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An Examination of Teachers' Continuous Professional Development Programmes and Implication for Quality Education in Basic Education Schools, Plateau State, Nigeria

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Abstract:

The study examined Teachers' Continuous Professional Development Programmes and the implication for Quality Education in Basic Education Schools, Plateau State, Nigeria.

Quality education is fundamental to the achievement of functional education. With this understanding, the study was built on the premise that teachers, being the heartbeat of quality education, are key to achieving this goal. The research advanced six objectives from which six research questions and two hypotheses were put forward to guide the study. The research methodology was based on survey design. Survey, as a versatile tool, is adaptive to both small and large samples. A self-developed questionnaire, "Teacher Professional Development Programmes Exploratory Questionnaire" (TPDPEQ), was used to obtain the opinions of teachers. The questionnaire was based on a 5-point Likert scale. A test-retest reliability test gave a value of 0.85, confirming internal consistency. The test items were further subjected to face validity. The data obtained was analyzed using frequencies, mean, standard deviation and one-tailed t-test for hypotheses testing. The level of significance was at $P < 0.05$. The findings of the study show that teachers' continuous professional development is closely linked to teacher quality and the quality of students' performance; teachers exposed to professional development programmes report a change in their competency skills and that access to such programmes hinges on overcoming identified hindrances. Teachers expressed the need for further professional development. It is recommended that governments at all levels need to prioritise the continuous professional development of teachers, who also desire to be involved in decisions involving competency skill choices for their continuous professional development. This should be backed by incentives to serve as motivation to participating teachers.

Keywords: Teacher, continuous professional development, quality education, basic education

1. Introduction

Quality education is fundamental to the achievement of national development objectives. Nigeria, being no exception, has focused on education as the main driver of national development. It is in this light that the teacher, the 'heart' of the education process, is seen as the main driver of the education process (Dashen, 2021). This point is underscored in the National Policy on Education (FGN, 2013), which recognizes the importance of quality teachers in producing quality education, with emphasis on its implication for in-service and continuous professional development of teachers, among others. In line with this imperative, the National Policy on Education states that teacher education is aimed at producing highly motivated, conscientious and effective classroom teachers. It also aims to encourage further the spirit of enquiry and creativity and to produce an intellectual and professional background for the teachers who are adaptable to any changing situation and have a commitment to the teaching profession (FRN, 2013).

To achieve these purposes, the government outlined policy objectives emphasizing continuous professional development, in which teacher education shall continue to take cognizance of changes in methodology and curriculum. In achieving this, teachers shall be regularly exposed to innovations in the profession through continuous teacher professional development. It also states that opportunities shall be created to allow for professional growth at all levels to improve the quality of education at the primary and secondary levels (FGN, 2013). Similar concerns can be linked to the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation Commissioned study anchored on the belief that teachers want and need support to develop their practice so that their students can succeed. The Bill and Melinda study analysed teacher views on continuous professional development and arrived at the conclusion that teachers expressed the need for professional development that is relevant and hands-on, sustained over time and, above all, needed to be treated as adult professionals (ability to make inputs in their professional development programmes). The study also established the fact that teachers who have a

choice in their competency needs for professional development report greater satisfaction (The Boston Consulting Group, 2014).

In line with the focus of this study, the Context, Input, Process and Product (CIPP) model, as propounded by Stufflebeam (1966), formed the theoretical framework for the study. The model is decision-based and, therefore, considered appropriate for an evaluative study. Consequently, the study proceeded to determine the types of teacher continuous professional development programmes available to teachers, whether such programmes reached appropriate beneficiaries (the teacher), whether teachers reported meeting their competency skill needs through such programmes and whether teachers reported access and satisfaction with teacher professional development programmes provided.

