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**Motivation to Participate in Continuous Professional Development:
A Study of Basic School Teachers in the Sagnarigu Municipality**



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Motivation to Participate in Continuous Professional Development: A Study of Basic School Teachers in the Sagnarigu Municipality

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Abstract

Purpose: This study assessed basic school teachers' motivation to participate in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in the Sagnarigu Municipality in the Northern Region of Ghana.

Methodology: The study adopted a descriptive survey design. Data was provided by 216 basic school teachers randomly drawn from selected basic schools in the Sagnarigu Municipality who responded to a semi-structured standardized questionnaire. Data was analysed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation and the inferential statistical technique of binary logistic regression with the aid of SPSS version 25.

Findings: The study found that 83.3% of teachers engaged in CPD activities like workshops, conferences, and mentoring within formal school settings. Key motivators included acquiring current skills, deepening subject knowledge, improving job prospects, introducing new technologies, increasing salary, and influencing school policy. Less motivating factors were compulsory or optional participation and social pressure. Importantly, motivation was significantly linked to actual participation, i.e., teachers who felt more motivated were more likely to engage in CPD activities, highlighting the role of intrinsic and professional incentives in driving continuous development.

Unique contribution to Theory, Policy and Practice: The findings of the study highlights the fact that basic school teachers main motivation to participate in CPD is to update their current skills and pedagogical knowledge. Thus, the study recommends that stakeholders such as the Ghana Education Service (GES) and Ministry of Education (MOE) should organize relevant CPD programmes targeting teachers' personal goals and growth more frequently and make it possible for teachers to participate as they are more likely to participate in CPD activities that are directly relevant to their teaching practice.

Keywords: *Basic School Teacher, Motivation to Participate, Continuous Professional Development, Sagnarigu Municipality*

1. INTRODUCTION

The call for teacher learning and professionalism has become a topical issue in recent times. This call is due to the fact that as society changes, so must our educational and school systems (Avidov-Ungar et al., 2021). Therefore, teachers, as the principal contributors to these systems, require learning in significant ways through teacher professional development (TPD) interventions, if they are to productively play their roles (Avidov-Ungar et al., 2021). CPD for teachers has been defined as a range of activities intended to enhance their knowledge, abilities, attitudes, expertise, and other traits Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD, 2014). This allows teachers to gain the skills and knowledge required to successfully navigate the complexities of modern educational systems (Pearman et al., 2021), thus improving teachers' classroom and school environment practices and hence learning (Arifin et al., 2024). Regardless of these widely known benefits of CPD, most teachers do not avail themselves to the opportunities provided for them to participate in CPD programmes (Abakah et al., 2022). This situation may be attributed to lack of or insufficient motivation on the part of teachers to participate in them.

Despite the minimal policy interest in teacher professional development activities in Ghana (Mereku, 2019), efforts are still being made to organize some CPD activities and programmes for teachers. The minimal interest in CPD in Ghana is seen in the fact that Ghana's implemented educational reforms and policies to improve quality education over the past decades fail to include teachers' CPD but had focused on restructuring the educational system, setting new educational standards and curricula, tightening the entry requirements into educational institutions, and introducing promotional examinations (Hall et al., 2015). Consequently, the low policy interest over the past decades may have also contributed to teacher lack of interest and motivation to participate in CPD activities and programmes, thus affecting the quality of teaching and learning, and students' performance in basic schools (Boakye, 2019) of which the Sagnarigu municipality is no exception. This calls for research on factors motivating teachers to participate in CPD. It is on this premise that the current study is conducted.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Teacher competence is critical for improving academic standards among students in basic schools in Ghana (Ghanney, 2020; Carter et al., 2020; Nkansah, 2021), thus attention has been directed toward its levels among teachers in elementary schools, with a focus on both essential generic and subject-specific skills (Mereku, 2019) essential for effective teaching and learning. Evidence reveal that approximately 90% of school children in Ghana are learning inadequately (Ministry of Education, 2012, Mereku 2019), and the incremental improvements in students' performances in

