



# Teachers Continuous Professional Development Practices in Secondary Schools of Arsi Zone: Opportunities and Challenges

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## Abstract:

*This study is based on the assumption that the successful implementation of any educational reform/policy is largely depends on teachers' commitment and professional skills. The purpose of this study is to examine the practices and challenges of teachers' continuous professional development in secondary schools of Arsi Zone. To achieve this purpose, a descriptive survey method and a mixed approach of research design were undertaken to collect and analyze the data obtained from the research participants. Ten randomly selected secondary schools were involved in this study. Out of these schools, 128 teachers (M=98, F=30) were included in the study by using simple random sampling technique. Furthermore, five supervisors and ten school principals were involved using availability sampling techniques. A self-developed questionnaire and interview guidelines were used for data collection from the secondary school teachers, and leaders (supervisors, principals) respectively; since they are an important constituent in the study of professional development. Various statistical tools such as percentage, weighted mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the data. In addition, one way ANVOA was used to analyze the mean differences of teachers based on their professional ranks. The findings of the data analysis generally showed that at present the practices of teachers' professional development in the secondary schools are not to the expected standard as per CPD guideline established by MoE. The benefits teachers gained as a result of participation in professional development practices are not significant rather rated as moderate contributions. Thus, it was concluded that the present practices are overwhelmed with multifaceted problems in its implementation. The study, therefore, suggests that there should be clear guidelines for effective implementation of CPD in secondary schools. In addition, for effective professional development programs there has to be adequate support with necessary facilities for teachers to gain optimal benefits out of the practices.*

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**Keywords:** *Continuous professional development, professional development, practices*

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## 1. Background of the Study

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the world at large has been under a dramatically growing process of change and reform in education. Professional development of teachers has become one of the key elements in the rapid process of educational reforms. This is because teachers in educational reforms are the main executors of any changes and plans. In this regard, Villegas-Reimers (2003: 7) noted that, teachers are not only one of the variables that need to be changed in order to improve the education system, but they are also the most considerable change agents in these reforms. Abundant research indicated that teachers are at the center of educational improvement. Any benefits that accrue to students as a result of education policies require the enabling actions of teachers. Fullan (2001) also places teachers at the heart of the success or failure of educational change, and if change is to happen it requires teachers to understand themselves and to be understood by others.

However, producing better teachers is mostly becoming a serious problem in many country of the world. Most countries recognized the inefficiency of pre-service training. To overcome this problem they use continuous professional development program as a solution (Eleonora, 2003). This idea presents teachers' continuous professional development as an indispensable issue of concern in education.

Continuous professional development keeps teachers up-to-date and provides them with valuable knowledge and skills necessary to succeed in the field of education. Continuous professional development is a process of lifelong learning which enables teachers to expand and fulfill their personal and professional potentials. To meet new expectation, teachers need to deepen their content knowledge and learn new methods of teaching through professional development. Continuous professional development does not mean attending a one-day in-service training course. Rather, it is a process which takes place through-out life. It also helps to identify and solve problems regarding teaching and learning, connect theory with practice and enhance students' performances (Holmes, 2005).

In this regard, the government of Ethiopia acknowledges the key role that teachers play in education quality and places teachers at the core of its quality improvement strategies (Amare, Daniel, Derebsa, and Wanna, 2006). Since 2007, CPD program was introduced in a rigorous implementation at all levels of the education system with the aim to improve the quality of education in general and students learning in particular, (MoE, 2005). Even though, emphasis was given to it by the policy of education, its practical implementation and effectiveness is doubtful and might not go beyond short-term training. Therefore, assessing the status of implementation and contribution of teachers' continuous professional development is found to be very crucial.

### ***1.1 Statement of the Problem***

Researches have shown that, teachers' continuous professional development has a noticeable positive impact on teacher's beliefs. In turn their practices both inside and outside the classrooms have large influence on identifying teachers goals for their students and these goals in turn affect teachers performance in their classroom and schools (Gebriel, 2003).

To successfully deal with continuous professional development, policy makers, teachers and other officials need to have profound knowledge of continuous professional development. It is very necessary for them to be clear about all the things related to continuous professional development, such as what it is, why it is essential, to whom it addresses, how to build or apply models of teachers' professional development (Gebriel, 2003). Basically, teacher's continuous professional development is implemented in order to help teachers sustain a high quality performance in their teaching career and encourage them to pursuit lifelong learning which is vital to their professional development. In spite of the significance of continuous professional development in improving quality of education in schools, as a matter of fact, some programs are successful, while others or not because of number of reasons. Regarding this, Eleonora, (2003) stated not all teachers' professional development programs are carried out successfully and effectively. The failure of the program may be because of improper plan preparation and evaluation of the program or because of poor participation of teachers in their continuous professional development.

