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EFL Teachers' Perceptions

Towards

Continuing Professional Development Activities

Research Project

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Supervised by

Dr. Arev Merza Astifo

Prepared by

Zhiwan Rasool Hassan

Sakar Dilshad Abdulla

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Abstract

This research was intended to investigate 'EFL Teachers' perceptions towards Continuing Professional Development Activities'. The participants of this research were 36 EFL teachers who had participated in CPD activities before in their careers. 26 of the participants were males and 10 were females, they had various degrees and their ages ranged between 21-57 years. A questionnaire was adapted and used for data collection which was shown to be reliable. The results showed that: EFL teachers preferred certain CPD activities to others; EFL teachers' degrees were not significant factors for their commitment to participate in and for their beliefs about the effectiveness of CPDAs; EFL teachers' degrees were significant factors for their preferences for participate in CPDAs; EFL teachers' years of teaching experience was a significant factor for their commitment to participate in CPDAs; EFL teachers' years of teaching experience was not a significant factor for their preferences to participate in and for their beliefs about effectiveness of the CPDAs. It can be recommended that educational authorities provide more opportunities for EFL teachers to participate in a variety of CPD activities.

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List of Abbreviations

EFL: English as a Foreign Language

CPD: Continuing Professional Development

CPDA: Continuing Professional Development Activities.

PD: Professional Development

Contents

Section One

1.1 Introduction

Schools nowadays are facing complex and dynamic changes and challenges. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is important to teachers' personal lives and career development. Much emphasis has to be put on the nature of CPD as a 'continuing' process for improvement in the knowledge and skills gained. As an ongoing process of any kind of education, training, learning and support activities engaged in by teachers alone or with others (Bolam, 1993; Day, 1999), CPD enhances their knowledge and skills and enables them to consider their attitudes and approaches to the education of children and to improve the quality of learning and teaching. In short, CPD focuses on fostering individual competence to enhance practice and facilitate dynamic changes in education (Blandford, 2000).

The focus of this research is primary school teachers' perceptions and experiences of CPD in Hong Kong. It is a study of how teachers perceive continuing professional development (CPD) and view their CPD experiences. The study aims to explore teachers' perceptions and experiences about continuing professional development (CPD). Understanding teachers' perceptions and views of CPD may help facilitate and improve CPD processes for teachers. This study identifies teachers' preferences, participation and perceived effectiveness of CPD activities. This study also explores teachers' perceptions about the development of professional competencies as listed in the Teacher Competencies Framework (TCF) that was recommended by the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications (ACTEQ) in the latest CPD document called Towards a Learning Profession: The Teacher Competencies Framework and the Continuing Professional Development of Teachers (hereafter CPD Document 2003) in 2003 (ACTEQ, 2003). It is focused on researching teachers' perceptions of professional development needs in the four CPD domains, namely, Teaching and Learning, Student Development, School Development and Professional Relationships and Services. This study further explores what factors affect their participation in CPD activities. It concentrates on the factors that facilitate and inhibit their participation in CPD activities.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This study is an attempt to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions of CPD and the types of activities they prefer to develop professionally. More specifically, the following research questions are raised: (1) What do high school EFL teachers understand by CPD? and (2) What types of CPD activities do EFL teachers engage in while teaching EFL?

1.3 Research Questions
This study attempts to address the following questions:

1. What are the preferred CPD activities for AUSFL teachers?

2. Is there any statistically significant difference between the lecturers with undergraduate degrees and the lecturers with graduate degrees in terms of

a) commitment   b) preferences   c) effectiveness

3. Is there any statistically significant difference among the lecturers with different years of teaching experience in terms of

a) commitment   b) preferences   c) effectiveness

1.4 Significance of the Study
Although recent studies have focused on CPD, there is an agreement on the fact that the nature of the activities and the context of the teachers are highly significant in affecting what kind of CPD activities teachers might prefer. Therefore, this study may extend the research on the topic by providing information on how effective teachers find CPD activities in the context of an accredited preparatory school in a state university. In addition, this study may be significant in terms of providing information about the motives of these teachers in pursuing CPD and therefore influencing the activities offered in institutions.

1.5 Definition of Key Terms
The following key terms, used frequently in this thesis, are defined below:

CPD: Professional development consists of all-natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school, which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purpose of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues throughout each phase of their teaching lives. (Day, 1999, p. 4)

Community of practice: A group of people sharing a profession is called a community of practice. The dimensions of a community of practice are mutual engagement, a joint enterprise, and shared repertoire (Wenger, 1998).

Section 2

Review of the Related Literature

2.1 Continuing professional development of EFL teachers.
It has been extensively researched how English affects foreign language teachers' professional growth. It is asserted that CPD is a continuous cycle of teacher learning that starts with initial training and lasts for the duration of a teacher's career. The public nature of teaching inspires instructors and raises social expectations for them to seek out strategies to raise student accomplishment (Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009). The sustainability of teacher professional development (TPD) over the long term is one of the most crucial objectives in the field of English language education (ELE).

