Institutional Practices Towards the Continuous Professional Development of Primary School Teachers

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Abstract

This study explores the role of school academic coordinators and their strategies in continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers. This qualitative research adopts a case study approach to gain deep insights into academic coordinators' strategies and challenges regarding effective CPD. Data for this study is collected through semi-structured online interviews from N=09 primary school coordinators from different campuses of private schools in Karachi using criterion sampling techniques. Thematic analysis was carried out from the transcription to find the themes. The study results revealed that barriers to effective implementation include a lack of interest, insufficient resources, and lack of technical skills among trainers. The findings underscore the importance of effective CPD and its implementation, highlighting challenges and suggesting strategies such as regular pre-job and during-the-job systematically interactive CPD training sessions. This study provides a deep understanding of the CPD model for curriculum developers, school coordinators, school teachers, and school management to elevate the standard of education in their schools by adopting a practical CPD approach.

Keywords: Primary Education, Continuous Professional Development (CPD), Pedagogical Strategies, Educational Institutions, Teacher Skills.

Introduction

Education forms the basis for a nation's future advancement toward prosperity. This advancement can be significantly amplified when accompanied by a proficient, inspired, and capable teaching workforce (Darling & McLaughlin, 2011; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Poekert, 2011). However, the challenge, particularly in a developing nation like ours, is that the teaching profession often needs more recognition for being a stable 'career' for the majority (Halai, 2007). The Pakistani private schooling system minimizes requiring professional certification as a prerequisite for hiring new teachers (Mooman et al., 2023; Suhag et al., 2017). Consequently, the significance of pre-service training and qualifications is often disregarded, resulting in teaching being perceived as temporary (Nooruddin & Bhamani, 2019; Fayaz et al., 2023). Hence, the role of school leaders, particularly head teachers, becomes crucial in orchestrating Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programs for such educators (Day, 2009; Leithwood et al., 2010; Thoonen et al., 2012; Buriro et al., 2023).

Professional Development, which is organized and guided activities for teachers to improve their teaching skills. It's important to note that "teaching ability" includes various skills like

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communication, modeling, instruction, and assessment but excludes brief training on specific technology tools or curriculum updates (Samad & Lashari, 2023). CPD is about enhancing teaching skills, not just knowledge or updates about school policies (Education Endowment Foundation, 2021). Continuous Professional Development (CPD) entails an ongoing, deliberate, and lifelong journey during which educators strive to enhance their personal and professional attributes (Fayaz et al., 2023). This process aids teachers in improving their expertise, capabilities, and methodologies, enabling them to enhance their schools' environment and their students' educational experiences (Saeed & Akhtar, 2021; Suhag et al., 2023). Whitehouse (2011) identified six fundamental features of effective continuous professional development (CPD) for school educators. These include aligning with the genuine needs of both teachers and students, maintaining continuity (Fayaz et al., 2023), focusing on subject-specific content, utilizing assessments of classroom dynamics and methods, promoting bi-directional communication to enhance effective practices, and leveraging external expertise for added benefits (Buriro et al., 2023; Fayaz et al., 2023; Samad & Lashari, 2023; Suhag et al., 2017).

Effective educators significantly influence student achievement throughout the academic year (Araujo et al., 2016). In the rapidly evolving technological age, educators must continually enhance their knowledge, abilities, and perspectives to effectively cater to the demands of 21st-century students and education methods (Nooruddin & Bhamani, 2019; Jillani et al., 2024). The obstacles faced in teachers' professional development arise from various sources (Khemchand et al., 2024). As Yitayew (2013) noted, these challenges encompass difficulties, complexities, barriers, or circumstances that impede achieving desired outcomes in teachers' advancement.

Researchers suggest that professional development (PD) programs are most effective when they address real-world challenges that teachers face in the classroom rather than focusing on abstract educational theories (Kiran et al., 2024). Teachers prefer hands-on PD sessions that enhance their knowledge of academic subjects and demonstrate practical classroom techniques they can apply in their teaching. Often, teachers are offered PD in areas unrelated to their everyday teaching practices, expecting them to make connections independently (Pervaiz et al., 2024). Teachers need practical solutions and relevant learning materials for their students. Therefore, PD policies should prioritize the teaching and learning of pertinent content (Buriro et al., 2023). A study by Supovitz et al. (2000) found that science teachers who received over 80 hours of PD promoting inquiry-based approaches applied these strategies more effectively than those with shorter training sessions. Additionally, the study showed that more rigorous and continuous PD for teachers led to better student achievement in subsequent years (Nooruddin & Bhamani, 2019; Buriro et al., 2023; Bushra et al., 2024)

Many teachers in low- and middle-income countries need more lack skills to teach students effectively. Research across seven African countries found that only a tiny percentage of fourth-grade teachers had the minimum knowledge required for teaching language, and even fewer had adequate math teaching knowledge (Bold et al., 2017). Professional development (PD) is the primary global approach to enhance teachers' skills. However, the effectiveness of PD programs varies widely (Popova et al., 2022; Fayaz et al., 2023). Some studies show positive impacts, such as improving literacy instruction in Uganda and enhancing teacher evaluation practices in Liberia (Piper & Korda, 2011; Kerwin & Thornton, 2021).