Finding of different studies show that the quality of CPD program in Ethiopia is low and it was deservingly criticized for focusing on upgrading, inefficient in producing enough number of teachers and for lack of necessary quality (Gizaw, 2006). Moreover, CPD in Ethiopia did not equip teachers with the necessary pedagogical skills and sense of professionalism (Tilahun, 1990). MoE (2005) also recognized: lack of teachers' commitment, school initiatives, trainers' capacity problem and lack of supervisory support from the principal were among the various implementation problems while CPD was practiced. Furthermore, the problem of the CPD program in the country include: poor educational management and planning, and lack of crucial, effective and positive support and supervision combined with mismanagement of scarce resources. In addition, the quality of educational leadership at grass root

level and the role of the community in the implementation process have not been satisfactory as desired (TESO, 2003).

In this regard, the extent to which the policy targets are realized in the present contexts of secondary schools of Arsi Zone is less known. From the experience stated above, there is a doubt whether the continuous professional development program in secondary schools is well understood, internalized, and evaluated by the teachers, principals, and educational officials at different levels. Thus, it is very essential to conduct research to investigate the practices and challenges of the continuous professional development ongoing in secondary schools of Arsi Zone and assess its contribution in changing teacher's skill, knowledge and attitude and improvement in student learning and achievement. Based on the above facts, this study is, expected to find answers to the following research questions.

- 1 What are the existing practices of teachers CPD in secondary schools?
- 2 What is the attitude of secondary school teachers towards continuous professional development?
- 3 How do teachers notice the contributions of CPD for their current professional practices in secondary schools?
- 4 What are the factors that influence the implementation of CPD in secondary schools?

## **2. Research Design and Methodology**

### ***2.1 Research Design***

In this study, a descriptive survey research design was employed to describe the practices of teachers' continuous professional development in secondary school of Arsi zone. This design was selected because it is appropriate when the aim of the study is to get an exact description of current status (Seyoum and Ayalew, 1989). In addition, they stated that this design is a fact finding with adequate and accurate interpretation of the findings. It describes with the emphases on what actually exists such as current conditions, practices, situations or any phenomena related to teachers' professional development. Besides, both quantitative and qualitative approach was used by combining both approaches i.e a mixed research approach was used to assess the effectiveness of continuous professional development. From different types of mixed research, this research used the sequential explanatory mixed research method or approach. More emphasis was given to quantitative approach, and the qualitative method was embedded in it.

### ***2.2 Data Collecting Instrument***

The instruments for data collecting were self-developed questionnaires, and interview guideline that will help to gather evidence based empirical and qualitative data on the existing practices, opinions, perceptions and factors that influence the implementation of CPD in the secondary schools. Questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data and contain items that measures on 5 point likert scale and open ended questions. Semi-structured interview questions were used for key informants. Validity and reliability was established using panel of academicians and pilot test.

### ***2.3 Ethical Considerations***

The research permit and approval was obtained from the office of Directorate for Research and Publication of Arsi University. Prior to data collection, ethical approval was obtained from Arsi zone education office. Institutional consent was communicated to the directors of the sample schools. Informed consent was obtained from the participants before they fill in the questionnaires and interviewed. Specifically, the participants were informed about the objectives of the study and they were informed that their participation was purely voluntary. The participants were transparently informed that the information they provide in the questionnaire and interview were only for research purpose and that it will be strictly anonymous and dealt with confidentially.

### 2.4 Data Presentation, Analysis and Interpretation

The data presentation, analysis and interpretation has four parts that include practices of CPD in secondary schools, contributions of CPD for current teachers practices, teachers attitude towards practices of CPD and factors that affect CPD practices in secondary schools.

### 2.5 Practices of CPD in Secondary schools

Teachers' continuous professional development plays a significant role in enhancing standards by improving the teaching and learning process in schools. It improves teachers' knowledge, skills and attitude. As scholars remarked, it has the power to improve professional practices. To have an understanding of CPD practices it is important to know how CPD is going on in schools. For this purpose, items related to CPD practices are designed to gather relevant information from secondary schools of Arsi zone which enables to understand the extent to which CPD practices are effective and successful in these secondary schools. (See Table 1 below).