Studies have shown a series of findings on access to and teacher satisfaction with various teacher professional development programmes. These studies include those of Boyle, While and Boyle (2004), Goodall et al. (2005), Onderi and Crall (2009), the Boston Consulting Group (2014) and Dashen (2014). A review of these studies shows that teachers reported varied opinions with regard to their satisfaction with the continuous professional development programmes they attended. Also, studies by Abolaji and Rosseau (1998), Ondari Crall (2001), Boyle, While & Boyle (2004), the Boston Consulting Group (2014) and Dashen, (2014) all point to the fact that teachers generally reported satisfaction with teacher continuous professional development programmes attended by them, but with varied opinions on the levels of satisfaction gained. The findings further reveal that:

- Teachers still felt that their inputs were not always sought in the design of professional development programmes meant for them and would wish to see improvements in this direction,
- Their views were important in making decisions regarding their skill needs for professional development if the desired impact were to be achieved,
- Professional development programmes were necessary and useful in providing opportunities for acquiring new ideas in teaching methods and strategies necessary for improving their class practice skills,
- Teachers who had been exposed to some form of professional development reported experiencing changes in their teaching skills,
- Teachers' access to professional development was limited by factors such as release time and funding, lack of incentives for teachers who acquire added knowledge and experience from such programmes and a lack of enabling teaching/learning environment to apply new knowledge acquired.

Arising from this background is the motivation for this study. The study sets out to determine the types of continuous professional development available to teachers, if the continuous professional development met teachers' expectations in terms of access, improvement in teachers' competency skills, students' performance and the impediments teachers face in the process, among others.

1.1. Problem Statement

Among all the critical factors that result in quality education, including the curriculum, funding and class size, teacher quality, sustained by continuous professional development, remains the most important. It is observed that the low quality of education is largely a reflection of the low quality of teachers. The imperative of continuous professional development of teachers, therefore, stems from the fact that no matter the efficacy of pre-service training given to teachers, there will continue to exist areas of deficiencies for which teacher continuous professional development programmes will need to fill. In Nigeria, and specifically Plateau state, however, the efficacy of teacher professional development programmes in meeting the competency skill needs of teachers remains an area of concern. These concerns relate to whether such programmes are available, whether they meet teachers' competency skill needs and students' performance and the constraints faced by teachers in accessing available programmes. It is in this light that the research sets out to examine teacher professional development programmes and implications for quality education in basic education schools of Plateau State, Nigeria.

1.2. Objectives

The study is inspired by the desire to address the endemic culture of an educational system that is in dire need of quality teachers who are responsive to the dynamics of national development. The study aligns with the position that teachers need continuous professional development to achieve this. The study was, therefore, guided by the following objectives:

- To determine the types of continuous professional development programmes teachers have participated in the past five years.
- To determine whether teachers' participation in continuous professional development improves their competency skills.
- To determine if teachers see any association between their continuous professional development and students' performance.
- To determine hindrances teachers face in participating in continuous professional development programmes.
- To determine competency skill needs, teachers indicate a preference for future continuous professional development.

1.3. Research Questions

The following research questions were advanced to address the objectives of the study:

- What types of continuous professional development programmes have teachers participated in the past five years?
- Does teachers' participation in continuous professional development improve their competency skills?
- Do teachers report any association between their continuous professional development and students' performance?
- Do teachers face any impediments in accessing continuous professional development programmes?
- What competency skill needs do teachers indicate as a preference for future continuous professional development?

1.4. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested:

- Ho1: There is no significant difference in the types of continuous professional development programmes available to teachers.
- Ho 2: There is no significant difference in teachers' opinions on experiencing a change in their competency skills as a result of undergoing continuous professional development programmes.

2. Methodology

The study adopted the survey design approach to obtain the opinions of teachers. A survey is a versatile tool as it is adaptive to both small and large samples (Kelinger, 1979; Dashen, 2014). Using a survey allows for a random selection of relatively limited data as a representative of a larger population with a focus on variables and not the individuals involved (Ary, Chaser & Razevieh, 1972; Rubin & Babbie, 2008). Teachers in Plateau State public basic secondary schools made up the population for the study. A random sample of 300 teachers was obtained from two, randomly selected, out of the three Zonal Education Areas of the state.

2.1. Research Instrument

The study used a self-developed questionnaire, "*Teacher Professional Development Programmes Exploratory Questionnaire*" (TPDPEQ). Harris (1980) observed that the evaluation of teachers' professional development programmes has been dominated by the use of questionnaires. Questionnaires, such as interviews, tests and observations, are research instruments that are synonymous with survey research design (Harris, 1980). The questionnaire consisted of Section A, which was made up of the biodata of the respondents, of qualification, age, sex, school location, teaching experience and subject taught. Section B consisted of questionnaire items made up of five sections aligning with the research questions. The 5-point Likert scale was used in obtaining the opinion of teachers. A test-retest reliability test gave a value of 0.85, confirming internal consistency and face validity by specialists confirming the questionnaire items as reliable and valid, respectively.