Conversely, other programs, like those in China and Costa Rica, have shown no improvement or adverse effects on teacher knowledge and student outcomes (Loyalka et al., 2019; Berlinski & Busso, 2017; Samad & Lashari, 2023). This variability makes it challenging for policymakers and practitioners to design effective teacher PD programs (McEwan, 2015; Evans & Popova, 2016). A

comprehensive examination of literature from affluent nations is not the focus of this study. Nonetheless, it could be beneficial to spotlight recent research on professional development for in-service teachers in the United States. The United States invests nearly $18,000 per teacher annually and dedicates 19 days of teacher time to yearly training (TNTP, 2015). Munir (2020) found that in Pakistan, Continuing Professional Development (CPD) in education remains a relatively new concept, with limited literature available locally on the subject. There needs to be a significant knowledge gap in comprehending the true worth of teacher development through mentoring within the CPD framework.

Research Questions
1. What specific strategies do school coordinators use to enhance teachers' professional development?
2. How do training programs, workshops, and other activities led by coordinators influence teachers' skills and instructional practices?
3. School coordinators employ what effective practices to foster ongoing teacher development, and what challenges do they encounter in this process?

Literature Review
Training without support is like a paddy field without water. In a paddy field, water is the support. It helps the paddy to grow correctly. If it grows properly, it will produce rice. Without support, there will be no result (Mahruf et al., 2012). In the 1960s, professional development became widely established and essential within the United States, particularly as a critical component of school staff training in the American education system (Murphy, 2011). Following its inception, professional development has evolved into a global practice utilized for personal and professional advancement, extending beyond education to various fields.

Research suggests that professional development (PD) opportunities aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) can be categorized into two main types: informal and formal (OECD 2009). Informal PD involves education and training where no formal qualification is granted, often pursued independently by individuals (e.g., self-learning). On the other hand, formal PD is obtained through accredited institutions such as universities, leading to recognized qualifications (OECD 2009; ICSA 2019). This formal category may include vocational education programs resulting in certifications or credentials. PD can also take the form of in-service programs, which may be formal or informal. On-the-job PD focuses on developing or refining process skills, known as "leadership skills" or "task skills." Examples of process skills include "effectiveness skills," team functioning skills, and "systems thinking skills" (Garet et al. 2001). Informal and formal PD demands personal commitment and continuous learning efforts (Havea & Mohanty, 2020).

The Role of Coordinators in Schools
Coordinators handle logistical aspects of the practicum, such as scheduling visits to remote schools, arranging timetables, and coordinating meetings between stakeholders. Coordinators play a crucial role in ensuring the quality of the professional experience by facilitating observation, feedback, hands-on activities, and reflection sessions with the help of professional leadership skills (DeBiase et al., 2018). They also oversee the moderation process for evaluating student performance. Coordinators advocate for student teachers' needs and provide support throughout the practicum. They offer guidance, encouragement, and assistance in addressing challenges that may arise (Lashari et al., 2023a; Buriro et al., 2023). Coordinators contribute to student teachers'

and supervise teachers' professional development by organizing training sessions, sharing resources, and fostering a culture of continuous learning (Martinez & Coombs, 2001). Another critical role of a good coordinator is to develop the required skills in teachers to make them feel satisfied with their job. Saleem et al. (2021) highlighted that CPD commences when a teacher joins an organization, and it is a lifelong process that enhances teachers' level of expertise, potential, skills, and knowledge. One of the benefits of CPD is that it improves job satisfaction levels. For supervision, evaluation, and professional development to succeed, the social context of the school must support these activities. The principal can utilize formal and informal structures within the school to create an environment that empowers teachers rather than obstructing their efforts (DiPaola & Wagner, 2018).

