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## Perceptions and Needs of University Teachers Toward Continuous Professional Development: Evidence from an Emerging Country

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### ABSTRACT

This study delves into the perceptions and needs of Bangladeshi university teachers regarding Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in classroom teaching. Using a quantitative approach, data was collected from 110 teachers through a standardized questionnaire. The goal of the study is to improve CPD programs by aligning them with the teachers' needs and perceptions. The results reveal that although many teachers actively participate in CPD activities, their perception of its importance and the support they receive from their institutions varies. While a minority of participants believe CPD is crucial for their current employment, many express encouragement from their institutions to engage in CPD. Popular methods of continuous professional development include attending seminars, webinars, workshops, and accessing online resources. However, teachers face several challenges in participating in CPD, such as limited resources, language barriers, technological constraints, and inadequate institutional support. These limitations highlight the need for more accessible and supportive CPD programs. Teachers prefer CPD activities that promote collaboration, flexibility, and align with their professional goals. They also expect CPD to cover aspects such as curriculum development, teaching methods, and technology integration. The findings stress the importance of initiating CPD programs that cater to the individual needs and preferences of university teachers. Institutions should provide more resources, such as flexible scheduling, financial assistance, and internal workshops, to address the identified challenges and meet teachers' expectations. By doing so, CPD programs can enhance professional development, classroom performance, and overall teaching satisfaction. This study offers a comprehensive understanding of the CPD requirements and perspectives of university teachers, which can guide the development of more effective and targeted professional development activities in Bangladesh.

### INTRODUCTION

Continuous professional development (CPD) has become essential for university teachers looking to maintain and improve their teaching competencies in the ever-changing field of higher education (Singh *et al.*, 2021). Because of the dynamic nature of educational paradigms and developments in pedagogical approaches and technology, teachers must continuously update their knowledge and abilities to deliver high-quality classroom teaching (Roy *et al.*, 2023). This is especially important in emerging nations like Bangladesh, where the infrastructure for education is always changing to keep up with international norms. In this evolution, university teachers are attaining educational excellence in their professional growth (Rahnuma, 2020; Sarkar *et al.*, 2021; Shater *et al.*, 2024).

The particular challenges faced by university teachers in Bangladesh emphasize the necessity of focused CPD programs. These include the need to strike a balance between teaching, research, and administrative duties, as well as resource limitations and disparities in institutional support (Padillo *et al.*, 2021). Notwithstanding these obstacles, teachers continue to have a strong commitment to professional development because they want to enhance student outcomes and adjust to the changing needs of the learning environment (Hennessy *et al.*, 2022).

A combination of official and informal events, such as peer observations, workshops, and seminars, as well as self-directed learning, define Bangladesh's contemporary CPD environment (Ansong-Gyimah, 2020).

The purpose of this study is to investigate how Bangladeshi university teachers perceive CPD in the classroom and what they need. Through an analysis of their perspectives regarding current CPD opportunities, the obstacles they face, and their unique requirements for professional development, this study aims to offer insights that help guide the creation and execution of more successful CPD initiatives (Bett & Makewa, 2020; Tonido *et al.*, 2024). It is vital to comprehend these viewpoints to devise tactics that are applicable and easily comprehensible for teachers, hence augmenting the quality of teaching they provide. The main goals of the study are to find out what drives instructors to participate in CPD and how they perceive it influencing their teaching strategies (Beckett, 2024). In alignment with these objectives, the research questions are formulated as follows:

### RQ1

What are the perceptions of Bangladeshi university teachers towards the effectiveness of CPD in the current educational landscape?

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## RQ2

What specific needs and challenges the Bangladeshi university teachers face in participating the CPD activities and how these can be solved for their professional development?

This study analyzes survey data from university teachers across disciplines using a quantitative method and descriptive statistics. This approach offers insights on enhancing CPD in Bangladeshi higher education by exposing perceptions of CPD engagement, highlighting areas in need, and finding different CPD aspects and preferences.