Professional development has a very favourable effect on teachers' practices and beliefs as well as students' learning. Teachers' work, both within and beyond the classroom, is significantly influenced by successful professional development opportunities, the importance of teacher professional development as a strategy to improve schools, increase teaching quality, and improve students' academic accomplishments has been extensively researched" (Day, 1999; Verloop, 2003, p. 653). With the help of a mixed-methods approach, the current study sought to advance our understanding of several facets of EFL instructors' opinions of professional growth in Iran. In the qualitative part of the study, interviews with 12 EFL teachers and teaching experts were conducted after a review of recent literature and questionnaires. Four key themes were identified after conducting a content analysis of the interview material. A 74-item questionnaire was created and given to 250 participants in the quantitative phase after it had undergone pilot testing and item review based on the qualitative phase's findings and supporting literature. A 4-factor structure was found after the quantitative data underwent exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and principal component analysis (PCA) analyses.

The immediate result of paying more attention to teachers' perceptions of PD can be to maximise teachers' engagement, learning, and efficiency of PD efforts (Day 2004; Harper-hill, 2022; Kuijpers et al., 2010).In 2020, Tran (2020) investigated TPD in Vietnam. In general education schools, teacher professional development (TPD) is crucial for increasing student achievement and raising the standard of instruction. This qualitative case-study research used information from open-ended principal interviews, teacher questionnaires, and documents about school policies to learn how principals and teachers felt about TPD in response to the implementation of education reforms in Vietnam in three selected K12 schools. The principals and teachers shared a similar perception and appreciation of the

significance of TPD as it was closely related to the implementation of general education reforms at three schools. These established a strong connection between their principles and TPD procedures at their schools to advance.

Different conceptualizations of this concept have been offered, and there is no agreement on what qualifies as professional development for language teachers (Adams, 2014; Borg et al., 2018).

2.1.1 The importance of continuing professional development for EFL teachers

Consequently, it is anticipated that an exploratory study will shed light on the continuing professional development (CPD) experiences and available options for teachers working in Iranian high schools, given the significance of CPD and its effects on teachers' efficacy in the classroom. Because of the insights gained into the experiences of Iranian EFL teachers, it is anticipated that the results will play an important role in improving understanding of the CPD situation in Iran. With the use of these insights, we hope to draw attention to the continuing professional development (CPD) of high school teachers in a specific sociocultural context—Iran—that, to the best of our knowledge, has not yet been well examined. This could also help to clarify how sociocultural contexts and CPD interact.

Participating in professional development events helps teachers grow professionally and attain career sustainability.

Prior research has examined teachers' motivations and attitudes towards taking part in teacher training (e.g., Brisk, 1998; Karabenick & Noda, 2004). To deliver high-quality instruction to students with diverse learning styles, teachers' attitudes and professional knowledge are equally important (Brisk, 1998). Karabenick and Noda (2004) assert that instructors' motivation to support their students' learning goals and reasons is greatly influenced by their attitudes. Furthermore, teachers' attitudes towards teaching and studying English have a big impact on how much they want to participate in professional development activities to help their pupils learn more (Karabenick & Noda, 2004). Put differently, the values that educators feel PD activities can support motivate them to engage in PD in the real world. The enhanced learning outcomes of the students as well as the increased expertise and performance of the teachers should demonstrate the efficacy of professional development initiatives.

Changes in instructors' knowledge, abilities, attitudes, or beliefs are essential outcomes of professional development activities. What matters more are the substantial improvements in student learning and the innovative teaching methods they implement in the classroom. It suggests that research on professional development activities for educators should concentrate on how teachers' perceptions change after engaging in these activities and whether they are

successful in incorporating the knowledge they learn from PD into their instructional strategies.

Certainly, it's critical to provide educators with enough professional development opportunities. Administrators and legislators, however, ought to assess the usefulness of these events for the professional development of their academic staff. Thus, it is worthwhile to research how teachers' participation in professional development affects their ability to teach. According to Doran (2014), there is a growing need to look into the professional development opportunities that prepare teachers to deliver appropriate instruction. The current program that high school EFL teachers are enrolled in presents several challenges. As a result, the professional development curriculum needs to be updated to take EFL teachers' goals, challenges, and reflections into account.

To keep up with the changes, continuous professional development, or CPD, is becoming a more crucial component of teachers' career advancement. CPD, according to Hargreaves and Fullan (1992), is necessary for teachers to continuously improve their knowledge and skills to enhance their teaching methods and the learning opportunities for their students. A teacher's main duty is to develop lifelong learners in their students, which means that in addition to adjusting to change, he or she must demonstrate a commitment to and excitement for continuous learning (Day, 1999).

English is an important language for intellectual and interpersonal communication as well as for current global understanding because it is widely used as an international language. English language teachers need to stay up to date with the latest advancements and changes in their field, which makes English language teaching (ELT) a significant field. As a result, CPD plays a significant role in teachers' professional competency. Accordingly, Luke & McArdle (2009) and Bailey et al. (2001) claimed that professional development is a fundamental component of teachers' growth and that being up to date with the quickly changing field of English as a foreign language teaching is necessary for success. As a result, educators ought to improve their competency in the workplace. Teachers should adopt new practices in this regard, collaborate with colleagues to exchange ideas and experiences and use CPD to evaluate their performance. Institutions must therefore acknowledge the requirements of educators to transform their teaching style, support professional growth, and make them more dynamic. Stated differently, professional development initiatives can be realized and proven successful when tailored to the individual needs of educators. For this reason, information regarding the needs of teachers must be gathered before designing professional development programs.