2.2. Data Analysis

The questionnaire items were converted into frequencies and the data were further analysed using mean and standard deviation in testing research questions and one-tailed t-test in the test of hypotheses. A mean of 2.50 was set as a decision point for accepting (>2.50) or rejecting (<2.50) questionnaire items while the hypotheses were tested at a $P < 0.05$ level of significance.

3. Data Analysis and Discussion

3.1. Research Question 1

What Types of Continuous Professional Development Programmes Have Teachers Participated in The Past Five Years?

S/N	Question Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision Point
1	Workshop	240	2.38	.873	Rejected
2	Conferences	252	1.75	.943	Rejected
3	Seminar	193	1.82	.965	Rejected
4	Short courses	264	1.79	.914	Rejected
5	Observation of colleagues in class	297	2.50	1.034	Rejected
6	Study group with other teachers	254	2.39	1.002	Rejected
7	Coaching (from a specialist)	272	2.21	.947	Rejected
8	Mentoring (from school-based experienced colleagues)	257	2.35	1.080	Rejected
9	Networking (collaboration with colleagues/ within the school or with other schools)	278	2.29	1.056	Rejected
10	Research/enquiry (deliberate policy of the school to encourage teachers to meet to compare experiences)	259	2.19	.984	Rejected

S/N	Question Items	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision Point
11	Sharing practice (deliberate policy to encourage teachers to meet to compare experiences)	285	2.26	.957	Rejected
12	Drop-in-clinics (special sessions to x-ray and diagnose solutions to specific teaching-learning challenges encountered in the course of teaching.	292	2.04	1.041	Rejected
	Overall Mean		2.16		Rejected

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation Response of the Continuous Professional Development Programmes Teachers Have Participated in the Past 5 Years

Table 1 presents the Mean and Standard Deviation response of teachers' continuous professional development programmes participation in the past five years. Twelve items were presented to the respondents. All the twelve items fell at rejection at the Standard Deviation and Mean decision point with an overall mean average (2.16<2.50). However, workshop (2.38), mentoring (2.35) and observation of colleagues (2.50) reported higher means (>2.50) of programmes participation, while conferences (1.75), seminar (1.82) and short courses (1.79) reported lower means (<2.50) of programme participation by teachers within the five years under focus. The results implied that teachers generally had very limited opportunities to participate in continuous professional development programmes in the past five (5) years.

3.2. Research Questions 2

Does teachers' participation in continuous professional development improve their competency skills?

S/N		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision Point
1	It has updated my subject area knowledge.	173	3.06	.653	Accepted
2	It has enhanced my lesson-planning skills	248	3.31	.651	Accepted
3	It has enhanced my skills in setting exam questions (objectives, essay and marking scheme)	258	3.31	.674	Accepted
4	It has improved my classroom management techniques	265	3.35	.659	Accepted
5	My skills in the application and use of ICT facilities (computer, internet) in learning, teaching and research are more effective.	261	2.98	.764	Accepted
6	I am more proficient in the use of teaching styles and methods	249	3.21	.651	Accepted
7	It has enhanced my competence in the application of formative and summative evaluation techniques	263	3.14	.619	Accepted
8	My questioning techniques have improved	310	3.19	.561	Accepted
9	I can communicate with students in the teaching and learning process more efficiently	260	3.24	.697	Accepted
10	My capacity to produce and use teaching aids has improved	256	3.24	.629	Accepted
11	I have acquired skills in teaching students with special needs	252	2.94	.773	Accepted
12	My understanding and application of professional ethics have been enhanced.	249	3.12	.700	Accepted
13	My skills in Action Research Techniques have improved.	251	3.04	.674	Accepted
14	I have been able to gain an additional qualification from such programmes	249	3.11	.741	Accepted
15	I am more proficient in time management	256	3.10	.646	Accepted
	Overall Mean		3.16		Accepted

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation Response of the Level of Improvement in Teachers' Report in Their Competency Skills

Table 2 shows that the Mean and Standard Deviation scores report the improvement in teachers' teaching skills. Fifteen question items were presented to the participants.

All the fifteen items were accepted at the Standard Deviation and Mean decision point with an overall mean average (3.16>2.50). However, teachers reported greater improvement in skills of classroom management (3.35), enhanced lesson planning skills (3.31), enhanced skill in setting exams (3.31), use of teaching method and style (3.21) and capacity to produce and use teaching aids (3.14). The items teachers reported the least improvement in competency skills are the use of skills for teaching students with special needs (2.94) and ICT skills (2.98).