In the end, this research adds to the larger discussion on educational development in developing nations by emphasizing the crucial role that CPD plays in developing a workforce of teachers who are flexible, competent, and driven to meet the demands of contemporary education. This study intends to assist policymakers, educational leaders, and professional development providers in developing more successful CPD programs by offering evidence-based recommendations. To ensure that university instructors in Bangladesh have the tools and assistance they need to succeed in their positions and improve the nation's higher education, these programs should be specifically designed to meet their demands.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Introduction to Professional Development for University Teachers

In Bangladesh, improving the quality of higher education requires university teachers to participate in professional development (Bragg *et al.*, 2021). It is introduced by Derakhshan *et al.* (2020) that the role that university teachers play in influencing the next generation of learners is becoming more and more important as the educational landscape changes. Teachers are empowered to stay updated with the newest pedagogical approaches, technological innovations, and subject matter expertise through Continuous Professional Development (CPD). Even though the value of CPD is becoming more widely accepted, many Bangladeshi university teachers still have difficulty finding high-quality opportunities for professional development (Dolighan & Owen, 2021). These difficulties include a lack of institutional support, time restraints, and resource limitations. To ensure that instructors can improve their teaching effectiveness and fully benefit from CPD programs, these challenges must be addressed (Esteve-Mon *et al.*, 2020; Fairman *et al.*, 2022).

In Bangladeshi higher education, the demand for an organized and easily accessible CPD framework is greater than ever. The effectiveness of CPD programs can have a major impact on the quality of instruction, student learning outcomes, and general educational standards. CPD programs support university teachers' culture of lifelong learning and help to improve the academic environment over time (Fernández-Batanero *et al.*, 2022; Goa, 2021).

Gumbo (2020) and Hennessy *et al.* (2022) stated that CPD activities are organized and promoted by several stakeholders, including governmental agencies, academic institutions, and professional groups. These initiatives are crucial to provide university teachers access to various pertinent and varied learning opportunities, such as recognized courses, peer mentorship programs, and workshops and seminars.

It is crucial to comprehend teachers' perceptions and needs about professional development to optimize the effects of CPD on teaching at universities. Policymakers and educational leaders can create more successful CPD programs that meet the various demands of educators across disciplines by understanding the unique difficulties and preferences of university teachers in Bangladesh (Kálmán *et al.*, 2020; Karlberg, M. & Bezzina, 2022).

### Perceptions of University Teachers Towards Continuous Professional Development

According to Kim *et al.*, (2019), most Bangladeshi university teachers agree that continuing professional development (CPD) is essential to improving their instruction and being up to date with new developments in the field. To enhance student learning outcomes, adapt to new teaching techniques, and gain pedagogical skills, they perceive continuing professional development (CPD) as a vital instrument for professional advancement (Kasprabowo *et al.*, 2018; Kelkay, 2020).

Even though CPD's advantages are acknowledged, Lay *et al.* (2020) and Longaquit (2024) found that a lot of teachers find it difficult to take advantage of these possibilities. Time restraints, a hard job, and restricted access to excellent CPD programs are typical obstacles that prevent them from participating. Some educators believe that their needs for professional development are not being adequately satisfied as a result (Lindfors *et al.*, 2021; Mercader & Gairín, 2020).

University teachers also believe that CPD courses are frequently irrelevant to their particular teaching environments (Ngenzi *et al.*, 2021). They indicate a need for more specialized CPD options that address the particular difficulties they face in the classroom and are in keeping with the requirements peculiar to their subject. Disengagement and a lack of willingness to participate might result from this mismatch between the requirements of teachers and the CPD options that are accessible (Phothongsunan, 2018).

University teachers say that programs should be more flexible, accessible, and relevant to their professional needs to improve the effectiveness of CPD (Powell & Bodur, 2019).

They support a collaborative approach to CPD design, in which educators actively participate in determining the direction and substance of initiatives for professional development. CPD programs can help teachers in their continuous attempts to improve their methods of instruction and raise the standard of higher education in Bangladesh by attending to these issues.