Cirocki and Farrell (2019) concur that a significant factor in the effectiveness of educational systems and student achievement is the ongoing learning and

development of teachers through professional development. While everyone agrees that professional development, or PD, is essential, there is disagreement over how effective PD programs are. Teachers are the primary recipients of professional development, so the effectiveness of professional development initiatives depends on their attentive participation in PD (Bolam, 2002; Harper-Hill et al., 2022). This participation is influenced by a variety of factors, including social, personal, and professional matters (Richards & Farrell, 2005; Noonan, 2019).

2.1.2 Factors influencing EFL teachers' professional development.
Many factors influence EFL teachers' professional development. However, these factors can vary based on various contexts.

Factors Influencing EFL Teachers' Professional Development can be:

1. Training and Workshops: Continuous training and workshops on language teaching methodologies, technology integration, and classroom management are vital (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

2. Access to Resources: The availability of teaching materials, books, online resources, and technological tools greatly impacts professional growth (Borg, 2015).

3. Mentoring and Support: Support from experienced mentors, peer collaboration, and constructive feedback positively influence development (Farrell, 2018).

4. Institutional Support: Policies, funding, and administrative encouragement play a significant role (Wallace, 1991).

5. Motivation and Attitude: Teachers' motivation and positive attitudes towards learning and self-improvement impact their professional development (Borg, 2013).

6. Autonomy and Reflection: Opportunities for autonomy in decision-making and self-reflection promote growth (Farrell, 2018).

7. Cultural Context: Understanding the cultural context in which teaching occurs can significantly influence professional development (Johnson, 2009).

2.2 Activities used in the continuing professional development
Our CPD activities for this study consist of reading published research or resource materials on language teaching, taking CELTA/DELTA courses, attending international conferences, attending national meetings, presenting a paper or poster at a conference, attending workshops, and being observed by the school administration. CE 2.4. The ability of teachers to obtain and critically develop the knowledge, skills, and emotional intelligence necessary for good professional thinking, planning, and practice with their students and colleagues throughout every stage of their teaching career is thought to be somewhat impacted by their

participation in professional development programs (see Borko, 2004; Buczynski & Hansen, 2010; Day, 1999; Gabriel, Day, & Allington, 2011; Poskitt, 2005). Because of English's status as a universal language, it seems vital to look at professional development programs and teachers' attitudes towards CPD. Understanding ELT teachers' beliefs is essential to developing professional development programs that are adequate. Because of their effect on teachers' sustainable behaviour, these beliefs are important.

Professional development is a vital component of improving teaching, as Knapp (2003) notes. As a result, educators require frequent chances to refresh their professional expertise. Due to their intricate organizational structure and constantly changing pedagogies, educational centres need to employ a variety of professional development strategies to effectively meet the needs of their students, adapt to new trends in education, and promote progress. Thus, research, experimentation, discussion, and reflection on teachers' perceptions of professional development, the educational needs of their student populations, and the learning opportunities available to them are all constant needs when it comes to teachers' professional development.

The current study examines EFL teachers' beliefs about CPD before and after involving them in professional development workshops and activities, filling the gap in more practical research. Given that it provides information about teachers' beliefs to supervisors, educational officials, and teacher educators, this study may prove advantageous to the field. We can better prepare teachers in teacher education programmes to promote educational success for their sustainable professional development if we effectively target teachers' beliefs.

The activities teachers take part in to better themselves at various points in their careers are referred to as Continuing Professional Development (CPD) (Day & Sachs, 2004). The intricacy of the idea is only partially addressed by this rather straightforward explanation. It does, however, draw attention to the importance of the various elements: the range of activities that educators can engage in, as well as the educators themselves, each of whom has unique needs and objectives at different stages of their careers. These elements demonstrate how malleable the concept of CPD is, as does its fluidity.

Adult learning should also be considered relevant since continuing professional development for teachers, or teachers' (re)learning how to teach, differs from that of children. The basis of adult learning practises, or andragogy is adult education.

All natural learning experiences as well as deliberate, planned activities meant to directly or indirectly benefit an individual, a group, or a school are considered professional development. These activities also raise the standard of instruction in the classroom. In addition to acquiring and critically developing the knowledge, skills, and emotional intelligence necessary for sound professional thinking,

planning, and practice with children, young people, and colleagues throughout every stage of their teaching careers, it is the process by which teachers, both alone and in collaboration with others, review, renew, and extend their commitment to the moral purpose of teaching as change agents.

Teachers have access to a variety of Continuing Professional Development (CPD) activities, and there has been discussion about the quality of these activities (Borg, 2011a; Kelchtermans, 2009; Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2008), with consensus emerging regarding what constitutes effective CPD. These qualities include relevance to the needs of teachers and their students; teacher involvement in decisions about content and process; teacher collaboration; support from the school leadership; exploration and reflection with attention to both practises and beliefs; internal and/or external support for teachers (e.g. through mentoring); job-embeddedness (i.e. CPD is situated in schools and classrooms); contextual awareness. Borg (2015a) stressed the concern that a CPD plan that would answer to all teachers would be impractical due to the uniqueness of each context. The literature that is currently available has examined, catalogued, or classified several CPD activities. In the Teaching and Learning International Survey (TALIS), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) carried out one such broad classification. Two primary categories are proposed by OECD TALIS (2009): a) more structured and organised, and b) more informal and self-directed learning. The courses and workshops, education conferences and seminars, professional development networks, individual and group research, peer and mentor observation, school observation visits, and qualification programmes were the most and least attended structured activities. On the other hand, reading professional literature and having casual conversations to enhance instruction were part of the informal activities. Even though this report shows that the most popular activities vary by nation, informal discussion to enhance instruction was most frequent.