**Table 1: Practices of CPD in Secondary Schools (N= 128)**

Items	M	SD
I know goals of CPD	3.34	1.19
Teachers involve in CPD plan of the school	3.03	1.13
The school identify the staff's development needs during CPD planning	2.6	1.09
The school identify the staff's individual need during CPD planning	2.6	1.08
There is a continuous assessment of impacts of CPD on teaching learning process	3.08	1.15
There is an evaluation of CPD plan implementation in the school	2.88	1.20
Teachers prepare their own CPD plan	3.13	1.23
The school arranges effective days for CPD program	2.8	1.09
Teachers decide the contents of CPD	2.8	1.16
Different stakeholders involve in CPD plan of the school	2.5	1.17
<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>2.87</b>	

As indicated in Table-1 items related to the practices of CPD in schools were presented to the respondents. Teachers were asked to rate the extent of practices of CPD that is going on in their respective schools on five point Likert scale that run from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Based on this, as can be seen from the table regarding the awareness of goal of CPD, the mean values of responses of the respondents was less than agree that is 3.34. This indicates that as some teachers do not know the goals of CPD. According to Thomas (2005) the goal of CPD in any profession is about doing job better. In addition, the ultimate purpose of teachers CPD is to enable students to achieve their best. From this point of view if teachers do not know the goals of CPD, it is very difficult to implement the program and hence has strong impact on its practices. The other point presented to the teachers is their involvement in school CPD plan. The mean value of teachers' response is 3.03 which is in the range of undecided. This implies that as some teachers do not involve in CPD plan of their school. However, for proper implementation of CPD plan in schools, teachers should involve in the school CPD plan. It becomes easier to implement the program if all teachers involve in the plan process of schools CPD.

Teachers were asked to rate whether schools identify the staffs development needs during CPD practices and school identify individual teachers need during CPD planning accordingly, the mean value obtained

is 2.6 which is less than the average mean value indicating that schools do not identify staffs need during CPD plan. However, the most effective CPD program are those that directly meet individual needs of teachers and the characteristics of high quality CPD is its coherent to teachers' needs and circumstances. Thus, it is important to consider the needs of the staff during CPD plan. In the same way, the mean response of teachers regarding, was 2.6 which is again below the average mean value. This implies that as there is a gap in considering individual teachers need during CPD plan. But during CPD planning teachers' interest and needs should be well addressed. Especially CPD will not have a beneficial impact unless it is carefully designed to meet the contextual needs of teachers involved in it. Many CPD plan efforts fail because they lack focused planning and are unrelated to the daily lives of teachers and need.

Regarding the presence of continuous assessment of impacts of CPD on teaching learning process the mean value responded by respondents was 3.08 which is less than agreement that is nearly undecided, which means they are not sure whether there is continuous assessment of impacts of CPD on teaching learning process. But CPD should afford teachers an opportunity to apply their newly acquired knowledge in practice. To check this continuous assessment must be an integral part of CPD. For effective CPD plan implementation, continuous assessment must be integrated in to CPD program.

As portrayed in Table 1, teachers responded the mean value of 2.88 about evaluation of CPD plan implementation implying that there is problem of evaluation of CPD plan implementation. But, the overall evaluation of implementation of CPD is important to the improvement of teachers' performance and student learning. CPD plan evaluation should focus on measuring its impacts against the goal set that is in terms of change in knowledge, skills, attitudes of teachers and student achievement.

The mean value of teachers' response regarding preparation of their own CPD plan was 3.13 which is again nearer to undecided indicating that teachers do not prepare their CPD plan. But, for effective implementation of CPD in schools teachers need to have their own CPD plan. To strengthen this James (2013) emphasized that teachers should have an individual CPD plan to improve their teaching and keep themselves up-to-date.

Arranging effective days is another factor that makes it challenging schools to implement CPD. Regarding arranging effective days for CPD the mean value of teachers' response is 3.13 which indicates that schools do not arrange suitable time and effective days for teachers in practicing CPD programs in their schools. However, proper and sufficient time should be provided to teachers for effective CPD implementation. The other important item given to be rated by the teachers was whether they decide the contents of CPD or not. The mean value response of teachers was 2.8 implying that teachers do not decide the contents of CPD. However, for effective practices of CPD teachers should decide what knowledge and professional development they need to be able to modify their practice.

