaborating, reflecting and problem solving (Nooruddin & Bhamani, 2019). Moreover, Table 2. highlights the important principles that literature has suggested to design policies and programmes for CPD of language teachers. These principles develop teachers' pedagogical skills, improves teachers' knowledge, and resolves classroom challenges and student achievement.

Table 2.

Principles of Designing Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Policies for Second Language Teachers (Adapted from Nooruddin & Bhamani, 2019)

Principles to Design Policies and Programmes for CPD	
i.	Rigorous, continuous, and connected practice.
ii.	Content specific teaching and learning.
iii.	Relevant and contextualized teaching of professional development.
iv.	Professional Development in promoting the teachers' collaborating skills.

CPD is considered as effective in terms of provision of time and learning opportunities for teachers to learn new knowledge, skills, strategies, classroom management skills (Banks & Smyth, 2011). It also ensures that teachers have accessibility to the updated knowledge and skills (Starkey et al., 2009). Importantly, it also refers to the process of teachers' learning or work under supervision that aims how to teach as per students' needs and expectation. It includes peer-coaching; study groups; action research; mentoring; teaching portfolios, in-service training, workshops, and team teaching (Hismanoglu, 2010). For Avalos (2011) CPD means to understand and learn the teaching process and transform the knowledge into practice for benefitting the learners' growth. The following construct of CPD is intended to teachers' professional growth, learn new methodologies of teaching, decision making skills, meeting learners' needs and expectation, course planning skills, reflection on classroom practices and gain vision or insightful teaching experiences. The construct of CPD has been deliberated and reflects various areas of professional development that are important for teachers, for instance: Subject-Specific Knowledge (SK), Pedagogical Skills (PS), Self-Awareness about Language Teaching (SLT), and Career Development (CD). Additionally, the article describes the Principles for Designing CPD Policies (PDP-CPD), including Rigorous and Continuous Practice (RCP), Content-Specific Teaching and Learning (CTL), and Promoting Collaboration among Teachers (PCT).

2. Need of in-service teachers training and continuous professional development

Inservice teachers training and Continuous Professional Development opportunities plays an important role in enhancing and improving the content knowledge of teachers. These prospects help in changing teaching practices in improving the quality standards of teaching and learning (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Smith & O'Day,1990). In recent years, the accountability of teaching in improving the standard of quality education at higher level has put forward issues related to professional development of teachers. Importantly, there is a need to support and guide teachers related to increasing the standard of teaching and promoting change in students' learning and classroom practices (Creemers et al.,2013). Additionally, in the context of improving the standards of teaching, the dominant approach is reflective practice for teachers' training and professional development (Golby & Viant, 2007).

Importantly, Drewes et al. (2017) addressed the concern of increasing teachers' knowledge that helps in gaining teachers' confidence and improves pedagogical skills and recommended teaching practices. Research shows that in the educational setting, teachers are the foundation and teaching profession requires CPD, devotion, enhancement of knowledge and refine pedagogical skills. Developing countries are struggling in improving the educational standards. Likewise, Pakistanalso struggling to improve the quality of education standard and provide training to in-service teachers, this step will helpin improving performance indicators of teachers and ensure to produce competent in-service teachers (Rizwan, 2021). Additionally, Ali et al. (2010) exploratory study also reported the training needs of in-service teachers at universities in Pakistan. Ali et al. study highlighted the four grey areas where university faculties need to be trained. These include, communication skills of teachers, skills to manage classrooms, technological usage in educational setting and assessment skills. Moreover, there is an increasing concern of further studies pertaining to needs assessment that public sector universities in Pakistan need to be addressed and policy makers may use the needs assessment research data before designing any training workshop. In addition, Ali et al. study recommended to launch CPD training programmes of adequate time duration for in-service university teachers. Similarly, Saleem and Ashiq (2020) research findings also revealed the training needs of in-service teachers and stressed to provide CPD opportunities in Pakistan, so that professionals communication and technological literacy skills will be improved. Research literature also revealed the positive impact of CPD programmes in the Pakistani context (Aslam, 2013; Dilshad et al., 2019; Mahmood & Iqbal, 2010; Nasreen & Odhiambo, 2018; Saleem et al., 2014; Shah et al., 2015; Singh et al., 2020).