Richards and Farrel (2005) also classified things according to the type of activities. Activities that require individual participation include action research, critical incidents, journal writing, self-monitoring, and teaching portfolios. Peer coaching, peer observation, critical friendships, action research, critical incidents, and team teaching are among the activities that can be carried out with a colleague. Case studies, action research, journal writing, and teacher support groups are examples of group activities. The last category includes teacher support groups, action research, and workshops—activities that can be planned, funded, or mandated by institutions. Several of the categories have a significant amount of overlap. The methodology used by the researchers to classify these is the cause of this overlap.

2.3 EFL teachers' perceptions of continuing professional development activities

According to Johnson and Golombek (2011), the ultimate goal of any educational endeavour is to improve the quality of student learning, and teacher professional development is a key to achieving this.

To be qualified, professional teachers in general need to have the necessary competencies. Many educators think that a teacher's level of experience is a good indicator of their quality. Though experienced teachers often manage their classrooms more effectively than less experienced teachers, Rodríguez and McKay (2010) contend that experienced teachers are not always superior to less experienced teachers. In this regard, to be considered professional teachers, both new and seasoned educators must possess certain standard competencies.

To raise the calibre of teachers, it can be concluded that collaborative professional development activities are more beneficial and successful than individual ones. In this regard, the value of teacher support groups and collegiality has greatly aided in the development of teachers' competencies. It reveals that EFL teachers participate in institutional professional development activities such as classroom action research (CAR), informal discussion/conversation, peer observation, peer coaching, and English-language communication with students and English teachers.

2.3.1 Types of activities used for continuing professional development of EFL teachers

These teacher-led activities demonstrate efficacy and are beneficial in preserving and enhancing educators' competencies. The exercises include reading on your own or alone, writing articles, participating in online professional communities, and engaging in reflective practices like journaling and self-monitoring. To summarize, self-directed learning entails the creation of meaning on a personal level, draws on personal experience as a foundation and learning stimulus, and investigates personal teaching methods to address issues related to practice.

To improve teachers' performance and competencies, a variety of efficient tactics and activities, including reflective inquiry and individual and group professional development programs, can be used. According to Raza (2010), self-directed development is important for each teacher because each has a unique agenda and set of needs. This also applies to the activities. However, while teacher development activities can happen on a teacher's initiative, collaborative professional development activities foster both individual and group development, according to Richards and Farrells (2005). It follows that to meet the diverse needs of teachers in their ways, professional development activities need to have both collaborative and individual teacher components.

PD manifests itself in various ways. A thorough overview of the various TPD techniques is given by Guskey (2000). These techniques include mentoring, study groups, inquiry/action research, training, observation, and reflective teaching. Murray (2010) lists several professional development activities for language teachers, including journaling, reading, writing in a journal, sharing journals, joining local, national, or even international teacher associations, peer mentoring/coaching, joining teacher support groups, and giving presentations or attending workshops and conferences. Wong (2011) recommends simple professional development exercises that are supported by resources and references from the Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) literature. Gebhard (2005) offers a set of guidelines for discussing teaching that includes self-observation, other teachers' observations, and how to interpret teaching differently to advance professionally.

2.3.2 The effectiveness of activities for continuing professional development based on EFL teacher's viewpoints

According to Day (1999), "PD is significant for teachers in achieving practical training." Page 24. Knapp (2003) also agrees that enhancing teaching quality is closely related to professional development. Similarly, educators require regular opportunities to update their professional knowledge and skills. Similar to this, examining instructors' points of view is crucial since their convictions shape the way they teach, which in turn affects student learning and has educational implications. Experts in English language instruction and other teaching areas agree that continuous professional development is crucial, especially in the quickly evolving, technologically-driven world of today. To continue evolving in the adaptation and application of their art and craft, teachers of English as a foreign language are more likely to experiment with the latest developments in language teaching theories and educational technology with their students (Allwright, 2005). This is important for their professional development.

Day and Sachs (2004) contend that the word CPD encompasses all professional development activities teachers undertake to improve their jobs throughout their careers. According to Kelly (2006), these kinds of activities are meant to lead to a process called continual teacher learning, which helps teachers develop.

Many researchers have made the case for teacher professional development. For example, Karabenick and Noda (as mentioned in Jafri, 2009) contend that professional development enables educators to enhance their instruction and stay current with emerging research in the subject. Similarly, Mizell (2010) contends that continuous professional development initiatives assist educators in identifying the most effective pedagogical strategies to enhance students' learning experiences. The importance of continual professional development for in-service practitioners to familiarize themselves with the newest tools and techniques is another point made by Richards and Farrell (2005).

<div align="center">**Section Three**</div>

<div align="center">**Method**</div>

In this section, the setting of the study is explained, followed by detailed information about the EFL teachers who participated in this study. Then explanations about the source, the development, and the reliability of the questionnaire that used in this study are given. The last section of this chapter is about data collection and data analysis procedures.

