

# The Needs of Continuous Professional Development Perceived by Novice and Experienced Teachers

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## ABSTRAK

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**Abstract:** This study was intended to investigate the current needs of continuous professional development viewed from the eyes of novice and experienced teachers in Malang senior high schools. The study was conducted through a descriptive survey study. The results identified some similarities and differences of needs between the novice and experienced teachers. Based on the order of importance, novice teachers agree that they need professional development in (1) knowledge and understanding of learner's characteristics and (2) pedagogical competencies in teaching the subject field, (3) knowledge about curriculum or syllabus, (4) teacher's communication skill in the classroom, and (5) teaching and learning approaches. Meanwhile, the experienced teachers need CPD about (1) knowledge and understanding of learner's characteristics, (2) pedagogical competencies in the subject, (3) Information and Communication Technology, (4) students' evaluation and assessment, and (5) teaching and learning approaches. Knowing the findings above, policy makers are suggested to arrange CPD programs based on the teachers' needs and learning styles. The suitability and effectiveness of the program must be put into consideration.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini mengungkap kebutuhan Pengembangan Keprofesional Berkelanjutan guru dilihat dari sudut pandang guru pemula dan berpengalaman di sekolah menengah atas di wilayah Malang. Penelitian menggunakan metode survei deskriptif. dan hasilnya menemukan bahwa terdapat persamaan dan perbedaan kebutuhan diantara guru pemula dan berpengalaman. Berdasarkan tingkat prioritas, PKB yang diperlukan guru pemula saat ini (1) pengetahuan tentang karakter peserta didik, (2) kompetensi pedagogik dalam mengajar, (3) pengetahuan tentang kurikulum atau silabus, (4) keterampilan berkomunikasi di kelas, (5) pendekatan belajar pembelajaran. Di lain pihak, guru berpengalaman memerlukan PKB tentang (1) pengetahuan tentang karakter peserta didik, (2) kompetensi pedagogik dalam mengajar, (3) penggunaan TI di dalam pengajaran, (4) penilaian peserta didik, (5) pendekatan belajar pembelajaran. Dengan mengetahui hal-hal diatas hendaknya pembuat kebijakan merancang program PKB berdasarkan kebutuhan dan gaya belajar masing-masing guru. Aspek kecocokan dan keefektifitasan program Pengembangan Keprofesional Berkelanjutan perlu diperhatikan.

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Teachers as the main factor in achieving successful education, are expected to always improve their competences and professionalism through lifelong learning. Without having qualified and standardized teachers, the educational goals of a nation would be difficult to reach because it is believed that teachers, who have direct and intensive contact with students, have significant influence on students' learning and performances (Bruce King & Newmann, 2001; Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010). Therefore, promoting teacher's professional development to improve teacher's competences is seen essential in order to improve learners' performances (Geldenhuys & Oosthuizen, 2015; Steyn, 2008).

The term Continuous Professional Development (henceforth CPD) is used to refer to all teachers' effort to look for new roles, new instructional knowledge, skills, and strategies to improve themselves both as educators and as individuals (Day, 1999; Jovanova-Mitkovska, 2010). Numerous studies with different focuses were conducted concerning on how teachers deal with their professionalism, particularly in the EFL area (Adel, S.M.R., Zareian, G., and Mardhekhoda, 2015; "Continuous Professional Development of English Language Teachers: Perception and Practices," 2016; Hismanoglu, 2010). Numerous studies on CPD have also been performed in local context due to the importance of CPD in Indonesia (Anugerahwati & Saukah, 2009; Kuzairi, 2014). It has been regarded as an issue that requires serious attention based on the government-initiated Teachers and Lecturers

Act No 14/2005. It stated that teachers are “educators” who have the responsibility of educating students in formal class and bear four main competencies: pedagogical, personal, social, and professional (Kemendikbud, 2016).