### Needs of EFL Teachers for Continuous Professional Development

Bangladeshi university teachers make it apparent that they require Continuous Professional Development (CPD) opportunities that are closely related to their particular fields of study. They search for Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs that emphasize advanced research skills, subject-specific teaching strategies, and technological integration in the classroom. Teachers would ultimately profit from these specialized programs by being able to improve their knowledge and stay up to date in their specialties (Rich *et al.*, 2021; Romijn *et al.*, 2021).

Teachers require flexible and accessible Continuing Professional Development (CPD) programs in addition to discipline-specific curricula (Rudi *et al.*, 2020). There is a high demand for online or blended learning solutions that let teachers engage in professional development activities at their own pace, given the busy schedules of university teachers. Their work schedules would be accommodated by flexible CPD forms, which would facilitate their continued learning (Sancar *et al.*, 2021; Scott *et al.*, 2023). University professors have highlighted the provision of chances for continuing professional development that promotes peer interaction and collaborative learning as a major necessity (Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021). Teachers cherish exchanging concepts, insights, and optimal methodologies with their peers, as this can result in enhanced pedagogical approaches and inventive resolutions to shared predicaments. Professional development initiatives that foster cooperation and networking would offer a nurturing atmosphere for advancement (Smith & Gillespie, 2023; Suwannatrai *et al.*, 2022).

Instructors also stress the need for continuing education initiatives that are approved and recognized by respectable organizations (Svendsen, 2020). In addition to adding value to the professional development activities, accreditation improves the career opportunities for instructors. For educators hoping to progress in their professions, programs offering certification or recognition from reputable academic bodies or professional associations are highly desirable (Tack & Vanderlinde, 2020; Tejedor *et al.*, 2021).

Ultimately, CPD programs that consider Bangladesh's changing educational landscape are requested by university teachers. This covers instruction in subjects including instructional design, assessment methods, and educational leadership found by Toropova *et al.* (2021). The demands of contemporary higher education, such as the growing number of students, the need for interdisciplinary approaches, and the inclusion of global viewpoints in the curriculum, have teachers eager to acquire the skills necessary to meet these problems. CPD programs can significantly contribute to raising the standard of higher education in Bangladesh by addressing these needs (Trikoilis & Papanastasiou, 2020; Zhang *et al.*, 2021).

### Empirical Study

This empirical study by Goa (2021), used an experimental design with 52 teachers from five primary schools in India to investigate how needs-based Continuous Professional Development (CPD) affected the attitudes of English language teachers. The results showed that after using needs-based CPD strategies, English language instructors' perceptions significantly improved. Their perceptions were not significantly different before the intervention, but after it, a change in direction was seen. According to this, customized CPD activities successfully improve teachers' attitudes toward professional development, emphasizing the significance of addressing particular requirements in CPD programs to boost instructional strategies and results.

This study conducted by Scott *et al.* (2023), looked at the relationship between teacher self-efficacy, institutional policies, and academic optimism about CPD in Chinese higher education. To learn more about these linkages, information was obtained from 456 instructors. The results showed that a strong sense of institutional support and academic optimism are important factors in improving instructors' CPD. Individual self-efficacy, however, didn't seem to have much of an effect on how engaged they were in CPD activities. The significance of institutional leadership in fostering an academic environment that promotes and facilitates teachers' continuous professional growth is underscored by these findings.

This study conducted by Phothongsunan (2018), looks at how 30 English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors at Thai public universities feel about their professional growth. According to research, even while colleges provide possibilities for in-service education, the majority of teachers believe that earning a higher degree is essential for improving their careers and earning more money. While student learning and teacher collaboration are important motivators, internal politics, a hefty teaching workload, and research demands impede professional development. The majority of educators are happy with their universities' attempts to enhance English instruction despite these obstacles. The report emphasizes how important it is to provide additional opportunities and assistance for worthwhile professional growth.

Rudi *et al.* (2020) investigate how Didactical Design Research (DDR) is applied in Collaborative Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) and how Indonesian teachers view it. The study reveals that educators have a preference for meetings with 2-4 lesson hours, monthly sessions, 10-20 participants, and a focus on government engagement, technology, and research-based activities. These preferences are incorporated into the DDR-based PLC design, which consists of 12 meetings that commence with a student difficulty test and conclude with results dissemination. The study emphasizes how crucial it is to match teachers' perspectives with PLC design to maximize efficacy.