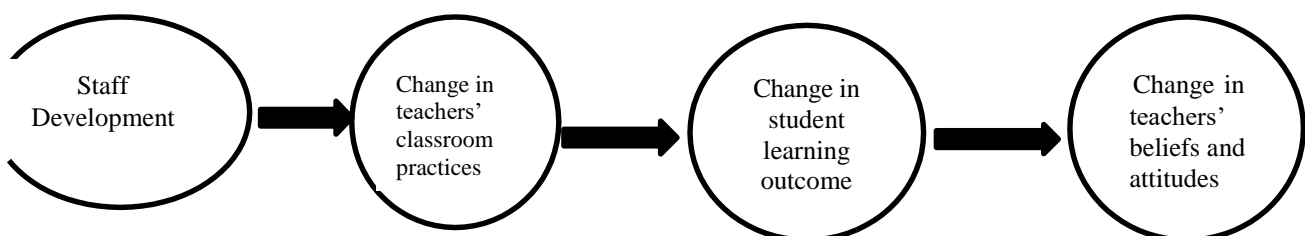
Kutaka et al. (2017) research also emphasized the importance of CPD opportunities that result in improving the performance of in-service teachers. Additionally, teachers need to be engaged in active learning, observing peers to improve their pedagogical skills, providing feedback towards teaching practices improves teachers' attitudes and beliefs. Lampert et al. (2019) study also suggested to conduct professional development training programmes that helps in increasing knowledge and skills of teachers. Furthermore, Roca-Campos et al. (2021) study also confirmed the effectiveness of teacher professional development programmes in changing teaching practices. Roca-Campos et al. study also reported the lack of sensibility and awareness of teacher development towards cultural and social factors of teaching practices. There is need to explore the impact of in-service teaching practices. It is now well established that CPD opportunities helps in improving the performance of in-service teachers.

3. Support of Continuous Professional Development of in-service English language teachers

Staff development or teacher development or continuous professional development_ it depends how we name the teachers' continuing education (Musanti,2005). Guskey (1986) states that staff development programmes, specifically designed in promoting student's achievement rate and endure change in teachers' perceptions, beliefs, and attitudes. Guskey has described the teachers' developmental process as shown in Figure 2. The present study model of the review process is illustrated in Figure 3. As the model was developed to support the major findings of this review. The study of Ashdown and Hummel-Rossi (2005) have concluded that professional development activities help in providing support to teachers in learning opportunities to excel and improves their pedagogical skills. Research findings of Burrowes (2015) study has emphasized that in-service teachers need opportunities of professional development. Desimone (2009) also stressed the need of professional development of in-service teachers.

Figure 2.

Process of Teachers' Development (Adopted from Guskey,1986, p.7)