3.3. Research Question 3

Do teachers report any association between their continuous professional development and students' performance?

S/N		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision Point
1	My students' performance has improved	271	3.28	.603	Accepted
2	My students exhibit more capacity for independent learning.	261	3.08	.622	Accepted
3	My students' enthusiasm for learning has improved.	290	2.97	.649	Accepted
4	My students understand concepts with ease	271	2.99	.672	Accepted
5	My students exhibit proficiency in skills application.	255	3.01	.710	Accepted
6	My students have developed self-confidence in the learning process.	263	3.16	.644	Accepted
7	The progression rate of my students has improved	261	3.04	.690	Accepted
	Overall Mean		3.08		Accepted

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation Response of Teachers' Opinions on the Association between Continuous Professional Development Programmes and Students' Performance

Table 3 presents the Mean and Standard Deviation scores of teachers' opinions on the association between their continuous professional development and students' performance.

All the seven items were accepted at the Standard Deviation and Mean decision points with an overall mean average (3.08>2.50). Items with means above the decision point average (>2.50) include:

- Improvement in students' performance (3.28),
- Development in students' self-confidence in the learning process (3.16) and
- Exhibition of students' more independent learning capacity (3.08).

It can be concluded that there is a strong association between professional development programmes attended by teachers and students' performance.

3.4. Research Question 4

Do Teachers Face Impediments in Accessing Continuous Professional Development Programmes?

S/N		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision Point
1	Lack of opportunities for professional development programmes.	278	3.42	.745	Accepted
2	Lack of access to funding to attend professional development programmes.	247	3.45	.713	Accepted
3	Absence of school-based, organized, professional development programmes.	250	3.26	.700	Accepted
4	Poor commitment of leaders to support and organize professional development programmes.	262	3.29	.793	Accepted
5	Time constraints to participate, especially in schools' professional development programmes, where available.	280	2.91	.791	Accepted
6	Lack of trained continuous professional development facilitators, especially for school-based professional development.	269	3.02	.893	Accepted
7	Lack of resources needed for effective professional development.	266	3.26	.822	Accepted
8	Heavy workload giving little or no time for professional development activities by teachers	264	3.20	.782	Accepted
9	Lack of adequate synergy among teachers for professional development activities.	255	3.04	.846	Accepted

S/N		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision Point
10	Content of continuous professional development is not always relevant to teachers' professional development skills needs.	263	2.63	1.036	Accepted
11	Poor organization of continuous professional development I have so far attended.	262	2.86	.860	Accepted
12	Teachers limited understanding and knowledge of the need for continuous professional development	248	2.93	.869	Accepted
13	Lack of incentives for teachers who participate in school-based professional development.	263	3.30	.703	Accepted
14	Lack of involvement of teachers in determining their skills needs in planning for their professional development activities	253	3.23	.792	Accepted
	Overall Mean		3.13		Accepted

Table 4: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on Opinion of Teachers on Impediments to Their Participation in Continuous Professional Development Activities

Table 4 presents the mean and standard deviation scores of the impediments teachers face in accessing continuous professional development programmes.

All the fourteen items were accepted at the Standard Deviation and Mean decision points with an overall mean average (3.13>2.50). Impediments with higher means are:

- Lack of access to funding for professional development activities (3.45),
- Lack of opportunities for professional development programmes (3.42), Lack of incentives for teachers who participated in school-based professional development activities (3.30) and
- Lack of involvement of teachers in determining their skill needs in planning for their professional development programmes (3.23).

These findings reflect a concern about the impediments affecting teachers' involvement in decisions concerning their continuous professional development.

3.5. Research Question 5

What competency skill needs do teachers indicate as a preference for future continuous professional development?