The value of response of teachers regarding the involvement of different stakeholders in school CPD plan was 2.5. This indicates that different stakeholders do not involve in school CPD plan. However, literature emphasizes the participation of stakeholders in CPD planning, design and implementation to realize its effectiveness. Involving more persons in developing CPD plan means more discussion about the activities and the development of a consensus among all groups in the school. In addition, more involvement in the plan means more commitment in the implementation of the plan and more willingness to attribute to the final results. Finally, the grand mean for practices of CPD in schools is 2.87. This reveals that as practices of CPD in secondary schools is not as expected and as per CPD practices.

On top of the above findings, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to explore the impact of professional rank of teachers on practices of CPD program in secondary schools which is measured on five point Likert scale. Professional rank of teachers were divided in to four groups (1.00= beginner, 2.00=

advanced beginner, 3.00 = competent level 4.00 proficient level). Accordingly, the result showed that there was no statistically significant difference among teachers opinion at the  $p < .05$  for the four groups of professional ranks with  $p = 0.59$ .

### 3. Contributions of CPD for Current Teachers Practices

The main purpose of teachers' professional development is to improve the professional competences of teachers and thereby improve the outcomes of students learning and in so doing sustaining education quality at all levels of the education system. To this end, items related to the contributions of PD are designed to gather relevant information from secondary schools teachers, supervisors and principals. This enables to understand the extent to which CPD benefits the practitioners in their professional practices.

**Table 2: Contributions of CPD for current teachers practices (N= 128)**

Items	M	SD
Helped me to know more about my field of specialization	3.16	1.24
Encouraged me to use emerging pedagogical approaches	3.29	1.15
Improved my ability to make instructional plan and use it accordingly	3.24	1.16
Enhanced my efficiency in presenting the contents of my subject	3.20	1.19
Enabled me to use my time effectively and efficiently	3.12	1.21
Helped me to use variety of instructional materials that support my lesson topics	3.19	1.21
Improved my techniques and skills of classroom management	3.28	1.29
Helped me to use continuous assessment of student learning	3.33	1.29
Promoted my knowledge and skills of conducting action research	3.04	1.28
Enabled me to address the needs and interests of the different learning styles of students	3.09	1.29
Encouraged me to work collaboratively with colleagues	3.15	1.23
<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>3.19</b>	

*NB. 1= Not at all, 2= A little bit, 3= Moderate, 4=Much, 5= Very much*

As can be seen in the above table (Table 2), the weighted mean score is  $M = 3.19$ . The mean results of all items in the table ranges from 3.03-3.32. This value is close to 3 which indicate 'moderate'. That means almost all the items were rated moderately. Specifically, items like the use of continuous assessment of students learning ( $M = 3.3$ ,  $SD = 1.29$ ), the use of emerging pedagogical approaches such as active learning and problem solving methods ( $M = 3.29$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ), improvement in the techniques and skills of classroom management ( $M = 2.8$ ,  $SD = 1.29$ ), improvement in the ability to make instructional plan and use it accordingly ( $M = 3.24$ ,  $SD = 1.16$ ) and enhancing the efficiency of presenting the contents of the subject ( $M = 3.20$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ) were rated at the top of the scores ranked in that order. The relatively low rated items are addressed on items such as promoting knowledge and skills of conducting research on school problems and daily practices ( $M = 3.04$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ), addressing the needs and interests of the different learning styles of students ( $M = 3.09$ ,  $SD = 1.29$ ), the use of time effectively and efficiently ( $M = 3.12$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ), encouraging to work collaboratively with colleagues ( $M = 3.15$ ,  $SD = 1.23$ ), helping to know more about field of specialization ( $M = 3.16$ ,  $SD = 1.24$ ) and helping to use variety of instructional materials that support my lesson topics ( $M = 3.19$ ,  $SD = 1.21$ ). The values of the standard deviation have also indicated that no significant discrepancy among the respondents response. Overall, the results indicated in the table reveals that professional development practices that have been under way in these secondary schools are somehow helping teachers to do their job. But still the practices are not to the expected level in promoting teachers effectiveness.

Related questions were raised during the interview with supervisors and school principals. It was reported that the contribution of PD to improve the quality of teachers is significant and noteworthy. It allows teachers to promote their day to day performance and to improve their professional knowledge and skills. These respondents expressed their strong beliefs that professional development (PD) is important to improve teachers' professional practice and consequently help students learn better. The interviewees further confirmed that it is through continuous professional development that sustainable improvement in the quality of education can be achieved.