Sustainable Development Goals and Education
The educational objectives outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) surpass those of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). SDG 4 not only encompasses goals related to pre-primary (4.2) and primary education (4.1) but also expands its scope to encompass the provision of "lifelong learning opportunities. (Bushra et al., 2023)" This broader perspective includes a focus on technical and vocational training as well as tertiary education (4.3), with a specific aim to equip youth with the necessary skills for employment, decent jobs, and entrepreneurship (4.4) (Fayaz et al., 2023; Buririo et al., 2023; Bushra et al., 2023). Furthermore, it recognizes the existing barriers to education, particularly for marginalized groups, highlighting the gender gap (4.3, 4.5, and 4.6) and vulnerable populations (4.5, 4.7, 4. a) that are at risk of being left behind (Bhattacharya et al., 2018).
Education and training-based professional development enhance individual capabilities and boost workforce productivity. It elevates workforce quality across various sectors such as education, healthcare, economy, environment, and human rights, thereby contributing to robust human resource development crucial for sustainable growth (Bushra et al., 2024; Buriro et al., 2023). The absence of professional development threatens achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined in the 2030 Development Agenda. In the context of the SDGs, professional development is essential across five key sectors: education, health, economy, environment, and human rights. Given the pivotal role of these sectors in ensuring societal well-being, professional development serves as a roadmap for accomplishing all 17 SDGs by 2030, fostering global collaboration between developed and developing nations. Notably, SDG 4 emphasizes "quality education," aiming to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Professional development within education improves educational quality and aligns with achieving SDG targets (Havea & Mohanty, 2020).

Figure 1: Sustainable Development Goal- 4

State of Teachers' Education in Pakistan

Out of the total 313,418 educational institutions in Pakistan, the majority, 227,506 (73%), are formal schools ranging from primary to higher secondary levels. Additionally, there are 43,613 (14%) religious schools or deeni madaris, 25,106 (8%) non-formal basic education institutes, 10,087 (3%) education foundations, 4,182 (1%) technical and vocational institutes, and 2,487 (1%) degree colleges. Furthermore, the country hosts 220 universities and 217 teacher training institutes. During the academic year 2021-22, Pakistan's Teacher-School Ratio (TSR) stood at 5. Notably, the province of ICT exhibited the highest TSR, boasting 15 teachers per school, while both Sindh and Balochistan reported the lowest TSR, each with only 3 teachers per school in their respective regions (Pakistan Education Statistics, 2022).

Figure 2: Teacher school ratio
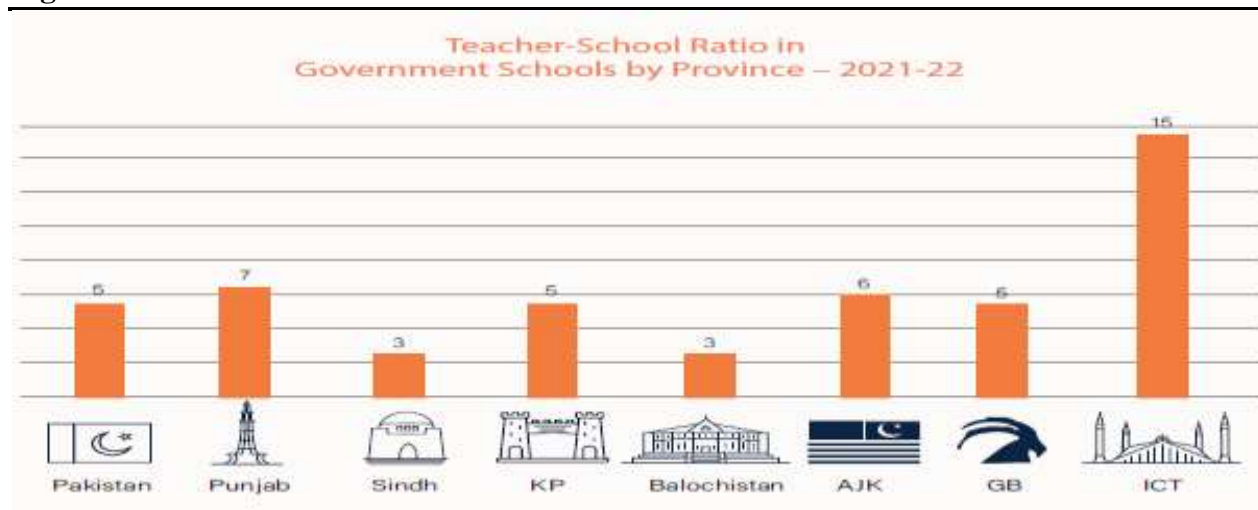
National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPSTs)

The National Professional Standards for Teachers were launched by the Pakistani government in 2009. Basic components of the National Professional Standards for Teachers (NPSTs) implemented in Pakistan encompass various aspects such as subject knowledge, human

development, Islamic ethics, instructional strategies, assessment methods, classroom environment, communication skills, technology integration, collaboration, continuous professional growth, code of conduct, and English language teaching (Lashari et al, 2018; Lashari et al., 2023; Lashari & Umrani, 2023). While these standards form the foundation of quality teaching, there is uncertainty regarding their consistent implementation and adherence (Munawar, Sattar, & Gull, 2020). In order to uphold and improve the quality of teacher education, the Higher Education Commission (HEC) has established the National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education (NACTE) as an independent entity (Salman et al., 2022) tasked with accrediting all teacher education programs provided by both public and private sector institutions across the country (National Accreditation Council for Teacher Education, 2009).