3.1 The Setting of this Study

This research is carried out in the Kurdistan Region. There are three types of schools that EFL teachers, who are graduates of colleges of education and basic education, teach at; namely, basic schools (grades 1-9), high schools (grades 10-12), and preparatory schools (grades 7-12). These schools are either for boys or girls or are coeducational.

Ministry of Education was providing certain continuing professional development opportunities for EFL teachers, but in the last few years, the number of these opportunities has decreased. However, schools and EFL teachers have in one way or another been engaged in CPD activities.

3.2 Participants of this Study

The participants of this study were 36 EFL teachers who had participated in CPD activities before in their careers. 26 of the participants were males and 10 were females, and their ages ranged between 21-57 years.

As shown in Table 3.1, over %71 of the participants had undergraduate degrees (diplomas and BA), and about %29 of the participants had graduate degrees (MA and PhD).

Table 3.1 *The participants' degrees*

Degrees		Frequency	Per cent
Undergraduate	Diploma	2	5.6
	BA	24	66.7
Graduate	MA	9	25.0
	PhD	1	2.8
Total		36	100.0

The participants were divided into three groups based on their years of teaching experience as presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 *The participants' teaching experience*

Experience	Frequency	Per cent
1-5 years	17	47.2
6-10 years	3	8.3
11 and more years	16	44.4
Total	36	100.0

As stated in Table 3.3, %36.1 of the participants of this study were teaching at basic schools (grades 1-9), %38.9 of them were teaching at high schools (grades 10-12), and %25 of the participants were teachers at preparatory schools (grades 7-12).

Table 3.3 *The grades the participants taught*

Grades Taught	Frequency	Per cent
Basic School (grades 1-9)	13	36.1
High School (grades 10-12)	14	38.9
Preparatory School (grades 7-12)	9	25.0
Total	36	100.0

The EFL teachers that participated in this study were teaching at three types of schools; schools for boys, for girls or at coeducational schools as shown in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 *Type of the schools the participants taught at*

School Type	Frequency	Per cent
For boys	13	36.1
For girls	14	38.9
Coeducational (for boys & girls)	9	25.0
Total	36	100.0

3.3 The Instrument Used in this Study

A questionnaire (*Appendix A*) was developed from Alshumaimeri and Almohaisen's (2017) questionnaire and then adjusted to be used to collect data in this study. The questionnaire consisted of four parts as follows:

Part One: this part of the questionnaire asked about the participants' background information including the participant's age, gender, the type of school they taught at, their degrees, and the duration of their teaching experiences.

Part Two of the questionnaire contained 20 items that were CPD activities, and the participants were asked to state the frequently they do or participate in each of the PD activities on a five-point Likert scale [Never= 0, Sometimes= 1, Often= 2, Usually= 3, and Always=4]. This part of the questionnaire was reliable as the *Cronbach Alpha* was .89 (Table 3.5).

Table 3.5 *Reliability statistics for part two (frequency of use)*

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.890	20

Part Three of the questionnaire contained 20 items that were CPD activities, and the participants were asked to state their preferences for CPD activities they prefer to participate in on a five-point Likert scale [Not preferred= 0, To some degree preferred= 1, Not sure= 2, Preferred= 3, and Very much preferred= 4]. This part of the questionnaire was reliable as the *Cronbach Alpha* was .90 (Table 3.6).

Table 3.6 *Reliability statistics for part three (preferences)*

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.901	20

Part Four of the questionnaire contained 20 items that were CPD activities, and the participants were asked to state their beliefs about the effectiveness of the CPD activities on a five-point Likert scale [Not effective= 0, To some degree effective= 1, Not sure= 2, Effective= 3, and Very effective = 4]. This part of the questionnaire was reliable as Cronbach's Alpha was .92 (Table 3.7).

Table 3.7 *Reliability statistics for part four (effectiveness)*

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.924	20

3.4 Data Collection and Data Analysis

The CPD activities questionnaire (*appendix A*) was conducted online using Google Forms. The link to the questionnaire was sent to EFL teachers and it took almost three weeks until 36 teachers agreed to participate and fill in the questionnaire.

The data file was downloaded as an Excel file, then necessary adjustments were made to the data and the data were transferred into an SPSS file and analyzed through SPSS using means, percentages, t-tests, and ANOVAs based on the research questions requirements.

<center>**Section Four**</center>

<center>**Results and Discussions**</center>

This section presents and discusses the results arrived at through analyzing the data collected through the questionnaire.

4.1 To answer the first research question which was about the preferred CPD activities for English teachers, means and percentages of the degree of EFL teachers' preferences are found as shown in Table 4.1. Based on the means, the CPD activities are arranged from the least preferred activity, would is item 1, to the most preferred activity, which is item 20.

According to the results, 'Discussing lessons with the supervisor after class visits (post-lesson discussion) (m=1.94)' was the least preferred CPD activity by EFL teachers. This could be because usually supervisors do not stay long at school and leave the school after observing the teachers. Activities such as 'Preparing lessons jointly with colleagues' (m= 2.25)', 'Attending formal meetings with local supervisors (m= 2.44)', and 'Participating in syllabus design (m= 2.47)' were respectively among the least preferred CPD activities. This may be because teachers do not have time for co-teaching due to their busy schedules, meetings with local supervisors are too rare and usually not productive, and teachers have no role in syllabus design and have to teach textbooks specified by the Ministry of Education.