Although the empirical studies offer insightful information about CPD practices, they also highlight a contextual gap that limits their applicability in a variety of contexts. The study mostly concentrates on English language instructors or particular geographic areas, such as China, Thailand, and Indonesia, ignoring a wider range of academic fields and diverse learning environments. Research on the effectiveness of CPD initiatives in other academic fields or in developing nations with unique educational difficulties is scarce. Furthermore, studies frequently ignore institutional cultures and regional differences that could affect how effective CPD programs are. Closing these contextual gaps can improve CPD's efficacy and relevance in a variety of educational contexts.

## MATERIALS & METHODS

### Research Design

This study adopted a quantitative research methodology to explore the perceptions, needs, and challenges of University teachers in Bangladesh regarding Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in classroom teaching.

### Participants

The participants consisted of university teachers currently employed in Bangladesh. A snowball sampling approach was used to ensure a diverse representation across variables such as gender, age, academic discipline, institution type (public or private), years of experience, and geographical location. The study targets a sample size

**Table 1:** Demographic Analysis

Descriptors	Items	Frequency (N=110)
Gender	Male	41
	Female	69
Age	Below or equal to 30	9
	31 – 40	53
	41 – 50	43
	Above 50	5
Institution Type	Public	30
	Private	80
Academic Discipline	STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics)	40
	Arts and Social Sciences	34
	Business Administration	28
	Education and Others	8
Location	Dhaka	61
	Outside Dhaka	49
Year of teaching experience	Less than 5	44
	5-10 years	50
	More than 10	16

of 110 university teachers, using non-probability sampling due to the absence of a definitive sampling frame. Table 1 shows the demographic profile of respondents.

The table shows the demographic and professional characteristics of the 110 participants. The majority of the responders are female (62.7%), with men accounting for 37.3%. The largest age group is 31-40 years (48.2%), followed by 41-50 years (39.1%), with lesser proportions aged 30 or below (8.2%) and over 50 (4.5%).

In terms of institution type, 72.7% of them are employed in private universities and the rest 27.3% of them are employed in public institutions. When it comes to academic disciplines, 36.4% work in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics) discipline, 30.9% in Arts and Social Sciences discipline, and 25.5% in Business Administration discipline, and 7.3% in Education and other disciplines. Geographically, 55.5% of the participants work in Dhaka, with the remaining 44.5% working outside the city including

Rajshahi (15.3%), Chittagong (10%), Khulna (6.4%), Barishal (5.6%), Sylhet (4.5%), and others (2.7%). In terms of teaching experience, the distribution indicates that 45.5% have 5-10 years of experience, 40.0% have less than 5 years, and 14.5% have more than 10 years. Overall, the sample represents mostly female, aged 31 to 50 years, and primarily employed in Dhaka, with a notable concentration of professionals in the STEM discipline.

### Research Instruments

A structured questionnaire was developed as the primary tool for data collection. It comprised closed-ended Likert-scale, and demographic questions designed to gather insights into university teachers' views on CPD, the obstacles they encounter, and the support they require. The questionnaire included 19 questions: 7 demographic, 8 related to perceptions of CPD, and 4 addressing challenges and needs. Expert reviews were conducted to ensure the questionnaire's validity and clarity.

### Data Collection Procedure

The validated questionnaire was distributed electronically to the targeted university teachers in Bangladesh. Detailed instructions for completion were provided, with outreach conducted via email and social media platforms. Participation was voluntary, supplemented by follow-up communications to encourage a high response rate. Completing the questionnaire required approximately 10 minutes per participant.

### Data Analysis

Descriptive statistical methods, including frequencies and percentages, were employed to analyze the collected data by using Microsoft Excel. The findings were presented using tables, facilitating an easy comparison of results and ensuring a clear understanding of the teachers' CPD perceptions, challenges, and needs within the classroom teaching context in Bangladesh.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

In the subsequent sections, the analysis explores university teachers' perceptions and needs regarding their participation in continuous professional development (CPD). This analysis covers several themes-

- The perceptions regarding participation in continuous professional development (CPD),
- The benefits of participating in CPD activities,
- The difficulties faced in participating in CPD activities,
- Support needed for future participation in CPD activities and expected various CPD aspects.