S/N		N	Mean	Std. Dev.	Decision Point
1	Update knowledge in my subject area	275	3.43	.687	Accepted
2	Lesson planning	264	3.02	.854	Accepted
3	Setting questions (objectives, essay marking scheme) and	297	2.83	.881	Accepted
4	Classroom management techniques	276	2.89	.908	Accepted
5	Application of ICT in teaching/ learning research and	269	3.35	.771	Accepted
6	Teaching styles and methods	265	3.08	.810	Accepted
7	Evaluation/assessment techniques	252	3.02	.798	Accepted
8	Questioning techniques	249	2.94	.873	Accepted
9	Communication techniques in teaching learning and	235	3.07	.821	Accepted
10	Production and use of teaching aids	254	3.03	.767	Accepted
11	Teaching students with special needs	252	3.37	.780	Accepted
12	Professional ethics	301	3.16	.702	Accepted
13	Action research techniques	250	3.18	.745	Accepted
14	Additional qualification courses	273	3.31	.724	Accepted
15	Time management	262	2.94	.840	Accepted
	Overall Mean		3.11		Accepted

Table 5: Mean and Standard Deviation Scores on the Competency Skills Teachers Indicate a Need for Further Continuous Professional Development

Table 5 presents the mean and standard deviation scores of teachers' opinions on competency skill preference for further continuous professional development. All the items were accepted at the Standard Deviation and Mean decision points with an overall average mean of 3.11>2.50 decision points. Mean scores of items indicating a higher preference for competency skills needs include:

- Updating knowledge in the subject area (3.43),
- Teaching students with special needs (3.37),
- Application of ICT in teaching and learning (3.35),

- Additional qualification courses (3.31) and
- Action research techniques (3.18).

The result indicates a need by teachers for further continuous professional development programmes in all the itemized areas with an emphasis on the above five identified areas of need.

3.5.1. Testing of Hypotheses: Two Hypotheses Were Tested

- Ho1: There is no significant difference in the types of continuous professional development programmes available to teachers.

	N	Mean	Std. Dev	T	df	Sig (p-value)
Types of continuous professional development programmes	12	2.16	.256	4.55	11	.001

Table 6

The one-tailed t-test result shows that there exists a significant difference in the types of continuous professional development programmes available to teachers. The hypothesis was rejected as the p-value of 0.01 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. This shows a significant difference in the types of continuous professional development programmes available to teachers.

- Ho2: There is no significant difference in teachers' opinions on experiencing a change in their competency skills as a result of undergoing continuous professional development programmes.

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Dev.	T	Df	Sig (p-Value)
Change experienced in their Competency skills	15	3.16	.123	20.73	14	.000

Table 7

The result of the one-tailed t-test result shows that there is a significant difference in teachers' opinions on experiencing a change in their competency skills as a result of undergoing continuous professional development programmes. The hypothesis was rejected since the p-value of 0.00 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. From the findings, it can be seen that continuous professional development significantly improves teacher's competency skills and enhance teaching and learning performance.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The study focused on teachers' continuous professional development programmes and implications for quality education in basic education schools with specific reference to Plateau State, Nigeria.

The first interest was to find out the continuous professional development programmes teachers had the opportunity to participate in the past five years. All the twelve items fell at rejection at the Standard Deviation and Mean decision point with an overall mean average (2.16<2.50), a confirmation that opportunities for professional development available to teachers were generally scanty. Item-by-item analysis shows that except for conference attendance (2.52) and observation of colleagues (2.50), all the other items had mean scores <2.50. The differences were significant as the p-value 0.000<0.05 significance level. This finding agrees with a similar study by Dilshad, Hussin, and Batool (2019), in which teachers reported moderate participation in professional development activities with varying rates of participation. This will require the attention of programme planners as teachers will always require professional development opportunities in various forms.

To determine whether teachers' participation in continuous professional development programmes impact on their competency skills, fifteen items were raised and tested. All the fifteen items were accepted at the Standard Deviation and Mean decision point with an overall mean average (3.16>2.50). Further look at the means, item by item, shows teachers reported a higher impact on their competency skills in classroom management, lesson planning skills, setting of exams, use of teaching methods and capacity to produce and use teaching aids. The study by Young, Liu and Gordela Jr. (2018) established that teachers who follow a professional learning community have a positive impact on their competencies. This finding also agrees with that of Abass and David (2021), who established a significant impact on teachers' competency skills from professional development programmes participation. In a similar study, Mallese and Gulia (2019), however, observed that teachers reported improvement in some, but not all, competency skills from continuous professional development participation. In this study, ICT skills and teaching students with special needs showed the least impact on teachers' competency. The fact that a study by you (2016) in an America-based research found that online professional development increased teacher self-efficacy implies more needs to be done in upscaling the development of ICT skills in the area under study. It was also established that the improvement in teachers' competency skills arising from the professional development they had attended was significant at p-value 0.00< p0.05 level of significance.