Table 4.1 *Means and frequencies of the preferred CPD activities for English teachers*

	Items	Means (out of 4)	Not preferred %	To some degree preferred %	Not Sure %	Preferred %	Very much Preferred %
1	Discussing lessons with the supervisor after class visits (post-lesson discussion)	1.9444	11.1	33.3	13.9	33.3	8.3
2	Preparing lessons jointly with colleagues	2.2500	2.8	27.8	22.2	36.1	11.1
3	Attending formal meetings with local supervisors	2.4444	5.6	22.2	2.8	61.1	8.3
4	Participating in syllabus design	2.4722	8.3	8.3	33.3	27.8	22.2
5	Attending local educational events (e.g. forums, conferences)	2.5556	5.6	16.7	13.9	44.4	19.4
6	Visiting other schools for professional development purposes	2.5556	8.3	16.7	8.3	44.4	22.2
7	Participating in team teaching	2.5833	8.3	11.1	16.7	41.7	22.2
8	Sharing ideas informally with colleagues about teaching	2.6389	2.8	22.2	11.1	36.1	27.8
9	Conducting workshops or seminars	2.6667	2.8	19.4	8.3	47.2	22.2
10	Participating in language training courses	2.6667	8.3	11.1	16.7	33.3	30.6
11	Observing model lessons	2.6944	11.1	11.1	5.6	41.7	30.6
12	Doing research	2.6944	2.8	16.7	16.7	36.1	27.8
13	Travelling to other countries for professional development purposes	2.6944	11.1	13.9	11.1	22.2	41.7
14	Observing other teachers' lessons (peer observation)	2.6944	2.8	16.7	11.1	47.2	22.2
15	Participating in workshops or seminars	2.7222	2.8	13.9	8.3	58.3	16.7
16	Attending international conferences	2.7222	5.6	13.9	13.9	36.1	30.6
17	Reading professional materials (e.g. ELT magazines, TESOL journals)	2.8333	2.8	19.4	11.1	25.0	41.7
18	Developing a teaching portfolio	2.8333	8.3	11.1	8.3	33.3	38.9
19	Asking for students' feedback	2.8611	2.8	16.7	8.3	36.1	36.1
20	Using the Internet to get teaching materials	3.1667	0.0	8.3	5.6	47.2	38.9

'Reading professional materials (e.g. ELT magazines, TESOL journals) (m= 2.83)', 'Developing a teaching portfolio (m= 2.83)', and 'Asking for students' feedback (m= 2.86)' had similar or very close means from each other and were among the most preferred CPD activities by EFL teachers. However, these results could be due to EFL teachers' interest in gaining new information about ELT, tracking the developments in their careers, valuing their students' opinions about the way they teach them and making adjustments accordingly. The most preferred CPD activity by EFL teachers was 'Using the Internet to get teaching materials (m= 3.16)'.

These results are in line with Karabenick and Noda's (2004) findings who stated that English teachers are motivated to participate in and prefer types of PD activities that increase their knowledge and make them help their students learn more and achieve better.

4.2 Three Independent Samples T-tests were conducted to answer the second research question to explore differences if any between the English teachers with undergraduate degrees and the English teachers with graduate degrees in terms of their commitment to participate in, their preferences to participate in, and their beliefs about the effectiveness of CPDAs.

4.2.1 An Independent Samples T-test was conducted between the English teachers with undergraduate degrees and the English teachers with graduate degrees to find out if there is any statistically significant difference in terms of their commitment to participate in CPDAs.

Table 4.2 *Independent Samples T-test; teachers, with undergraduate degrees and graduate degrees, commitment to participate in CPDAs.*

Group Statistics					
	Degree	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MeansOfFrequency	Undergraduate Degree	26	1.8346	.68524	.13439
	Graduate Degree	10	1.4750	.41315	.13065

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
MeansOfFrequency	Equal variances assumed	6.154	.018	1.547	34	.131	.35962	.23251	-.11290	.83214
	Equal variances not assumed			1.919	27.170	.066	.35962	.18743	-.02484	.74407

The results of the independent-samples t-test between the English teachers with undergraduate degrees (M= 1.83, SD= .68) and the English teachers with graduate degrees (M= 1.47, SD= .41) indicated that there was no statistically significant difference (p= .066, two-tailed) in terms of their commitment to participate in CPDAs.

4.2.2 An Independent Samples T-test was conducted between the English teachers with undergraduate degrees and the English teachers with graduate degrees to find out if there is any statistically significant difference in terms of their preferences to participate in CPDAs.

Table 4.3 *Independent Samples T-test; teachers, with undergraduate degrees and graduate degrees, preferences to participate in CPDAs.*

Group Statistics					
	Degree	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MeansOfPreferences	Undergraduate Degree	26	2.5173	.75868	.14879
	Graduate Degree	10	2.9400	.39777	.12579

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
MeansOfPreferences	Equal variances assumed	6.236	.018	-1.666	34	.105	-.42269	.25377	-.93842	.09303
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.170	30.388	.038	-.42269	.19483	-.82038	-.02500

The results of the independent-samples t-test between the English teachers with undergraduate degrees (M= 2.51, SD= .75) and the English teachers with graduate degrees (M= 2.94, SD= .39) indicated that there was a statistically significant difference (p= .038, two-tailed) in terms of their preferences to participate in CPDAs.