Table 2 presents the perceptions of the participants regarding CPD participation in terms of the necessity of CPD for the current position, encouragement by the current institution for CPD participation, recent participation in CPD activities during the current position, participation in different kinds of CPD activities, number

**Table 2:** The perceptions regarding participation in continuous professional development

Descriptors	Items	Frequency (N=110)
Is CPD required for the current position	No	71
	Yes	36
	Not Sure	3
Does your current instruction encourage you to participate in CPD activities?	No	61
	Yes	48
	Not Sure	1
Have you ever attended any CPD activities?	Yes	107
	No	3
From 2023 to the present, what kinds of CPD activities have you participated in?	Attending trainings and/or workshops by the university or educational institutions	66
	Watching/ listening to online resources such as courses, or materials provided by organizations like the British Council, Coursera, or Khan Academy	63
	Exploring educational books, podcasts, YouTube video sessions, and articles independently for professional growth	62
	Attending seminars on contemporary educational practices and research methodologies	60
	Attending national and international academic conferences to stay updated with recent advancements	40
	Engaging in peer observation by sharing teaching practices and constructive feedback	38
	Enrolling in or attending accredited courses (pursuing locally advanced teaching certification programs, TESOL, etc.)	37
	Engaging in mentoring and coaching activities to support and guide new teachers	37
	Pursuing a master's or doctoral degree in a relevant field	25
	Presenting research findings and educational innovations at academic conferences	25
	Being a member of a professional association (e.g. BELTA for English, ISTE for technology in education, or NCTM for Mathematics, etc.)	25
	Others	2

Number of times participated in CPD activities since 2023	More than 9 times	20
	7-9 times	17
	4-6 times	37
	1-3 times	36
	Never	0
Key organizers of CPD activities	Professional Associations and Organizations (BELTA, ISTE, etc.)	74
	Other educational institutions in your area	61
	Your Institution	43
	University Grants Commission (UGC)	37
	Others (local or international NGOs, private education providers, etc.)	7
What forms of support does your current institution give you to take part in CPD activities?	Travel allowance	47
	Registration cost	43
	Recognition via institution media platforms	42
	Paid leave of absence	33
	Certificates	32
	Unpaid leave of absence	30
	Accommodation	29
	Others	28

of times participated in CPD activities, key organizers of CPD activities, and supports from the current institution to participate in the CPD activities.

The survey results indicate how university teachers perceive and use continuous professional development (CPD). Notably, there is a difference in opinions, with 32.7% of teachers believing that CPD is necessary for their current position, while the majority (64.5%) do not. Only 43.6% of respondents reported encouragement from their institutions to participate in CPD activities, suggesting limited support. Despite this, a significant 97.3% of respondents have participated in CPD activities in their current roles, indicating widespread engagement in professional development.

Popular CPD activities include attending workshops or training sessions (60%), using online resources (57.3%), exploring educational books, podcasts, YouTube video sessions, and articles (56.4%), and attending seminars or webinars (54.5%). Additionally, more advanced activities like pursuing a master's or doctoral degree, presenting at academic conferences, and being members of professional associations such as BELTA and ISTE are also common (22.7% each). A considerable percentage of respondents participate in professional development activities frequently, with 33.6% attending 4-6 times, 32.7% attending 1-3 times, and 18.2% attending more than 9 times since 2023.

The main organizers of CPD programs are professional associations and organizations (67.3%), other local educational institutions (55.5%), current institutions (39.1%), and the University Grants Commission (UGC) (33.6%). Institutions provide various forms of support, including travel allowances (42.7%), registration cost assistance (39.1%), recognition via institutional media platforms (38.2%), and paid leave of absence (30%).

Additionally, many respondents show a proactive interest in obtaining unpaid leave of absence (27.3%).