To assess whether teachers see a link between their students' performance and their professional development, seven questionnaire items were used to assess teachers' opinions. All the seven items were accepted at the Standard Deviation and Mean decision points with an overall mean average (3.08>2.50), confirming an overwhelming agreement

among teachers on the positive effect on students' performance. Item-by-item analysis of teachers' opinions indicates improvement in the area of students' performance, development of self-confidence and independent learning capacity by students. This is in tandem with findings by Tantawy (2020), which linked the positive influence of professional development on teachers' performance to students' outcomes. Studies that support this finding also include those of Bicay (2014), who found that professional development improves the quality of teaching, especially in methodologies with improvement in students' critical and logical thinking. The studies by Abbasi and David (2016) established a correlation between the learning outcomes of students and teachers' performance. Young, Liu and Gordela Jr. (2018) concluded that teachers who are exposed to a professional learning community reflect positively on their students and Yangambi (2021) found that teachers agree on the importance of teacher continuous professional development on students' achievement.

To find out the impediments hindering teachers' participation in continuous professional development, fourteen questionnaire items were put forward, with all the fourteen items accepted at the Standard Deviation and Mean decision points with an overall mean average ($3.13 > 2.50$). Most reported impediments include inadequate access to funding, lack of continuous professional development opportunities and teachers' inability to participate where available. This finding agrees to that of Bilshad, Bashir and Batool (2019), who found that time, funding and lack of opportunities for study leave constituted impediments for teachers. This concern has also been echoed in various studies, such as that of Gatrict & Pradash (2019) and Bilshad, Bashir & Humera (2019), who variously found that teachers face impediments in areas such as lack of incentives, shortage of time, lack of funding, lack of opportunities for study leave, lack of support from stakeholders and lack of trained continuous professional development facilitators. That teachers report barriers to professional development should be a thing of concern. This means that teachers and all stakeholders need to synergise in ensuring teachers have unimpeded access to continuous professional development opportunities by removing observed barriers.

Of strategic importance is the need for the inclusion of teachers in identifying the skills needed in planning for their continuous professional development. Teachers' opinion was sought in this direction. A fifteen-item questionnaire was administered to obtain teachers' opinions on the skill needs they would desire for their future continuous professional development. All the items were accepted at the Standard Deviation and Mean decision points with an overall average mean of $3.11 > 2.50$ decision points, indicating teachers have skills preferences for their continuous professional development and in varying degrees of needs. An item-by-item analysis shows that teachers have preferences for competency skills needs for:

- Continuous professional development in updating knowledge in a subject area (3.43),
- Teaching students with special needs (3.37) and
- Application of ICT in teaching and learning (3.35).

Getriect and Pradash (2019), in a similar study, indicate that teachers do express preferences for specific continuous professional development needs, such as in curriculum and classroom management. This finding is also buttressed in the study by Bilshad, Bashir & Humera (2019) of teachers considering specific competency skills such as communication, management, and research skills as important for inclusion in their future continuous professional development. Unfortunately, teachers' skill preferences are not usually keyed into planning for their continuous professional development as collaborated in studies by Alhasan, Mohammed and Gunu (2022) and Yudi and Syaofah (2019) that teachers express disappointment in continuous professional development programmes offered as not aligning with their working needs or are inappropriate for implementation in the classroom.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

The findings show that teachers' continuous professional development holds unlimited opportunities for the attainment of teachers' quality and improved students' performance. This is premised on the fact that when teachers are given the opportunity for capacity development, they report a change in their competency skills. This, as established from the study, is, however, contingent on certain factors such as the availability of a variety of professional development programmes, and teachers' ability to access professional development programmes devoid of limitations to access. Teachers expressed the need for opportunities for continuous professional development, which provides the needed environment that can be leveraged for continuous competency skills training. Teachers also desire their inputs in decisions regarding the choice of competency skill needs in planning for their continuous professional development.

5.2. Recommendations

It is recommended that governments at all levels need to prioritise the continuous professional development of teachers. Teachers should be active participants in the choice of competency skill needs for continuous professional development. Teachers need to be given incentives that take away barriers to accessing continuous professional development opportunities. The study can be further extended to other variables such as gender, years of experience, qualification and subject distribution.

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