This result could be because teachers with graduate degrees may be more familiar with CPDA compared to teachers with undergraduate degrees, which is why their preferences differ from each other.

4.2.3 An Independent Samples T-test was conducted between the English teachers with undergraduate degrees and the English teachers with graduate degrees to find out if there is any statistically significant difference in terms of their beliefs about the effectiveness of the CPDAs.

Table 4.4 *Independent Samples T-test; teachers', with undergraduate degrees and graduate degrees, beliefs about the effectiveness of the CPDAs.*

Group Statistics					
	Degree	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
MeansOfEffectiveness	Undergraduate Degree	26	2.6173	.82097	.16101
	Graduate Degree	10	2.6900	.51359	.16241

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
MeansOfEffectiveness	Equal variances assumed	.806	.376	-.260	34	.797	-.07269	.27980	-.64131	.49592
	Equal variances not assumed			-.318	26.254	.753	-.07269	.2289	-.54256	.39717

The results of the independent-samples t-test between the English teachers with undergraduate degrees (M= 2.61, SD= .82) and the English teachers with graduate degrees (M= 2.69, SD= .51) indicated that there was no statistically significant

difference (p= .79, two-tailed) in terms of their beliefs about the effectiveness of the CPDAs.

4.3 Results of three one-way ANOVAs to answer the third research question to explore differences if any among the English teachers with different years of teaching Experience in terms of their commitment to participate in, their preferences to participate in, and their beliefs about the effectiveness of CPDAs.

4.3.1 A one-way ANOVA was conducted among the teachers with different years of teaching experience to find out if there is any statistically significant difference in terms of their commitment to participate in CPDAs.

Table 4.5 *One-Way ANOVA; teachers, with different years of teaching experience, are committed to participating in CPDAs.*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1-5 years	17	2.0265	.43701	.10599	1.8018	2.2512	1.25	2.60
6-10 years	3	1.3167	.99289	.57325	-1.1498	3.7831	.60	2.45
11 and more years	16	1.5031	.65076	.16269	1.1564	1.8499	.95	3.30
Total	36	1.7347	.63716	.10619	1.5191	1.9503	.60	3.30

ANOVA					
MeansOfFrequency					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	2.829	2	1.415	4.103	.026
Within Groups	11.380	33	.345		
Total	14.209	35			

The results of the one-way ANOVA showed that there was a statistically significant difference among the teachers with different years of teaching experience in terms of their commitment to participate in CPDAs; teachers with 1-5 years of experience (M= 2.02, SD= .43), teachers with 6-10 years of experience (M= 1.31, SD= .99), teachers with 11+ years of experience; (M= 1.73, SD= .65), [F(2,33)= 4.10, p= .026].

Doran (2014) and Hargreaves and Fullan (1992) have both addressed the issue that English teachers must participate in CPD activities throughout their careers without considering whether they are experienced or not.

4.3.2 A one-way ANOVA was conducted among the teachers with different years of teaching experience to find out if there is any statistically significant difference in terms of their preferences to participate in CPDAs.

Table 4.6 *One-Way ANOVA; teachers, with different years of teaching experience, preferences to participate in CPDAs.*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1-5 years	17	2.4559	.75868	.18401	2.0658	2.8460	1.20	3.90
6-10 years	3	3.3000	.35000	.20207	2.4306	4.1694	2.95	3.65
11 and more years	16	2.7000	.61698	.15425	2.3712	3.0288	1.30	3.50
Total	36	2.6347	.69906	.11651	2.3982	2.8713	1.20	3.90

ANOVA					
MeansOfPreferences					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.940	2	.970	2.111	.137
Within Groups	15.164	33	.460		
Total	17.104	35			

The results of the one-way ANOVA showed that there was no statistically significant difference among the teachers with different years of teaching experience in terms of their preferences to participate in CPDAs; [F(2,33)= 2.11, p= .137].

4.3.3 A one-way ANOVA was conducted among the teachers with different years of teaching experience to find out if there is any statistically significant difference in terms of their beliefs about the effectiveness of the CPDAs.

Table 4.7 *One-Way ANOVA; teachers', with different years of teaching experience, beliefs about the effectiveness of CPDAs.*

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
1-5 years	17	2.5588	.91194	.22118	2.0899	3.0277	.00	3.90
6-10 years	3	2.9167	.55076	.31798	1.5485	4.2848	2.35	3.45
11 and more years	16	2.6687	.57703	.14426	2.3613	2.9762	1.05	3.35
Total	36	2.6375	.74185	.12364	2.3865	2.8885	.00	3.90

ANOVA

MeansOfEffectiveness

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.355	2	.177	.310	.736
Within Groups	18.907	33	.573		
Total	19.262	35			

The results of the one-way ANOVA showed that there was no statistically significant difference among the teachers with different years of teaching experience in terms of their beliefs about the effectiveness of the CPDAs; [F(2,33)= .310, p= .736].

<div align="center">**Section Five**</div>

<div align="center">**Conclusions, Suggestions and Recommendations**</div>

5.1 Conclusions

From the findings of this research, the following conclusions can be met:

- EFL teachers prefer certain CPD activities to other CPD activities

- EFL teachers' preferences for CPD activities are based on the usefulness and availability of the CPD activities

- EFL teachers' degrees were not significant factors for their commitment to participate in CPDAs.