These results highlight the complex environment of continuous professional development for university teachers. There is a clear need for increased institutional support to match the strong personal commitment to professional development demonstrated by the teachers.

**Table 3:** The benefits of participating in CPD activities

Descriptors	Mean
Enhancing professional growth	3.57
Adapting to new technologies	3.55
Enhancing personal growth	3.53
Enhancing classroom management	3.51
Fostering lifelong learning	3.49
Having professional networks	3.48
Increasing job opportunities	3.48
Improving teaching skills	3.39
Staying updated on educational advancements	3.38
Gaining professional recognition	3.37
Increasing confidence	3.32
Increasing motivation	3.30
Better understanding of student needs	3.29
Improving English language proficiency	3.07

Table 3 presents the benefits of participating in CPD activities for teachers in their teaching careers. The highest-rated benefit is enhancing professional growth, with a mean score of 3.57, indicating that teachers highly value professional development for advancing their careers. The ability to adapt to new technologies is also important, with a mean score of 3.55. Promoting personal

growth is another significant benefit, scoring 3.53. Classroom management skills and fostering lifelong learning are also highly valued, with mean scores of 3.51 and 3.49, respectively. The benefits of having professional networks and improving career opportunities both received a mean score of 3.48, showing their perceived importance in teachers' professional lives. Improving teaching skills (mean score of 3.39) and staying updated on educational developments (mean score of 3.38) are also considered beneficial outcomes of CPD programs. Gaining professional recognition (mean score of 3.37) and increasing confidence (mean score of 3.32) are slightly

lower but still notable benefits. Increasing motivation (mean score of 3.30) and a better understanding of student needs (mean score of 3.29) are recognized as beneficial, though to a lesser extent. The lowest-rated benefit is improving English language proficiency, with a mean score of 3.07, indicating that it is considered the least important among the listed benefits. Overall, the table demonstrates that CPD activities contribute broadly to both professional and personal development, technological adoption, and classroom management, which are highly valued by teachers. Table 4 presents the difficulties faced by the teachers in participating in CPD activities.

**Table 4:** The difficulties faced in participating in CPD activities

Did you face any difficulties while participating in CPD activities in the last year, and if yes, how serious were they?	No problem	Problem (Minor & Major)
Having time constraints	20	90
Having geographical constraints	29	81
Lack of support from colleagues	30	80
Having financial constraints	38	72
Lack of support from the head	41	69
Having inadequate institutional support	42	68
Having technological limitations	43	67
Having limited networking opportunities	78	32
Having recognition and certificate issues	86	24
Lack of interest	97	13
Having a language barrier (content delivered only in English)	100	10

The survey revealed several significant challenges faced by university teachers in Bangladesh when participating in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities. The most common issue was time constraints, reported by 81.8% of participants, indicating that balancing professional duties with CPD is a major hurdle. Geographical constraints were also significant, affecting 73.6% of the teachers, highlighting the difficulty in accessing CPD opportunities due to location. A lack of support from colleagues was reported by 72.7% of participants, suggesting that peer support is crucial yet often lacking. Financial constraints were noted by 65.5%, indicating that the cost of CPD activities is a barrier for many teachers. Additionally, 62.7% of respondents felt

unsupported by their superiors, while 61.8% reported inadequate institutional support. Technological limitations impacted 60.9% of participants, pointing to issues with accessing or using technology for CPD. Limited networking opportunities and issues with recognition and certification were less problematic, affecting 29.1% and 21.8% of respondents, respectively. Only 11.8% expressed a lack of interest in CPD, and language barriers linked to English content were the least problematic, affecting only 9.1%. Table 5 presents the support needed for, expected various CPD aspects, and expectations from the current institution to participate in future CPD activities.