the annual Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) over the years have been only marginal (Ansong et al., 2015). While many other factors may contribute to the declining academic standards, the central role of teachers in promoting active learning among students cannot be over emphasized (Derakhshan et al., 2020). Quality professional development empowers teachers to make complex decisions, enhance problem-solving abilities, and improve pedagogical and content knowledge to foster students' learning (Sulaimon & Adebayo, 2024). Teacher professional development programmes play critical role in systemic reform, aiming to increase teacher knowledge, transform classroom practices, and enhance student achievement (Abakah et al., 2022). Therefore, teacher participation in CPD is critical to their quality and subsequently student performance. Despite existing research emphasizing the organization of teacher professional development programmes such as professional learning community (TLC), in recent times in Ghana, few studies (e.g., Appova & Arbaugh, 2018; Njenga, 2023; Abbas et al., 2025) examined important factors such as what motivates or influence teachers to participate in CPD activities. Examining these factors is important as it will enable us understand better the motivations of teachers and thus design and or redesign CPD programmes and make them relevant to teachers. It is in light of this research gap that the present study explored the factors that motivate basic school teachers in the Sagnarigu Municipality to participate in CPD.

1.2 Research Questions and objectives

The current study addressed the following research questions.

1. What motivating factors influence basic school teachers' participation in CPD programs?
2. What is the relationship between teachers' motivation to participate in CPDs and their actual participation?

Based on the above research questions, the main purpose of this study is to:

1. Assess factors that motivate teachers to participate in CPD programmes,
2. Examine the relationship between teachers' motivation to participate in CPDs and their actual participation

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The review focuses on motivating factors for participation in CPD programmes by basic school teachers.

2.1 Factors that motivate basic school teachers to participate in CPD programmes and activities.

Studies on CPD have repeatedly noted that instructors' engagement is driven by intrinsic

motivations, such as the desire to learn for personal fulfillment, to be recognized, or to better their performance. According to a recent study by Njenga (2023), instructors are intrinsically driven to participate in CPD for several reasons, such as the necessity to change classroom procedures and the desire to increase their teaching expertise. Motivation has been highlighted as a critical factor in learning and development in numerous studies. For professional development programmes to be effective, teachers must be motivated to participate in them. However, research has shown that certain teachers have struggled to benefit from CPD due to their insufficient motivation levels, as noted in studies by Abakah (2022), despite the significance of CPD for teachers.

A number of studies (e.g., Appova & Arbaugh, 2018; Nsenga, 2023; Zhang et al., 2021; Abbas et al., 2025) have been conducted on the motivation of teachers to participate in CPD programmes. The findings of these studies have given important perspectives on the several facets of teacher motivation in the framework of CPD, therefore augmenting the existing body of knowledge already in the area. These researchers have discovered some characteristics that might influence the motivation of teachers to participate in learning activities. The factors that influence teachers' motivation to participate in CPD include personal and professional factors specific to the individual teacher, as well as the broader school and environmental contexts, policy and education systems, and the quality of CPD content (Potera & Zabeli, 2022; Delahunty et al., 2022; Adu et al., 2023).

Other research (e.g., Potera & Zabeli, 2022, Delahunty, Shúilleabháin et al., 2022) have indicated that personality traits have the greatest impact on teacher motivation for CPD while other scholars (Adu et al., 2023; Appova & Arbaugh, 2018) indicated that school-related variables such as workload and time restrictions might influence teacher desire to engage in CPD. Teachers' opinion of the value of learning activities have also been found to significantly influence their desire to engage in CPD activities (kkarat & Charoenkul, 2023) when they perceive the programmes to be advantageous for their personal growth. According to Zhang et al. (2022), autonomy has a crucial role in increasing motivation. Teachers who experience autonomy are more capable of articulating their requirements and selecting the most effective method to participate in CPD. However, Acton (2021) found that in many schools, it is the school leaders who determine the needs of the teachers. This approach can undermine the autonomy of teachers and lead to decreased motivation for CPD.

Most of the aforementioned factors that motivate participation in CPD activities is in line with Bradley and Chohan (2024) proposal that instructors participate in CPD activities for several reasons, including the goal of lifelong learning, the aspiration for professional competence, remaining abreast of current advancements in their industry, career progression, or adhering to mandatory government rules.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The study adopted the descriptive survey design, rooted in the pragmatic philosophical assumption (Creswell & Clark, 2018). This design aimed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the motivation of basic school teachers to participate in CPD.