Continuous Professional Development Status Globally
The Education 2030 Framework for Action advocates for nations to dedicate a minimum of 4–6 percent of their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or at least 15–20 percent of their overall public spending towards education (World Bank, 2021). In 2014, a consultation by the Department for Education (DfE) found that many teachers felt the quality of available development opportunities varied widely. They thought professional development (CPD) was often seen as just attending classes or listening to boring talks with lots of slides (Fayaz et al., 2023). They believed that teacher development didn't always focus enough on what students needed and wasn't always consistent or based on actual teaching experiences. Also, there wasn't enough evidence about how different types of teacher training affected teaching quality. These concerns match with the findings of a 2013 OECD survey, which showed that while many teachers in England attended classes and workshops, they were less likely to engage in more profound activities like research or getting formal qualifications. They also spent less time overall on professional development (Cordingley et al., 2015).

State of Continuous Professional Development in Pakistan
Awareness of CPD has been familiarized with our homeland for a few years. Despite the comprehensive attention given to teachers' training and professional development within educational policies and reforms since 2000, the quality of education in public schools continues to face substantial disapproval. This could stem from inadequacies in executing policy decisions and shortcomings in implementing teachers' professional development initiatives (Munir, 2020). Teacher professional development (TPD) in our country typically involves attending externally organized training events such as workshops, conferences, seminars, or meetings, usually coordinated by the central office or other external bodies (DSD, 2006; 2007a; Mohammad, 2004; Zareen, Mahmood, & Mahmood, 2013). However, this conventional approach is criticized for its limited scope, as it fails to establish meaningful connections with daily classroom teaching and learning activities and lacks ongoing support and guidance in the workplace (Anwar, 2014; DSD, 2014; 2009; Guskey, 2000; Shehzad, 2014; Zareen et al., 2013).
The Department of School Education Development (DSD) in Punjab took on the responsibility of teachers' professional development for teachers' improvement and quality education in 2004, initiating a continuous professional development (CPD) framework in 2006 aimed at enhancing teachers' skills (Anwar, 2014; DSD, 2007a, 2007b; Mahmood & Iqbal, 2010; Shehzad, 2014; Zareen et al., 2013). Unlike old and outdated training models due to their ineffectiveness, this framework integrates in-service education and training with follow-ups, on-spot support,

guidance, mentoring, supervision, monitoring, evaluation, incentives, and career development (DSD, 2010; 2007a; 2006; Zareen et al., 2013).

Methodology and Procedures

The chosen research design for this study is a case study, which is aligned with the study's topic. This research aims to investigate the strategies and challenges primary school coordinators encounter in providing continuous professional development (CPD) for primary teachers. The selection of the case study method is justified by Creswell (2013), who emphasizes its suitability for exploring the subjective experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of individuals within specific contexts. By employing the case study approach, researchers can delve deeply into the experiences and practices of primary school academic coordinators within the formal education system. This methodology enables a comprehensive examination of the challenges, strategies, and distinctive perspectives of coordinators involved in primary school teacher training and CPD initiatives.

Additionally, the case study design facilitates the collection of rich, detailed data through in-depth interviews with a limited number of participants, ensuring a thorough understanding of the research topic. This research design is beneficial for exploring individual experiences. It provides a framework for understanding the unique perspectives and subjective realities of coordinators, teachers, and subjects within the context of teacher education and CPD. Its flexibility and iterative nature allow researchers to explore emerging themes and insights.

This study focuses on primary school academic coordinators operating in Karachi. The sample size selection is driven by comprehending the strategies and challenges these coordinators encounter. Specifically, the sample comprises ten coordinators from primary school campuses affiliated with FISS, a reputable chain of school systems in Karachi. This selection is based on FISS's distinctive features, including its extensive network of 142+ campuses nationwide, a student population exceeding 34,000, a qualified and trained faculty, and its non-profit status catering to the middle-class community. These characteristics allow for a closer examination and in-depth research into the role of primary school coordinators in teacher CPD within this context. Statistical considerations do not guide the sample size determination but rather by the principle of saturation, wherein new information or themes emerge from the existing data (Guest et al., 2006). This ensures that the collected data is comprehensive and provides a holistic understanding, facilitating a detailed exploration of primary school coordinators' strategies, challenges, and experiences in teacher CPD within the specified context.