- EFL teachers' degrees were significant factors for their preferences to participate in CPDAs.

- EFL teachers' degrees were not significant factors for their beliefs about the effectiveness of the CPDAs.

- EFL teachers' years of teaching experience were a significant factor in their commitment to participate in CPDAs.

- EFL teachers' years of teaching experience were not a significant factor in their preferences to participate in CPDAs.

- EFL teachers' years of teaching experience were not a significant factor in their beliefs about the effectiveness of the CPDAs.

5.2 Suggestions for further research

In this research, only a questionnaire was used for collecting data, and the number of CPD activities was limited. Therefore, it can be suggested that research about EFL teachers' perceptions and preferences to be done using interviews and an extensive list of CPD activities and reasons for teachers' responses are necessary to be asked.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it could be recommended that

- Educational authorities provide more CPD activities for EFL teachers.

- EFL teachers develop their knowledge about CPD activities and seize every opportunity to participate in them.

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Appendix A

EFL Teachers' Questionnaire

We would like to invite you to participate in our graduation research project. By filling in this questionnaire, you kindly agree to participate in our study which is about **''EFL Teachers' Perceptions towards Continuing Professional Development Activities''**.

   We request that you provide what truly describes your attitudes and circumstances. Your identity remains anonymous and your responses will only be used for this research.

Filling in this questionnaire takes approximately 20 minutes.

         Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Tick ☑ the cells that best describe the reality.

Part One: Background Information

1. Your age? ……………..

2. Gender: **a.** Female ☐   **b.** Male ☐

3. I teach at   **a.** basic schools (grades 1-9) or

           b. high school (grades 10-12) ☐

           c. preparatory school (grades 7-12) ☐

4. Your degree   **a.** Diploma ☐☐

           b. B.A. ☐

           b. M.A. ☐

           c. Phd. ☐

5. Years of teaching experience   **a.** 1 to 5 years ☐   **b.** 6- 10 years ☐   **c.** 11 and more years ☐

Part Two

A- [Commitment]

How frequently do you do/participate in each professional development activity?

	Items	Never	Sometimes	often	Usually	Always
1.	Discussing lessons with the supervisor after class visits (post-lesson discussion)					
2.	Sharing ideas informally with colleagues about teaching					
3.	Participating in workshops or seminars					
4.	Reading professional materials (e.g. ELT magazines, TESOL journals)					
5.	Developing a teaching portfolio					
6.	Conducting workshops or seminars					
7.	Attending formal meetings with local supervisors					
8.	Asking for students' feedback					
9.	Participating in language training courses					
10.	Observing other teachers' lessons (peer observation)					
11.	Using the Internet to get teaching materials					
12.	Observing model lessons					
13.	Attending local educational events (e.g. forums, conferences)					
14.	Preparing lessons jointly with colleagues					
15.	Visiting other schools for professional development purposes					
16.	Participating in team teaching					
17.	Doing research					
18.	Participating in syllabus design					
19.	Attending international conferences					
20.	Travelling to other countries for professional development purposes					

Which of the following professional development activities do you prefer?

	Items	Not preferred	To some degree preferred	Not Sure	Preferred	Very much Preferred
1.	Discussing lessons with the supervisor after class visits (post-lesson discussion)					
2.	Sharing ideas informally with colleagues about teaching					
3.	Participating in workshops or seminars					
4.	Reading professional materials (e.g. ELT magazines, TESOL journals)					
5.	Developing a teaching portfolio					
6.	Conducting workshops or seminars					
7.	Attending formal meetings with local supervisors					
8.	Asking for students' feedback					
9.	Participating in language training courses					
10.	Observing other teachers' lessons (peer observation)					
11.	Using the Internet to get teaching materials					
12.	Observing model lessons					
13.	Attending local educational events (e.g. forums, conferences)					
14.	Preparing lessons jointly with colleagues					
15.	Visiting other schools for professional development purposes					
16.	Participating in team teaching					
17.	Doing research					
18.	Participating in syllabus design					
19.	Attending international conferences					
20.	Travelling to other countries for professional development purposes					

C- [Effectiveness]

Which of the following professional development activities are more effective?

	Items	Not effective	To some degree effective	Not Sure	effective	Very effective
1.	Discussing lessons with the supervisor after class visits (post-lesson discussion)					
2.	Sharing ideas informally with colleagues about teaching					
3.	Participating in workshops or seminars					
4.	Reading professional materials (e.g. ELT magazines, TESOL journals)					
5.	Developing a teaching portfolio					
6.	Conducting workshops or seminars					
7.	Attending formal meetings with local supervisors					
8.	Asking for students' feedback					
9.	Participating in language training courses					
10.	Observing other teachers' lessons (peer observation)					
11.	Using the Internet to get teaching materials					
12.	Observing model lessons					
13.	Attending local educational events (e.g. forums, conferences)					
14.	Preparing lessons jointly with colleagues					
15.	Visiting other schools for professional development purposes					
16.	Participating in team teaching					
17.	Doing research					
18.	Participating in syllabus design					
19.	Attending international conferences					
20.	Travelling to other countries for professional development purposes					

End of the questionnaire.