CPD activities are expected to change not only teachers’ beliefs and perceptions but also the teaching practices that improve students’ performances. However, Utami argue that CPD programs do not always influence teachers’ practices (Utami, 2017). This is surprising considering the kinds of teachers’ attended activities and the amount of contributed time, not to mention the received pressures from the authority to attend CPD activities. One of the ineffective factors relates to the occurrence of irrelevant programs with teachers’ actual practice needs. In the traditional view, CPD program arrangements are made by administrators and consultants rather than made by teachers. It is commonly designed to fit-for-all activities, regardless the different needs of the teachers. Skipping the teachers’ voices and focusing more on administrative needs, these programs become a burden to teachers rather than bring solutions to classroom problems (Diaz-Maggioli, 2004; Paterson, 2018). Therefore, future CPD activities designers are expected to give more attention towards teachers’ actual needs. Thus, this study views a different angle of CPD programs by focusing on two groups of teachers: novice and experienced teachers. The current study investigates the most and the least effective CPD activities perceived by teachers based on their service years and figures out the areas of professional development they need.

Figuring out teachers’ actual needs can be done by considering teachers’ length of service years. A study by Utami reveals that the length of service years does contribute to the different needs of English teachers’ professional development (Utami, 2015). This finding is in line with Richard and Farrel’s study that novice and experienced teachers have different ways to perceive and understand what they do, in this case when they teach (Richard & Farrel, 2005). According to Rodriguez & McKay, experienced teachers require professional development which affirms their knowledge, experience, and intuitive judgment they get throughout their careers (Rodríguez & McKay, 2010). On the contrary, novice teachers tend to be lacking in subject-matter, teaching strategies and contexts (Richard & Farrel, 2005). However, experienced teachers might not be as receptive to professional development as novice teachers are.

This current study is different from previous studies since the data are collected not only through survey using a questionnaire, but also an interview with the respondents. In addition, the findings of the study enrich the knowledge of Continuous Professional Development in general by exposing the teachers’ perspectives on the effective design of CPD from different viewpoints, particularly viewed in Indonesian context. The research question of the study is: What are the professional development areas needed by novice and experienced teachers?

## METHOD

The study investigates the teachers’ perception of the needed continuous professional development and employs descriptive survey method design. As the aim of the study identifies two educational groups in terms of attitudes, beliefs, opinion, and practices at a single particular time, the cross-sectional design is utilized (Creswell, 2012). To be precise, quantitative and qualitative data are collected in the study. Quantitative data are collected through an online questionnaire to answer the research questions. Four samples are selected from the survey respondents to be interviewed. The results of the interview are used as a confirmation and considered as the qualitative data. The results of quantitative and qualitative data are expected to complement each other and provide a more complete picture of the research problems (Creswell, 2012).

### Research Population and Sample

The population of the study is English teachers of Private and Public senior high schools in Malang, including the municipality and the regency areas. Online questionnaires were distributed to the population through WhatsApp application. Since the survey was voluntary, there was a possibility that the target population might not respond to the online survey. There were 40 respondents participated on the survey, yet only 29 were eligible for this study. After analysing the questionnaire result, the respondents are categorized based on their length of teaching experiences into two clusters (1) novice group with  $\leq 5$  years of teaching experience, (2) experienced teachers’ group with  $\geq 10$  years of teaching experience. The detailed respondents’ information can be seen in Table 1 for the novice teachers and table 2 for the experienced teachers.