On the other hand, teachers requested to explain on an open ended question about the benefits they have gained so far due to their engagement in professional development programs. As described by the great proportion of teachers, PD somehow enables them to improve their teaching skills and develop confidence in teaching their courses, provide opportunities to develop the teamwork spirit with other staff members, and acquire considerable knowledge in improving communication and sharing experiences with other colleagues and experienced teachers. But, due to various problems attached to the implementation of PD, the benefits are not to the expected standard.

Emphasizing the contributions of profession development, Fullan (2001) described that 'teachers of today and tomorrow need to do much more learning on the job, or in parallel with it- where they can constantly test out, refine, and get feedback on the improvements they make. They need access to other colleagues in order to learn from them. The teaching profession must become a better learning profession-not just incidentally; at teachers own initiatives, but also in the very way the job is designed'.

#### 4. Teachers Attitude towards Practices of CPD

Thirteen questionnaire items with five point Likert scale were designed and presented to teachers to identify their attitude towards practices of CPD. Mean and standard deviation were used to analyze the attitude of teachers towards CPD. Thus, mean would be an appropriate measure of central tendency for attitude of teachers. Accordingly, Table 3 was projected to examine the extent to which secondary school teachers perceive continuous professional development practices in discharging their roles. The means and standard deviations of the scores of the teachers' perceptions of their professional development are presented in Table 3 below.

**Table 3: Teachers Attitude towards CPD (N=128)**

Items	Mean	SD
CPD is useful for teachers professional growth	3.46	1.26
CPD is useful to make teachers knowledge up-to-date	3.39	1.23
CPD improves the quality of teachers performance	3.41	1.26
CPD is compulsory to improve teachers knowledge and skills	3.21	1.22
CPD is a waste of time	1.04	1.36
CPD is helpful for educational reform	3.29	1.22
CPD encourages collaboration among instructors	3.23	1.16
CPD improves students learning	3.22	1.27
my pre-service training is adequate to accomplish my task effectively	3.19	1.18
I am very much interested to learn from my colleagues to improve my performances	3.60	1.18
I am satisfied with my existing professional development competencies	3.19	1.23
CPD at this school doesn't meet the quality and standard of teachers training	2.89	1.19
The contents of the current training program are relevant to my teaching	3.14	1.13

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CPD at this school doesn't meet the quality and standard of teachers training	2.89	1.19
The contents of the current training program are relevant to my teaching	3.14	1.13
<b>Grand mean</b>	<b>3.29</b>	

*N.B. Strongly Agree=5; agree=4; Undecided=3; Disagree=2; Strongly Disagree=1*

As indicated in Table 3 above the values of mean for all variables are greater than the average mean value which is 3. As shown in table, from the given items, "I am very much interested to learn from my colleagues to improve my performances (M=3.6), CPD is useful for teachers professional growth (M=3.46), CPD improves the quality of teachers performance (M=3.41), CPD is useful to make teachers knowledge up-to-date (M=3.39) and CPD is helpful for educational reform (M=3.29) were rated positively which means that they have positive attitude towards CPD. The remaining items such as the contents of the current training program are relevant to my teaching (M=3.14), I am satisfied with my existing professional development competencies (M=3.19), and my pre-service training is adequate to accomplish my task effectively (M=3.19) were relatively rated at moderate level by teachers. The grand mean for attitudes of teacher was 3.29 which indicate that teachers have positive attitude towards CPD in their schools. On the other hand, items like professional development is a waste of time (M=1.6, SD=.97) and CPD at this school doesn't meet the quality and standard of teachers training (M=2.89) are rated below the average score of five points rating scale.

With particular reference to the variable about the quality and standard of CPD, the finding shows poor quality and standard of CPD practices. The implication is that if the quality of CPD practices is meagrely poor and not attractive, it affects the attitude of the participants. It was also reported during the interview with supervisors and school principals that the qualities of professional development activities are somehow good. The programs are fairly organized and systematically arranged. The trainers are well experienced and qualified. However, resources are scarce and not sufficiently allocated, and participation to CPD on the part of teachers is low since they are highly overloaded by classroom teaching. Generally however, from the responses gathered and tabulated it could be possible to say that teachers have positive attitude towards professional development practices in secondary schools; but still their perception is not that much promising and strong enough. So, decision makers are expected to work more closely with teachers to make CPD program attractive and motivating.