3.2 Participants

The sample consisted of 216 basic school teachers who were sampled randomly from selected schools in the study area using a proportional simple random sampling approach, where the sample was proportionally distributed among the selected schools. The sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) guide for sample size determination. Out of the 216 participants, 130 (60.2%) were male and 86 (39.2 %) were female. Age was captured under categories ranging from 20-29 to 50-59 with the 30-39 category being the highest with a 43.5%. A high percentage of respondents (81%) were married, 14.8% were single and the rest were either divorced or widowed. With regards to educational qualification, teachers' qualifications included Certificate, Diploma, Bachelor and Postgraduate degrees with 66% being Bachelor degree holders followed by Diploma holders (27.3%) and post graduate (6%). The average number of years of working experience was 10 years. Finally, subjects taught by teachers were 11 including English, Mathematics, science, social studies and ICT with 23.6% of teachers teaching English followed by 16.6% and 10.1% teaching mathematics and science respectively.

3.3 Data Collection Instruments

A semi-structured questionnaire adapted from previously published studies (e.g., Abakah, Widin et al., 2022; Yaqub et al., 2020; Nkundabakura et al., 2024) was used to collect data. Additional data collected included demographic information such as age, gender, years of experience, and professional qualification. The questionnaire consisted of items on factors that motivate teachers' participation in CPD programmes and activities. Sample items on factors that motivate teachers to participate in CPD programmes include "To help my students learn better", "to better develop myself as a teacher", and "To seek promotion". Respondents were expected to rate the extent to which they are motivated by the various factors on a scale ranging from very weak (1) to very strong (6). To ensure the suitability of the instruments for use, the instrument was pre-tested on a sample of 25 teachers from two schools in Savelugu district (a neighboring district). The instrument was deemed suitable for use in the study's context after the pre-test with the instrument yielding a Cronbach Alpha Coefficient of 0.79.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviation and inferential statistical techniques such as binary regression model, with the aid of Microsoft Excel and SPSS version 25.

3.5 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles as stipulated by relevant institutional review boards were adhered to in this study. The principles of honesty, integrity and respect for the well-being of the participants were upheld. Informed consent was obtained from each participant before data collection was done and confidentiality and anonymity were also assured and ensured as well as making participation voluntary.

4. RESULTS

Prior to examining the motivation of teachers to participate in CPD programmes, the study examined the issue of whether respondents ever participated in a CPD programme. Results showed that majority 83.3% (180) of the teachers ever participated in a CPD programme, while the remaining few had never participated in any form of CPD programme. The results revealed the specific CPD programmes basic school teachers mainly ever participated in were in-service training (77.8%), workshops and short courses, 166(76.9%), educational conferences, 57(26.4%), continuing education, (80) (37.0%), peer class observation, 111(51.4%), and coaching and mentoring activity within formal school arrangements, 108(50.0%).

4.1 Results Based on the objectives of the Study

The following sections present the results of the study based on its objectives.

4.2 Objective 1: Assessing factors that motivate teachers to participate in CPD Programmes

The study examined the motivation of teachers to participate in CPD. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which predetermined factors were important in motivating them to participate in CPD programmes. They rated this on a 6-point likert type scale ranging from 1= less important to 6 = very important. Results were computed based on the mean with a criterion value of 3.5 which was calculated by adding the values of all six points on the Likert scale (6+5+4+3+2+1=21) and dividing it by 6. Thus, a mean score below 3.5 indicated low motivation to participate and mean score equal to or greater that 3.5 indicated high motivation to participate.

As presented in Table 1, almost all the predetermined factors were important in motivating teachers to participate in CPD programmes with the exception of 3 factors - being made compulsory to participate (Mean= 2.75, SD =1.908), being made optional (Mean = 3.10, SD =1.782) and

participating in order to “satisfy social views and pressure” (Mean =3.31, SD =1.950). In effect, all the other factors including “To acquire current skills” (Mean = 4.62, SD = 1.913); “To increase my knowledge in the subject area” (Mean = 4.49 , SD = 2.044) “To get a more paying job later on” (Mean = 4.49 , SD = 1.843), “To be able to introduce new technologies” (Mean = 4.48, SD = 2.011), “To increase my salary in the near future” (mean = 4.46 , SD = 1.926), and “To enable me assist in shaping school policy”(Mean= 4.44, SD =1.954), among other factors were considered important in motivating teachers to participate in CPD programmes.