### Research Instruments

This study utilized a questionnaire and an interview guideline as the research instruments. The questionnaire used semi-closed-ended questions. The questionnaire was developed in order to answer the research questions with the following steps: Firstly, the questionnaire was arranged and covered 2 major categories, i.e.: Part A about respondent’s background information, Part B about the aspects of teacher’s needs in CPD. Secondly, after being categorized, the questionnaire was validated to an expert to see the suitability of the content and grammar usage. Thirdly, the validated questionnaire was transformed into online version by using Google Forms application developed by Google LLC then it was distributed and tried out to 10 English teachers to check the readability and suitability of the items viewed from the target respondents. In the tryout, feedback was given in terms of content suitability, user interface, and user experience of the online questionnaire. Following up the feedback, some revision was made due to the inappropriate content and confusion. Some adjustment was also made dealing with the user interface and experience to solve the technical problems. The questionnaire was written in English and distributed in the quantitative stage. The

second instrument is interview guideline which includes interview protocols for the semi-structured interview with the samples of the study. The interview aims at checking the consistency of the samples' responses and acquiring confirmation upon the information obtained from the questionnaire. The interview guideline was also validated by the expert.

**Table 1. Data of Novice Respondents**

No	Research Subjects	Length of Teaching Experience in the current schools	Age	Gender	Academic Qualification	School's Status	School's Area
1.	NT 1	2	31	Female	S1 in ELT	Private Vocational High School	Municipality
2.	NT 2	3	27	Male	S1 in English Literature	Public Vocational High School	Municipality
3.	NT 3	3	32	Male	S2 in ELT	Private Senior High School	Municipality
4.	NT 4	4	27	Female	S1 in ELT	Private Senior High School	Municipality
5.	NT 5	5	28	Female	S1 in ELT	Private Vocational High School	Regency
6.	NT 6	5	30	Female	S1 in ELT	Private Vocational High School	Municipality
7.	NT 7	5	30	Female	S1 in ELT	Public Vocational High School	Municipality
8.	NT 8	5	29	Male	S1 in ELT	Private Vocational High School	Municipality
9.	NT 9	5	36	Male	S2 in ELT	Private Vocational High School	Municipality

Note:  
 ELT : English Language Teaching  
 : samples for interview

**Table 2. Data of Experienced Respondents**

No	Research Subjects	Length of Teaching Experience in the current schools	Age	Gender	Academic Qualification	School's Status	School's Area
1.	ET 1	10	33	Female	S2 in ELT	Public Vocational High School	Municipality
2.	ET 2	10	39	Female	S1 in ELT	Public Vocational High School	Regency
3.	ET 3	10	45	Female	S2 in ELT	Public Senior High School	Municipality
4.	ET 4	10	39	Male	S2 in ELT	Private Vocational High School	Municipality
5.	ET 5	10	39	Male	S2 in ELT	Public Vocational High School	Municipality
6.	ET 6	10	47	Male	S1 in ELT	Private Vocational High School	Municipality
7.	ET 7	11	44	Female	S1 in ELT	Public Senior High School	Municipality
8.	ET 8	12	37	Male	S1 in ELT	Public Senior High School	Regency
9.	ET 9	13	37	Female	S1 in ELT	Private Vocational High School	Municipality
10.	ET 10	13	42	Female	S1 in ELT	Private Vocational High School	Municipality
11.	ET 11	16	42	Male	S2 in ELT	Private Senior High School	Municipality
12.	ET 12	19	52	Female	S1 in English Literature	Private Vocational High School	Municipality
13.	ET 13	20	52	Female	S1 in ELT	Private Vocational School	Regency
14.	ET 14	20	54	Female	S1 in ELT	Unknown	Unknown

**Table 2. Data of Experienced Respondents**

No	Research Subjects	Length of Teaching Experience in the current schools	Age	Gender	Academic Qualification	School's Status	School's Area
15.	ET 15	20	44	Male	S1 in ELT	Public Senior High School	Municipality
16.	ET 16	20	54	Male	S1 in English Literature	Unknown Vocational High School	Unknown
17.	ET 17	23	55	Female	S1 in ELT	Public Senior High School	Regency
18.	ET 18	30	55	Female	S1 in ELT	Public Senior High School	Regency
19.	ET 19	35	56	Female	S2 in ELT	Public Senior High School	Municipality
20.	ET 20	35	59	Female	S1 in ELT	Private Senior High School	Municipality

## FINDINGS

It subsumes the data on the respondents' perception on the needs of professional development for novice and experienced teachers. The results of the interview will also be presented in this section.