This research uses various instruments for data collection, including audio recorders, written notes, and potentially video recordings with participants' consent. In addition to audio recording, written notes are taken during interviews as a complementary tool for capturing essential details, non-verbal cues, and contextual observations (Fontana & Frey, 2005). They provide additional layers of information that may need to be fully captured through audio recording alone. The data from the semi-structured interviews underwent thematic analysis, a widely utilized qualitative research method (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The thematic analysis commences with immersing oneself in the data through repeated readings of transcripts, audio recordings, and written notes (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The thematic analysis commences with immersing oneself in the data through repeated readings of transcripts, audio recordings, and written notes (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This initial familiarization stage enables the researcher to grasp the data comprehensively and identify initial patterns or themes emerging from the participants' narratives. Coding involves systematically

organizing data by assigning labels or codes to segments of text representing significant ideas, concepts, or patterns (Saldana, 2016). During coding, the researcher actively seeks similarities and differences within the data to capture the full range of experiences and perspectives expressed by the participants. To present the findings from the thematic analysis in a clear and organized manner, quotes and excerpts from participants' interviews support and illustrate the identified themes (Saldana, 2016).

Figure 3: Thematic Analysis, Semi-structure interview from primary school coordinators
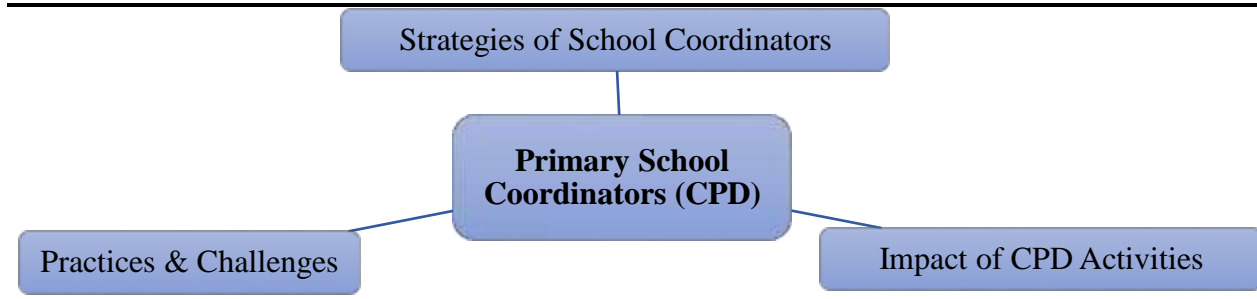
Semi-structured Interview of Coordinators

The article examines semi-structured interviews held with ten primary school coordinators affiliated with a well-known chain of school systems in Karachi, with a focus on key themes:

Strategies of Primary School Coordinators

This theme sheds light on the remarkable efforts of primary school coordinators to enhance the quality of education and the teaching-learning process. As per the need and context, different coordinators modify their approaches to get the desired results, considering the hurdles of practical implementation.

One of the participants highlighted that "we believe in the effectiveness of interactive training sessions as a key strategy employed by us for CPD. These sessions involve hands-on activities, group discussions, and collaborative learning experiences, providing teachers with practical skills and knowledge." One of the participants said, "Additionally, coordinators emphasized the importance of utilizing technology-enhanced learning approaches, such as online training sessions and virtual workshops, to cater to the diverse learning needs of teachers. During the interview, one of the participants mentioned, "by leveraging digital platforms, coordinators ensure accessibility and flexibility in CPD delivery, enabling teachers to engage in professional development activities at their convenience."

Another participant emphasized that "we try to adopt some new approaches. Coordinators facilitate peer coaching and mentoring programs, fostering a supportive learning environment where teachers can exchange ideas, share best practices, and receive constructive feedback from their colleagues." The coordinators serve as relational leaders and prioritize establishing trusting relationships among various stakeholders in their schools. They emphasize effective communication, actively engaging with school principals and stakeholders while listening attentively to identify common interests and foster collaboration. Creating for interaction and reflection facilitates meaningful dialogue and promotes a cohesive and supportive school environment (Sanders et al., 2019). Rajendran et al. (2023) stated that CPD activities involve training workshops, learning conferences, online courses, self-directed study material, mentoring, collaborative learning, and other relevant practical activities that give lots of learning experiences. These practices foster teachers' modern teaching skills, content knowledge enrichment,

and instructional technologies, keeping students' requirements, issues, and contemporary educational needs in view.