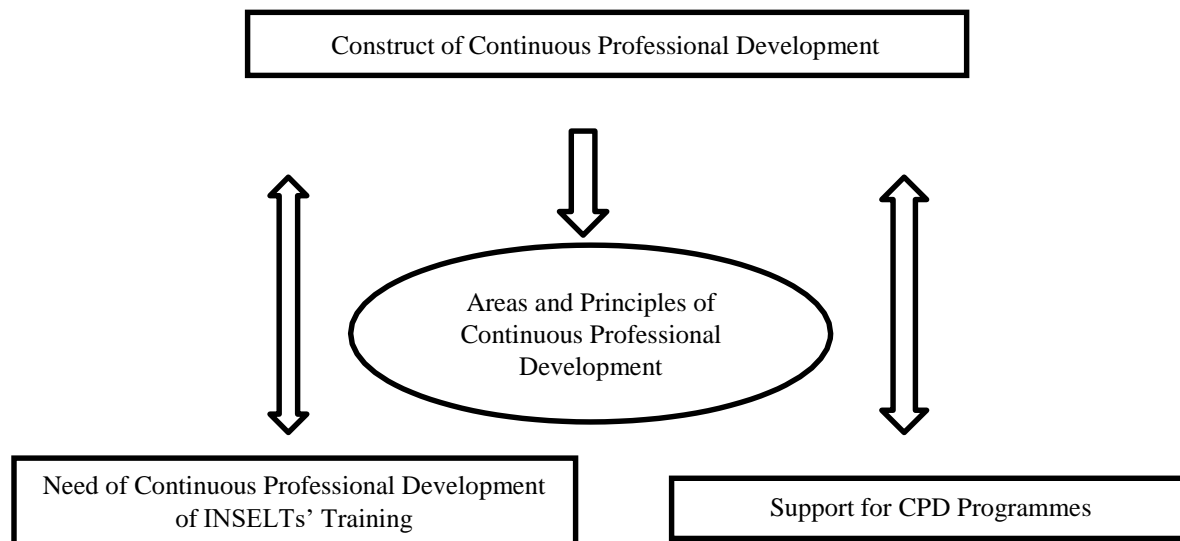


Modern trends in the field of English language teaching have restructured the requirements for English language teachers. To meet the current requirements, English teachers are encouraged to join in-service training for their professional development. Nevertheless, the current in-service professional development programmes are not as good as expected. Importantly, improvement in English language teachers' professionalism greatly depends upon in-service trainings. The need is to bridge the gap by providing in-service professional development opportunities (Meng & Tajaroensuk, 2013). Richard (2008) study has highlighted the greater need of professionalism in English language teaching owing to the worldwide requirements of competent English language teachers. Considering this, requirements of specialized knowledge including academic and practical experience, field work, professional trainings, reflective practice, adopting transformative approach, self-monitoring helps teachers to facilitate learning in their classroom's context.

Early researchers, Day (1999) and Hargreaves and Goodson (1996) also stressed the importance of professional development programmes and the need of in-service training. Korkmagil (2015) study has reported that Ministry of National Education offered in-service professional development programmes, but participants were unwilling to attend these programmes, despite its current needs. Moreover, the study also shed light on lack of teachers' autonomy and freedom in their teaching practices. Additionally, Korkmagil research findings has suggested to incorporate technology, develop, and adapt teaching material into language teaching.

Literature review highlighted difficulties and problems in the conduction of in-service Continuous Professional Development programmes. Ono and Ferreria (2010) have highlighted the importance of professional development programmes in improving teaching practices. Study has reported that still professional development models do not achieve the target learning goals. Ono and Ferreria study also pointed out that teaching practices do not change overnight, it requires long-term training for change. Ajani (2021) study also recommended activities at least once a term for professional growth of teachers and recommended that these activities should be focused on teachers' varied classroom needs. Villegas-Reimers (2003) study has highlighted some challenges and limitations of teacher preparation programmes includes: more emphasis on theory and little focus on practice; quality of curricula is not demanding, short duration of programmes and weak relation between program and teaching practices. Similarly, Grossman, Hammerness, and McDonald (2009) have informed the lack of connection between theory and practice and need of training programmes. Researchers have suggested to link the process of theory into practice and focused to refine the pedagogical skills. These practices improve the students' achievement rate. Ercan and Ivanova (2020) study have concluded that teachers need to develop their pedagogical skills in the field of English language teaching (ELT). Additionally, the current study of Zorba (2023) also identified the need for professional development of teachers. Another, recent study of Hubbard (2023) has reported that language teachers need to participate in a relevant community of practice. It is now well established that in-service Continuous Professional Development Programmes enhance teachers' pedagogical skills. INSELTs need to develop their professional skills, this is only possible when policy makers and administrators consider the responsibility of raising the standard of quality education.