### *Needs of Professional Development*

Regarding the topics of the professional development needed by teachers in Malang, it was found that the respondents choose 5 most needed topics which suit their current needs. Based on the calculation of the questionnaire, the order of importance regarding the areas of CPD programs needed by novice teachers are: (1) knowledge and understanding of learner's characteristics (voted by 78% of the respondents), (2) pedagogical competencies in the subject field (voted by 67% of the respondents), (3) knowledge about curriculum or syllabus (voted by 56% of the respondents), (4) teacher's communication skill in the classroom (voted by 56% of the respondents), (5) teaching and learning approaches (voted by 44% of the respondents). The details of the questionnaire results can be seen in table 4.

**Table 4. CPD Needs of Novice and Experienced Teachers**

Ranks	Novice Teachers Needs		Experienced Teachers Needs	
	Areas of CPD Programs	%	Areas of CPD Programs	%
1	Knowledge and understanding of learner's characteristics	78%	Knowledge and understanding of learner's characteristics	100%
2	Pedagogical competencies in teaching my subject field	67%	Pedagogical competencies in teaching my subject field	80%
3	Knowledge about curriculum or syllabus	56%	Information and Communication Technology skills in teaching	70%
4	Teacher's communication skill in the classroom	56%	Students evaluation and assessment	50%
5	Teaching and learning approaches	44%	Teaching and learning approaches	50%
6	Students evaluation and assessment	33%	Developing learning materials	45%
7	Students behaviour and classroom management	33%	Teacher's personal and character development	20%
8	Self-reflection for self-improvement	33%	Knowledge about curriculum or syllabus	15%
9	Information and Communication Technology skills in teaching	22%	Students behaviour and classroom management	15%
10	Developing sustainable professionalism	22%	School management and administration	15%
11	Teaching for students with special needs	11%	Self-reflection for self-improvement	15%
12	Implementation of national curriculum standards	11%	Knowledge and understanding about the subject-matter	15%
13	Teacher's personal and character development	11%	Teaching for students with special needs	5%
14	Knowledge and understanding about the subject-matter	11%	Teacher's communication skill in the classroom	5%
15	Developing learning materials	11%	Implementation of national curriculum standards	0%
16	School management and administration	0%	Developing sustainable professionalism	0%

Based on the accumulative result in table 4, it can also be seen that 5 areas of CPD programs needed by experienced teachers are (1) knowledge and understanding of learner's characteristics (voted by 100% of the respondents), (2) pedagogical competencies in the subject field (voted by 80% of the respondents), (3) Information and Communication Technology (voted by 70% of the respondents), (4) students evaluation and assessment (voted by 50% of the respondents), and (5) teaching and learning approaches (voted by 50% of the respondents).

Meanwhile, observed from the results of the interviews which are used as the source of confirmation, NT 2 stated he needed to develop his knowledge in pedagogical area as he did not graduate from the English language teaching program. He needed the knowledge about teaching methods, learner's characteristics, classroom management, and classroom communication. He had been doing self-taught about all of those skills and learning through asking with more experienced colleagues. ET 1 also explained her needs in pedagogical areas. As an experienced teacher, she wanted to know more about various teaching techniques especially to be implemented to students in Grade 12 who focus to face *Ujian Nasional* (National Examination). Most of the teachers in her school, including her, did monotonous activity like doing exercises, discussing them, doing another one, discussing again, and so forth. She expected other effective methods which could be used to train their students. Besides, ET 1 also confirmed that she currently lacked in students' assessment. As the curriculum was character-based, she needed to learn the best ways to assess students' characters concerning the appropriate methods and how to grade her students fairly. She had difficulties in assessing her student's characters as she taught around 9 big classes in a week. In short, she expected to learn how to assess students effectively, efficiently, and fairly considering the large numbers of the students. Meanwhile, ET 17 thought that there were 6 areas which she considered essential namely, knowledge and understanding about the subject-matter, knowledge about curriculum and syllabus, pedagogical competencies, learning materials development, ICT skills in teaching, and last teacher's classroom communication. During the interview, she emphasized that ICT skills in teaching was her biggest challenge. Instead of being timid due to her lacking in ICT skill, she strived to overcome it by learning harder. She was willing to learn the utilization of ICT in the teaching; however, she needed more time in learning. Compared to other younger teachers, she took longer time to learn how to use technologies for teaching purposes.