**Table 4: Summary of Teachers' Attitude towards CPD**

Choice	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
<b>Positive</b>	91	71.1	71.1
<b>Undecided</b>	3	2.3	2.3
<b>Negative</b>	34	26.6	26.6
<b>Total</b>	128	100	100

As indicated in Table 4 above, teachers were asked to rate their attitude towards the current practices of CPD. The scale given was positive, undecided and negative. Accordingly, majority of the respondents 91(71.1%) replied that they have positive attitude towards CPD while 3(2.3%) replied undecided. A relatively large number of teachers i.e. 34 (26.6%) replied that teachers have indicated negative response towards CPD. Hence, the data obtained from majority of teachers have shown that they have positive outlook towards CPD. Teachers have appreciated the contributions of continuous professional development in terms of promoting teachers' knowledge and skills. The majority have no doubt that CPD has a significant contribution for teachers' professional practices and eventually improves students learning.

Furthermore, one way ANOVA among groups was conducted to examine the perception of professional rank of teachers on attitude of teachers towards practices of CPD in schools. Professional rank were divided into four groups (1.00= beginner, 2.00= advanced beginner, 3.00 = competent level 4.00 proficient level). In this respect, there was no statistically significant difference at the  $p < .05$  level in the attitude of teachers' towards practices of CPD in secondary school based on teachers professional rank with  $p = .43$ .

Related open ended questions were presented to teachers to suggest possible solutions to improve the negative attitude of teachers towards CPD. The commonly described ideas are as follows:

- CPD should be relevant to teachers professional practices and field of study;
- CPD should not be an imposed program for the sake of its own; rather it has to be planned, organized and implemented with the direct participation of the beneficiaries i.e teachers;
- There has to be promotion upon completion of the program; if there is no attachment between CPD program and teachers change of status or salary increment or any sort of promotion, it is hardly possible to make CPD effective
- Creating awareness on the advantages of CPD for teachers should be the primary task that could improve their voluntary participation in professional development. Sometimes teachers may resist change and innovation like professional training programs due to lack of orientation. Orientation and discussion can play the crucial role for making them convinced. Thus, supervisors, school management in collaboration with the government bodies at different echelons including Ministry of Education should give relevant and adequate orientation for teachers and school community at large;
- Minimizing the workload of teachers participating in professional development is another important factor for promoting active participation. Taking this into account will encourage teachers for high rate of participation to PD activities;
- Fulfilling the necessary resources and facilities that are required for PD practices is also pertinent to harvest the benefits of CPD.

In general, from the discussion above, it could be possible to say that the great proportion of teachers have positive outlook towards CPD practices in the secondary schools. However, for more engagement of teachers it is important to create conducive and motivating environment for PD participants and solve the existing constraints that teachers are facing.

### 5. Factors that Affect CPD Practices in Schools

Providing teachers with CPD opportunities is a fundamental part of teaching learning process in schools. Even though CPD plays a great role in supporting teachers to update themselves with the ever changing science technology and improve learners' academic achievement, there are different factors that impede its practices in schools. To identify factors that affect practices of CPD in schools, twelve items were identified and presented to the respondents. Responses were given on 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5. In this case, higher scores signified greater impact on CPD practices. The response of respondents towards CPD is summarized in Table 5 below.

**Table 5: Factors that affect practices of CPD (N= 128)**

Items	Mean	SD
High teachers work load	3.56	1.24
Lack of awareness of CPD opportunities	3.60	1.14
Lack of recognition for participation	3.56	1.13
Poor teachers attitude toward CPD	3.52	1.35
Non-alignment of training contents with teachers need	3.62	1.07
Lack of school leadership support	3.54	1.16
Lack of well-trained mentors	3.78	1.16
Improper timing of CPD program	3.78	1.21
Lack of motivation	3.87	1.19
Repetitiveness of CPD content	3.82	1.22
Lack of ownership of CPD	3.87	1.19
<b>Grand mean</b>	3.68	

*N.B. Strongly Agree=5; agree=4; Undecided=3; Disagree=2; Strongly Disagree=1*

As indicated in Table 5, teachers agreed that workload affects their practices of CPD in schools with mean value of 3.58. This coincides with study made by Abdullahi, et al, (2017) which indicated that work load has a significant inhibiting factor in preventing teachers from engagement in CPD program. Thus, it becomes necessary to arrange conditions for teachers so that they fully participate in CPD implementation for quality education and improvement of students' academic achievement.