Figure 3.
Present Study Model of Review Analysis



Discussion

The findings of the studies included in the review reported the need of continuous professional development training of in-service English language teachers. Mcknight (2018) study shed light on the need of CPD for in-service teachers, as it is a way to enhance organization's knowledge, improves teaching practices and learning behaviors. CPD programmes includes several factors that needs to be fulfilled, these are as follows: sustainable, well defined, content specific and iterative opportunities to excel and grow that directly lead to program success. Likewise, Burrowes (2015) also highlighted the need of CPD opportunities for in-service teachers in order to improve their classroom instructions and students' achievement rate. Burrowes qualitative study also emphasized the need of improving teachers' professional skills and provision of academic needs of the learners. Burrowes study also recommended a need of professional development activities and its practices to be evaluated. Similarly, Hill (2009) and Ennes et al. (2021) study stressed the need of investment in teachers' training programmes in improving teaching practices that helps in increasing teachers' confidence. Ennes et al. study also reported the lack of teachers' preparation in teaching the subject and emphasized educational sectors to employ professional development opportunities. Moreover, Craft (2000) study also informed the need of professional development of teachers so that teachers update and improve their skills. Moreover, researcher also highlighted the reasons for embarking professional development programmes, because these programmes, improves the job performance of individual teacher, enhance professional knowledge, promote the job satisfaction level, enable, and prepare teachers for change. Research findings of Cumming (2011) also highlighted that teachers need to improve their pedagogical skills. As CPD programmes is a key element of all teachers' statutory of responsibilities. These programmes enhance professional knowledge, skills, and improved teaching practices. Cumming study has concluded that effective CPD strategies are considered as powerful tool in overcoming current and future challenges. Likewise, Liu (2005) study also reported that some instructors still used lecture-based teaching methods. There is a need for English language instructors to improve their teaching practices. In the same way, the findings of Yilmaz (2017) study suggested that there is need to provide opportunities to EFL teachers related to in service education and training, so that they develop professionally. In this way, EFL teachers enhances their knowledge and skills. Yilmaz has reported that there is a still need to work effectively on educational outcomes and improving the standards of quality teaching. Additionally, Yilmaz also pinpoint that EFL teachers need to update their knowledge and teaching skills.

Contribution of Research

The present study contributes theoretically to the literature as it provides learning construct further regarding CPD of INSELTs at tertiary level. In addition, the present study enriches the literature with empirical evidence about the impact and need of continuous development programmes and its outcome with respect to INSELTs. The findings or results of the study provide grounds or evaluative information of CPD programmes, trainings to the related stake holders such as HEC, certifying universities offering professional development programmes, higher education institutions, ESL/EAP/EOP/ESP/EFL in-service practitioners to improve the quality of teaching and offering input for future

educational policy decisions with respect to INSELTs. The present review encourages teachers to identify the learner's need; inquire their own skills and expand the knowledge of teaching English Language Learners (ELL). Additionally, the review gives more attention to help INSELTs for developing their understanding about language aspects; skills of second language learning, discipline specific linguistic knowledge and its practical applications. Hence, the theoretical review is helpful to guide different stakeholders with respect to fulfill the teaching demand at the tertiary level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the targeted reviewed literature, it appears that professional development is an important foundational element to enhance the process of teaching and learning because, CPD trainings develop teachers' capability, and professionalism. Educational institutes and government should invest in CPD programmes in terms of improving the teaching quality and meet the learners' needs (Al Asmari, 2016; Luke & McArdle, 2009). The Present study found evidence that teachers' professional development programmes are indispensable in providing positive change in the classroom environment. These programmes also strengthen teacher's pedagogy as well as improve the quality of work and assist better the learning process of students (Acevedo 2013; Croft et al., 2010; Eliahoo, 2017; McFarland, 2014; Mico, 2019; Morewood et al., 2010; Ortactepe, & Akyel, 2015; Wayne et al., 2008; Yoon et al., 2007). However, the literature on the need of CPD training and programmes continues to expand. This kind of analysis helps to promote the professional growth in enhancing teacher's learning and improving the quality of teaching practices. Hence, reviewed literature explains the importance of in-service preparation programmes in improving the performance of teachers which ultimately result in student's growth and learning. The review highpoints the necessity for in-service teachers' training and CPD activities have been emphasized in hand research, highlighting that professional development opportunities play a significant role in enhancing teachers' content knowledge and effective improvement in teaching practices. The article emphasizes the importance of supporting and guiding teachers to improve the quality of education and student learning outcomes. The studies from developing countries, including Pakistan, are referenced to demonstrate the need for CPD programmes for INSELTs in these contexts. Moreover, the article discusses the support for CPD of INSELTs, emphasizing the role of professional development activities and programmes in providing platforms to teachers for improvement in their language competence and pedagogical skills. The article strongly recommends the implementation of Annual Mentoring Programs (AMP) and the improvement of Teacher Education Programmes (TEP) at the tertiary level. The review suggests that future studies could empirically be done with the same research objective in order to reinforce and triangulate the research findings.

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