**Table 5:** Support needed for, various CPD aspects, and expectations from the current institution to participate in CPD activities

Descriptors	Items	Frequency (n=110)
What support do you need before deciding to participate in a CPD activity?	Having a shared, participative, and collaborative environment where you can work with others and share ideas.	89
	Having a well-trained host to lead the CPD program who is experienced and skilled.	78
	Confirming the ease of access to the resources, materials, or sessions	66



	Ensuring the activity aligns with my professional goals and interests	62
	Checking if the activity offers flexibility in scheduling or mode of participation, such as self-paced options, live sessions, or recorded content.	50
	Getting paid leave of absence to participate in the CPD activity.	50
	Verifying that there is adequate support available, including mentors, facilitators, or supplementary resources.	49
	Make sure the activity offers recognized certification or accreditation that will be valued by your school or future employers.	38
	Considering if you will receive any financial support or allowance to cover the costs of participating	35
Various expected CPD aspects	CPD on curriculum development	85
	CPD on teaching strategies and methodologies	80
	CPD on technology integration	75
	CPD on testing and Assessment	62
	CPD on classroom management	54
	CPD on understanding students' psychology	48
	CPD on education research	39
	CPD on teachers' leadership	38
	CPD on English language teaching and learning	36
How do you want your institution to help you participate in CPD? (You can choose more than one option)	Offering internal workshops and training sessions regularly, so I can easily access CPD opportunities without needing to travel or find external programs.	95
	Creating a supportive culture for professional development, where teachers are encouraged and motivated to improve their skills and share their learning experiences with colleagues.	80
	Providing recognition and incentives for participating in CPD, such as certificates, bonuses, or additional paid time off, to acknowledge and reward my efforts in professional development.	73
	Providing a flexible schedule for CPD activities so that I can attend without conflicting with my teaching duties or personal commitments.	48
	Giving financial support for CPD activities by covering costs like registration fees, travel expenses, and materials needed for the courses or workshops.	33

### Support Needed for CPD Participation

University teachers identified several key supports needed before deciding to participate in CPD activities. The most important factor was having a shared, participative, and collaborative environment, as indicated by 80.9% of respondents. A conducive learning environment led by well-trained and experienced hosts was also crucial for 70.9% of teachers.

Easy access to resources, materials, or sessions was important for 60% of participants. Additionally, ensuring that CPD activities align with their professional goals and interests, as well as offering flexibility in scheduling or participation modes, were significant factors for 56.4% and 45.5% of respondents, respectively. Other supports needed included paid leave of absence (45.5%), adequate mentoring and supplementary resources (44.5%), recognized certification or accreditation (34.5%), and financial support to cover participation costs (31.8%).

### Desired CPD Aspects and Institutional Expectations

Teachers expressed interest in various aspects of CPD, with curriculum development being the most desired

(77.3%), followed by teaching methodologies (72.7%) and technology integration (68.2%). Other important areas included testing and assessment (56.4%), classroom management (49.1%), understanding students' psychology (43.6%), educational research (35.5%), teachers' leadership (34.5%), and English language teaching and learning (32.7%).

Regarding institutional support, 86.4% of respondents desired regular internal workshops and training sessions to easily access CPD opportunities. A supportive culture for professional development was important for 72.7% of teachers, and 66.4% valued recognition and incentives for CPD participation. Flexibility in scheduling CPD activities was essential for 43.6%, and financial support to cover costs was necessary for 30%.

These findings underscore the multifaceted dynamics of CPD participation for university teachers in Bangladesh, highlighting the need for increased institutional support and resources to facilitate meaningful professional development opportunities that align with teachers' needs and preferences.

## DISCUSSION

The results about how university teachers perceive CPD (continuous professional development) show a complex picture that aligns with previous research. Although CPD is increasingly recognized for improving student outcomes and teaching effectiveness, most participants indicated that CPD participation is not required for their current roles. This is consistent with research showing that instructors often participate in CPD voluntarily (Derakhshan *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, a significant percentage of respondents stated that their organizations promote involvement in CPD; however, the response indicates a moderate level of institutional support, which aligns with research showing variations in institutional commitment to CPD (Bragg *et al.*, 2021).