The second item was about lack of awareness of CPD opportunities. Teachers agreed as there is lack of awareness of CPD opportunities by teachers with mean value of 3.6 hence affecting practices of CPD in secondary schools. But for CPD to be successful teachers have to be aware of its requirements and expectations. Therefore, for effective CPD practices teachers have to be made aware about how to engage in CPD activities and requirements. In the same way, teachers were asked to rate whether lack of recognition for participation affects CPD practices or not. Teachers revealed as it has impact on CPD practices with mean value of 3.56. Lack of recognition of the value of CPD discourages teachers' participation in CPD program. For successful CPD practices in schools recognition should be given by the concerned bodies. Teachers replied that non-alignment of training contents with teachers' need affects CPD practices in their school with mean value of 3.6. CPD cannot be effective when content is unconnected to teachers current experience and their identified needs. Thus, CPD contents should be relevant and related with teachers every day practices to motivate teachers' need and readiness to CPD program.

Poor teachers' attitude as a factor affecting practices of CPD was provided to teachers to rate their opinion. Accordingly, the mean value of teachers' response was 3.5 indicating that teachers' poor attitude towards CPD influences the practices of CPD in schools. Attitude is the belief and mindsets

teachers need to have about practices of CPD. Thus, teachers' attitude can influence their decisions to participate in CPD practices. For effective CPD practices teachers need to have positive attitude towards CPD program. Teachers' beliefs, practices and attitudes are important for understanding and improving CPD practices in schools.

Lack of school leadership support was revealed by teachers as a factor affecting practices of CPD in schools with mean value of 3.53. For effective CPD practices the support provided by school leaders is very crucial. Lack of support by the school leaders can significantly affect teachers moral, job satisfaction and motivation which will have impact on teachers' involvement and practices of CPD. lack of well-trained mentors was responded by teachers as a factor affecting practices of CPD in schools with mean value of 3.78. To share knowledge, skill and experience of mentors to new teachers, develop them both personally and professionally, support them to feel free to involve openly and honestly without worrying in CPD mentors needs to be well trained. From the listed items 'improper timing of CPD program was also rated as a factor affecting practices of CPD with mean value of 3.78. Among the affecting factors listed "Lack of motivation, repetitiveness of CPD content and Lack of ownership of CPD" highly affect the practices of CPD in schools. In general teachers response supported as the listed factors affected practices with grand mean value of 3.6.

## 6. Conclusions

Based on the findings of the study, the following concluding remarks are drawn.

The overall practices of professional development in secondary schools of Arsi Zone appear not satisfactory. The great proportions of teachers do not appreciate their participation in professional development activities. The present practices are overwhelmed with a lot of problems and challenges. The findings have shown that the practices are not effective and successful. As a result, teachers are not benefited much from the PD activities. This result has an adverse impact on the attempt improve the quality of education.

As a whole the perceptions of teachers on the contribution of professional development is not that much positive. The majority of responding teachers have mentioned their disagreements by confirming that professional development has no significant contribution in promoting their professional knowledge and skills which by implication leads to improve the quality of students learning. Although there is common understanding about the contributions of PD across all schools, teachers, and management bodies (supervisors and principals), the information obtained reveals that there is less practical implementation of PD activities.

On the other hand, the opinion of school principals and supervisors is encouraging to work on professional development programs. But, the prevailing situations reveal that the environment is not conducive for teachers to actively engage themselves to professional development activities. There are factors that impede teachers' participation in CPD such as high workload, lack of access to resources and facilities, and lack of adequate support from the school management and other concerned bodies. The implication is that if teachers are poorly motivated and uncommitted to their professional development, it is hardly possible to efficiently and effectively achieve a high level of academic excellence in line with the mission and vision of the schools i.e teachers will have unsuccessful results for even the best intentions for improvement.

In general, the conclusions made in this study reveal that there is gap between the ideals and present practices of professional development programs in secondary schools of Arsi Zone. Although there are attempts to organize and deliver teachers' professional development activities, the prevailing conditions are so critical and inconvenient for teachers to participate in CPD. Very little conscious efforts have been made by the school management to build favourable working environment which has no significant change on the overall practices of CPD.

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