Through these collaborative initiatives, coordinators empower teachers to enhance their skills, instructional techniques, and overall teaching effectiveness, ultimately contributing to improved student outcomes and academic success.

Figure 4: Strategies of coordinators
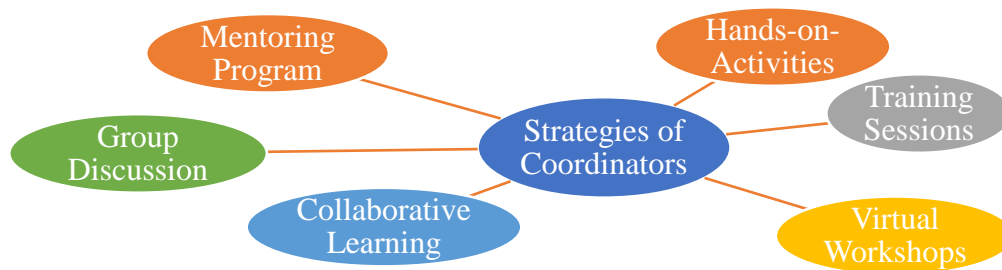
Impact of CPD Activities

This theme offers a profound exploration into the vital role of academic coordinators because by the effort of the academic coordinators in the form of different activities such as training sessions, hands-on activities, mentoring, etc., a positive impact is produced that is supporting and helpful to make the CPD successful.

One of the participants emphasized that "the positive impact of CPD activities on teachers' skills and teaching effectiveness, highlighting that CPD enables teachers to stay updated with current standards, deliver high-quality teaching, enhance student outcomes, and increase motivation and confidence."

Another coordinator elaborated "CPD equips teachers with specialized skills in utilizing digital tools and technologies, facilitating the integration of technology-enhanced learning approaches into their teaching practices." During the interview, the participant mentioned "this reflects a holistic improvement in instructional techniques, with teachers incorporating interactive and student-centered approaches to foster active learning and student collaboration."

Musonda et al. (2020) discussed that if teachers are engaged in CPD activities effectively, they are more active in teaching and learning. It improves their critical thinking, evaluative, and analyzing skills, allowing them to gain knowledge for problem-solving and situation handling.

Another significant aspect contributing to educators' effectiveness, job satisfaction, and retention in the profession is Continuous Professional Development (CPD). This mechanism enhances educators' pedagogical abilities, knowledge, competencies, skills, and motivation levels throughout their professional lifespan. (Rajendran et al., 2023).

Overall, CPD programs play a pivotal role in teachers' professional growth and development, contributing to creating dynamic and conducive learning environments that promote meaningful and impactful learning experiences for students.

Figure 5: Impact of CPD
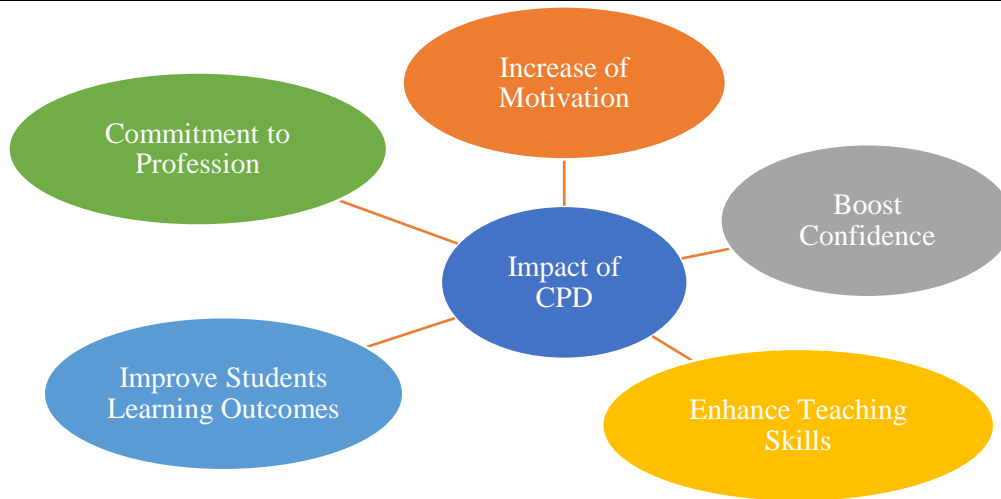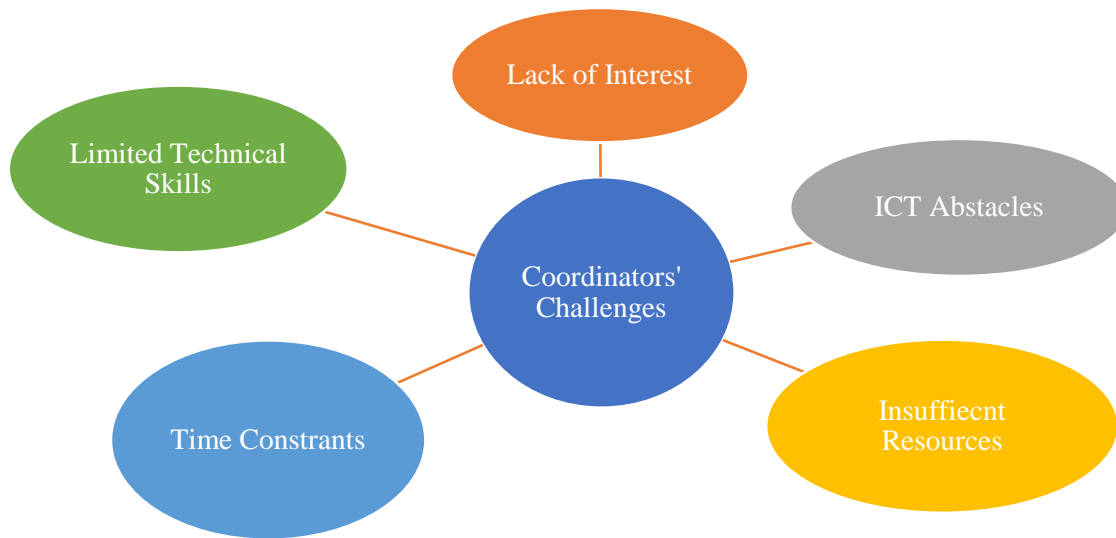