Table 1 Summary of factors motivating participation in CPD

Factors	Mean	Std. Deviation
It was compulsory for me to participate	2.75	1.908
To help my students learn better	4.29	2.096
Because it was made optional	3.10	1.782
To enable me assist in shaping school policy	4.44	1.954
To appreciate every aspect of my students	4.42	1.968
To better develop myself as a teacher	4.32	2.153
To increase my knowledge in the subject area	4.49	2.044
To please my family	3.58	2.024
To seek promotion in my career	4.38	2.096
To be able to introduce new technologies	4.48	2.011
To acquire current skills	4.62	1.913
To get a more paying job later on	4.49	1.843
To increase my salary in the near future	4.46	1.926
To satisfy social views and pressure	3.31	1.950

Note- Mean and SD determined on a rating scale of 1 to 6 (1= less important factor, 6 = very important factor)

4.3 Objective 2: Association between Motivation and Actual Participation in CPD

The research also examined whether there was a relationship between motivation and participation in CPD activities. This was deemed important as it reveals whether or not motivated teachers are more likely to participate in CPD activities compared to less motivated ones. To do this, binary logistic regression analyses were conducted on the data and this revealed a statistically significant association ($p < 0.05$). As shown in Table 2, it can be observed that, the majority 132(93.6%) of the teachers who were motivated to participate in any form of CPD actually did participated in a CPD programme or activity. From Table 2, teachers who were motivated to participate in CPD activities

(cOR=8.356, $p=0.000$, 95%CI= 3.621 to 18.798) were approximately 9 times more likely to participate in a CPD activity compared to teachers who were relatively less motivated.

Table 2 Binary Logistic regression result on Motivation and Participation in CPD

	Ever participated in any CPD			P-Value	95% CI	
	Yes	No	cOR		Lower	Upper
Are you motivated						
No	48(64.0%)	27(36.0%)				
Yes	132(93.6%)	9(6.4%)	8.356	0.000	3.621	18.798

Note-cOR= Crude Odds Ratio **CI**= Confidence Interval

5. DISCUSSION

This study sought firstly to assess factors that motivate teachers to participate in CPD programmes and secondly to examine the relationship between teachers' motivation to participate in CPD programmes and their actual participation in them. The results revealed that generally, a significant majority of basic school teachers (83.3%) in the Sanarigu Municipality participated in CPD programmes. Teachers participated in in-service training, workshops and short courses, educational conferences, continuing education, peer class observation, and coaching and mentoring activity within formal school arrangements in that order.

Factors motivating teachers to participate in CPD programmes were numerous including the need to acquire current skills, to increase one's knowledge in the subject area, to get a more paying job later on, to be able to introduce new technologies, to increase one's salary in the near future and to enable one assist in shaping school policy in that order in terms of significance. Factors considered not motivating included when participation is being made compulsory, being made optional and participating in order to satisfy social views and pressure.

On the relationship between teachers' motivation to participate in CPD programmes and their actual participation, the findings revealed a statistically significant association ($p<0.001$), implying that teachers who were motivated to participate in any form of CPD actually did participated in a CPD programme or activity. These findings were generally consistent with previous findings and have implication for education and practice.

5.1 Factors that motivate teachers to participate in CPD programmes

The primary motivation for participants to engage in any form of CPD was the need to acquire up-to-date skills. This finding is consistent with Balta et al. (2023) which found that teachers are more likely to be motivated to participate in CPD programme when they perceive that the programme will improve their skills and fulfill their professional needs. Similarly, Dixit (2022) emphasized

the importance of relevant and connected content in CPD programmes to enhance teacher motivation. He suggested that when CPD programmes align with teachers' learning goals and positively impact student achievement, they can effectively foster motivation among educators. Numerous other studies confirm the significance of CPD in enhancing teachers' skills, enriching their experiences, and increasing their motivation to participate in such programmes. For instance, Delahunty et al. (2022) emphasized the importance of programme relevance as a factor influencing teacher motivation for CPD. Alemayehu (2021) also highlighted that well-designed CPD programmes may not be effective unless they offer relevant content that supports teachers' practices. Similarly, Perry et al. (2022) suggested that several aspects, such as programme content, format, and delivery method, should be considered to engage teachers in CPD.