A large percentage of respondents reported participating in CPD activities, with almost all indicating attendance, highlighting the importance of professional development to the teaching community. This is consistent with studies that underscore the value of CPD in supporting teachers' continuous learning and skill development (Gumbo, 2020). Additionally, the wide range of CPD activities, such as conferences, seminars, online resources, and training workshops, demonstrates a multidimensional approach to professional development, supporting literature that advocates for accessible and varied CPD opportunities (Karlberg & Bezzina, 2022). Overall, the results highlight the complex landscape of CPD beliefs and behaviors among university instructors in Bangladesh, reflecting broader patterns in the literature on educational professional development. Teachers' engagement with continuous learning programs is shaped by various CPD aspects, institutional support, and contextual considerations (Bett & Makewa, 2020).

The analysis of the CPD needs of university teachers provides valuable information on the specific needs and preferences of teachers to advance their teaching careers. The results are consistent with previous research that highlights the varied and changing demands of educators in different settings (Beckett, 2024). The study identifies several obstacles that university teachers face when trying to take advantage of CPD opportunities, such as a lack of resources, language difficulties, technological limitations, and insufficient institutional support. These challenges are consistent with earlier research showing obstacles to CPD participation, especially for non-native English speakers and those working in resource-limited environments (Ansong-Gyimah, 2020).

Additionally, the study outlines the support mechanisms, such as a collaborative environment, well-trained hosts, and flexible scheduling, that university teachers expect before engaging in CPD activities. These findings align with research supporting customized and supportive CPD frameworks that emphasize the particular requirements and preferences of teachers (Powell & Bodur, 2019). Overall, the discussion underscores the importance of inclusive and responsive CPD programs that address the unique needs and challenges faced by university

teachers, supporting their professional development and success in the classroom (Derakhshan *et al.*, 2020). The results enhance our understanding of the evolving CPD requirements in the university teaching community and help shape the development and implementation of effective professional development programs.

## Pedagogical Implications

Teachers should actively engage in CPD activities to stay updated with the latest teaching methodologies and technological advancements. They should seek out diverse CPD opportunities, including workshops, online courses, and peer observations, to enhance their professional growth. Additionally, collaborating with peers to create a supportive learning community that shares resources and best practices is essential.

Institutions should provide regular and varied CPD opportunities that are easily accessible to all teachers, regardless of geographical location. Offering financial support and incentives, such as paid leave and recognition, can encourage teachers to participate in CPD activities. Schools should also develop a supportive culture that values continuous learning and professional development. Policymakers should ensure that CPD programs are aligned with the professional goals and interests of teachers, making them relevant and practical. Promoting policies that provide adequate funding and resources for CPD, especially for universities in remote or underdeveloped areas, is crucial. Policymakers should facilitate the development of CPD programs that are flexible in accommodating the diverse needs of teachers.

## CONCLUSION

This study emphasizes the vital role that continuous professional development (CPD) plays in improving Bangladeshi university teachers' professional development and efficacy. Even though a considerable number of teachers participate in CPD activities, the results show that institutional support is frequently deficient, which makes it difficult for teachers to utilize these opportunities. The study emphasizes how crucial it is to overcome challenges such as lack of support, time restraints, and financial constraints to improve the environment for professional development. Furthermore, the various needs for CPD that have been identified such as curriculum development and technology integration highlight the importance of having tailored and adaptable CPD programs. These observations support the continuous initiatives to raise the standard of higher education by efficiently developing teachers.

## Limitations and Future Research

This study has several limitations. The sample size is relatively small and may not fully represent the diverse experiences of all university teachers in Bangladesh. Additionally, the study relies on self-reported data, which can be subject to bias. Future research should involve larger and more diverse samples to generalize the findings.

Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into the long-term impact of CPD on teaching practices and student outcomes. Further research should also explore the specific needs of different sub-groups of university teachers, such as those in rural areas or with varying levels of experience, to tailor CPD programs more effectively. Future research might also benefit from mixed-methods approaches, combining qualitative data to capture significant insights. Additionally, the perspectives of other stakeholders, including administrators, legislators, and students, should be considered to develop a more comprehensive picture of the opportunities and challenges associated with improving classroom teaching in Bangladesh. Despite these limitations, this research lays the groundwork for future studies focused on creating customized and effective CPD activities that meet the changing needs of university teachers and advance the field of education.

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