Challenges Faced by Academic Coordinators

This segment explores academic coordinators' challenges in promoting Continuous Professional Development (CPD) among teachers, shedding light on the complexities and strategies employed to overcome them.

One coordinator pinpointed "lack of teacher interest, limited technology awareness, and inadequate facilities pose significant challenges." This elucidates the multifaceted nature of obstacles, from teacher engagement to technological limitations, impeding effective CPD implementation. One of the causes of the lack of teacher interest is traditional resources, which create boredom among teachers. Another coordinator elaborated "time constraints issue among staff further hinder CPD initiatives." This underscores the logistical hurdles coordinators face in facilitating CPD among teachers' demanding schedule constraints. Management should give some additional time for training sessions." This issue points out HR-related policies that should be addressed, and teachers should have some quality time for training because it is a part of learning and teaching. Avoiding this factor may lead to ineffective CPD.

Designing PD that meets every teacher's professional learning needs is a significant challenge for education authorities. Not all teachers have similar knowledge and skill levels, even when they have emerged from the same preparation programs. Recurring complaints from teachers are that PD does not feel relevant and that they are seldom consulted about the focus or format of PD (Darling-Hammond et al. 2009). According to Abakah et al. (2022), the teachers in Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities are influenced by innumerable factors, as highlighted by research. Two significant challenges identified include teacher time constraints and financial considerations. Teachers have to face a heavy word-load within limited that compromises personal commitments and CPD because teachers are busy with daily schedule tasks the whole year.

Other obstacles to CPD participation include accessibility, staff motivation, and financial concerns that stress the multi-layered nature of challenges in promoting teacher engagement in CPD activities.

In essence, while challenges abound, the resilience and resourcefulness of school coordinators play a pivotal role in promoting CPD among teachers. Through strategic interventions and innovative solutions, coordinators pave the way for continuous professional development, ultimately enhancing primary school teaching practices and student outcomes.

Figure 6: Coordinator's challenges

Discussions

This study thoroughly explored the strategies, their impact on teachers' development, and the challenges academic coordinators face in implementing effective CPD, mainly focusing on primary school teachers. The study encompassed various dimensions of CPD within primary school settings, unraveling the intricate relationships and dynamics among coordinators, teachers, and institutions.

As the researcher, I ventured into the heart of different primary campuses in Karachi, belonging to a renowned chain of schools. Most schools are located in middle and lower-middle-class areas. The focal point of this exploration was to discover the activities, methods of working, the effectiveness of their efforts, and the difficulties academic coordinators face. I had the invaluable opportunity to engage with academic coordinators, discussing the holistic picture of the entire system with them.

Interacting with these primary school coordinators, I saw that their resilience and determination to learn, coupled with their challenges, painted a touching picture of their daily activities. Walking the school corridors and engaging with coordinators and teachers, I witnessed firsthand the complexities of their leadership journey.