Other important factors driving basic school teachers' participation in CPD programmes in the Sagnarigu municipality included the goal of increasing knowledge in specific subject areas and the desire for better-paying jobs. These factors encompass enhancing teaching skills, gaining a deeper understanding of the teaching profession, addressing challenges associated with the profession and subject matter, and striving to become successful teachers (Almazroa & Alotaibi, 2023).

Furthermore, the findings align with previous research such as Potera and Zabeli (2022) which emphasized that personal factors have a greater influence on enhancing teacher motivation for CPD activities and programmes compared to other factors. Similarly, studies such as Butt et al. (2021) and Delahunty et al. (2022) highlighted the significant role of personal factors in motivating teachers to participate in CPD activities. Personal fulfillment emerges as a crucial factor driving teachers' motivation toward CPD.

The fact that factors such as “when participation is being made compulsory”, and “participating in order to satisfy social views and pressure” were considered not motivating is generally consistent with previous findings. For example, it is consistent with the findings of Zhang et al. (2022) which indicated that autonomy has a crucial role in increasing motivation and that teachers who experience autonomy are more capable of articulating their requirements and selecting the most effective method to participate in CPD. Similarly, it is consistent with the finding of Acton (2021) that in many schools, it is the school leaders who determine the needs of the teachers and that approach could undermine the autonomy of teachers and lead to decreased motivation to participate in CPD. This finding together with the finding that teachers are not motivated to participate when CPD activities are made optional implies that flexibility in CPD participation motivates teachers or that they value it when it comes to participating in CPD programmes.

5.2 Implications of the findings

The findings of the study imply that basic school teachers in the Sagnarigu Municipality generally participate in CPD programmes. This is evident from the high percentage (83.3%) of participation. The findings also revealed that numerous factors especially relating to personal goals and growth motivate teacher participation in CPD while being made compulsory or optional both do not motivate participation. Thus, stakeholders such as the GES and MOE need to organize relevant CPD programmes targeting teachers' personal goals and growth more frequently and create a flexible and supportive environment for teachers to participate.

5.3 Conclusion and Recommendations

This study provides valuable insights into the factors motivating basic school teachers to participate in CPD programmes. Motivational factors identified, such as the perceived relevance of CPD programmes, opportunities for professional growth, and a supportive school culture, emphasize the importance of creating an environment that encourages and values continuous learning. The positive impact of CPD on teacher productivity, as evidenced by improved work outputs and student performance, underscores the potential benefits of investing in teachers' continuous learning. The study suggests that efforts to enhance CPD should be aligned with recognized motivational factors while addressing existing barriers to participation.

Based on the findings of the study, several recommendations are proposed. This includes the following.

1. GES and MOE should organise relevant and high-quality CPD programmes focusing on current pedagogical and technological skills for teachers as they are more likely to participate in CPD activities that are directly relevant to their teaching practice and that offer new insights and strategies for improving student learning outcomes.
2. Stakeholders should provide adequate resources and time as teachers are more likely to participate in CPD activities if they have the necessary resources and time to do so.
3. Stakeholders should make CPD activities flexible and accessible as teachers are more likely to participate in CPD activities if they are flexible and accessible, but not compulsory or optional. Therefore, it is important to offer a variety of CPD formats, including online and in-person options, as well as flexible scheduling to accommodate the needs of teachers.

It is believed that by implementing these recommendations, school administrators and policymakers can help to enhance the motivation of basic school teachers to participate in CPD activities, leading to improved teaching practices and better student learning outcomes.

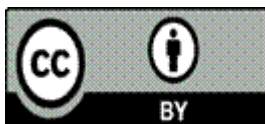
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