The study aimed to identify the strategies and their impact on teachers' continuous professional development and to explore the underlying challenges primary school academic coordinators face in developing effective CPD for primary teachers. This research provides a comprehensive landscape of the role of primary school coordinators and their efforts. The coordinators attempted to overcome hurdles and employed different teacher development tactics. Challenges in primary schools highlighted the urgent need for integrated support for academic coordinators to strengthen their efforts toward implementing CPD using innovative strategies and efficient methods.

Key Findings

1. To implement effective CPD, school academic coordinators conduct hands-on activities, group discussions, and collaborative learning experiences to teach teachers practical skills and knowledge. They also incorporate online training sessions and virtual workshops to cater to

diverse learning needs, ensuring accessibility and flexibility in CPD delivery. Further, they foster a supportive learning environment where teachers exchange ideas, share best practices, and receive constructive feedback, ultimately enhancing teaching effectiveness.

2. CPD activities significantly impact teachers' performance and skills. It improves instructional techniques, student outcomes, motivation, and teacher confidence. CPD equips teachers with specialized skills to utilize technology-enhanced learning approaches, stimulating interactive and student-centered teaching approaches. CPD advantages lead to holistic improvement in teachers' skills, knowledge enrichment, and commitment to the profession, resulting in meaningful and impactful learning experiences for learners.

3. School academic coordinators face several challenges, such as unwillingness to teach, insufficient resources, lack of management support, average technical skills, and obstacles to teacher engagement and proficiency in CPD. They need help to allocate sufficient time for CPD activities amidst busy schedules and face challenges related to poor infrastructure, such as unreliable electricity and insufficient IT resources. Coordinators deal with issues regarding incomplete feedback during CPD sessions and teachers' proficiency in utilizing digital platforms, posing challenges to effective CPD implementation.

These findings collectively emphasize coordinators' vital role in overcoming challenges and promoting CPD among teachers. Despite obstacles like limited interest and technology awareness, coordinators utilize diverse strategies such as workshops and peer coaching to enhance teachers' skills. These efforts boost teacher confidence, improve teaching practices, and ultimately benefit student learning outcomes in primary schools.

Conclusion

Several key conclusions can be drawn based on the thematic analysis of the responses provided by primary school coordinators regarding their role in promoting continuous professional development (CPD) among teachers.

Firstly, it is evident that school coordinators need help in promoting CPD among teachers, ranging from issues such as lack of teacher interest and limited technology awareness to time constraints and inadequate IT skills among staff. However, despite these challenges, coordinators demonstrate resilience and resourcefulness by proposing practical strategies to overcome these obstacles, such as arranging standby generators, organizing training sessions on holidays, and addressing the needs of technophobic teachers.

Secondly, the impact of CPD activities on teachers' skills and teaching effectiveness is overwhelmingly positive, according to the coordinators. CPD programs are instrumental in enabling teachers to stay updated with current standards, deliver high-quality teaching, enhance student outcomes, and foster a more effective teaching environment. Additionally, CPD equips teachers with the necessary skills to navigate digital education trends successfully, thus ensuring their adaptability in uncertain times.

Lastly, coordinators implement diverse activities and programs to enhance teachers' professional development, including workshops, discussions, conferences, peer coaching, and online training sessions. These initiatives underscore the importance of teamwork, collaboration, and a supportive learning environment in promoting CPD among teachers.

In conclusion, the responses from primary school coordinators highlight their crucial role in promoting CPD among teachers despite facing various challenges. Through their proactive efforts and collaborative approach, coordinators contribute significantly to the continuous improvement of teaching practices and the overall academic growth of students within their schools.

Recommendations

Occasional and irregular professional development is insufficient; quality and standard teaching demands continuous professional development (CPD). It is recommended that teachers acquire ICT skills so that they can meet the global standard of education. Teachers should use various instructional strategies, such as inquiry-based, cooperative, project-based, and problem-based, to engage students in active and meaningful learning. Teachers should engage in continuous professional development and lifelong learning to update their knowledge, skills, and competencies. They should also seek opportunities to collaborate with their colleagues, mentors, and experts and to reflect on their practice.

The findings suggested that academic coordinators should use a transformational leadership style to develop the willingness of teachers to not only take an active part in CPD but also do research for their further learning. School management should focus on CPD to enhance the quality of the teaching and learning process. For this, incentives should be given to the teachers involved in the CPD process to attain the desired results.

CPD courses should not only give them theoretical knowledge but also provide them with practical exposure to apply educational strategies. Teacher educational institutions should design and deliver CPD courses that are relevant, interactive, and engaging for primary teachers and that address the current and emerging challenges and opportunities in the field of education.

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