## DISCUSSION

Findings in this study reveal that novice and experienced teachers show some similarities and differences in prioritizing the areas of needs of teacher's CPD. According to the order of importance, it is found that the majority of novice teachers agree that they currently need professional development in (1) knowledge and understanding of learner's characteristics and (2) pedagogical competencies in teaching the subject field, (3) knowledge about curriculum or syllabus, (4) teacher's communication skill in the classroom, and (5) teaching and learning approaches. Meanwhile, the areas of CPD programs needed by experienced teachers are (1) knowledge and understanding of learner's characteristics, (2) pedagogical competencies in the subject, (3) Information and Communication Technology, (4) students' evaluation and assessment, and (5) teaching and learning approaches.

From the findings above, it can be seen that both groups, novice and experienced teachers, agree that professional development in pedagogical areas is essential for them, especially about understanding learner's characteristics (the 1<sup>st</sup> rank), pedagogical competencies of the subject field (the 2<sup>nd</sup> rank), and teaching and learner approaches (the 3<sup>rd</sup> rank). Those three areas are considered important to develop regardless of the teachers' length of service years. All of the respondents are aware that as language teachers they must know their learners' characteristics and differences. The teachers should be skilled to utilize those differences in the advantage to design the best teaching strategies and approaches in the language learning process (Zafar & Meenakshi, 2012). Thus, by doing so, an increase in the language learning success ratio will be reached. In addition, the teachers' ability to adjust the learning environment to suit the learners' needs can make the most of their abilities and maintain the learners' motivation (Gregersen, 2013).

Both of the groups also perceive pedagogical competencies as the currently needed areas. In general, pedagogical competence covers the teachers' ability to understand the learners, to design curriculum or syllabus, and to actualize the learners into their various potentials. It also includes the teachers' ability and eagerness to regularly apply the attitude, knowledge, and skills that promote learning from definite goals and frameworks through continuous development of teaching in the best way (Kementerian Pendidikan Dan Kebudayaan, 2007). Therefore, pedagogical competencies in teaching the subject field are needed for enabling teachers to design and run the teaching-learning activities successfully.

Differences of needs are identified in the findings of the study particularly in the third and fourth ranks of importance. These differences are consistent with Utami's study that different years of teaching experience indeed contributes to the different needs of CPD for English teachers (Utami, 2015). Novice teachers show the need in understanding curriculum or syllabus in the 3<sup>rd</sup> rank (with the level of agreement 56%) unlike the experienced teachers (with the level of agreement 15%). This finding is in line with Widiati, Suryati, and Hayati's ideas that state novice teachers indicate needs in understanding the current curriculum because the curriculum they had studied during the pre-service years was different from the one they currently use in schools (Widiati, Suryati, & Hayati, 2018). Therefore, they feel the need for adjusting and implementation guidelines of the new curriculum for developing lesson plans.

Viewed from the experienced teachers' perspectives, Information and Communication Technology skills in teaching are considered needed after the pedagogical aspects and placed in the 3<sup>rd</sup> rank (with the level of agreement 70%). The urgency of enhancing ICT skills for experienced teachers was also confirmed in the interview. Experienced teachers admitted that they were

lacking the skills but willing to learn them, although, it might take more time compared to younger teachers. The experienced teachers' weakness in implementing ICT skills was also proven by Okas, van der Schaaf, and Krull (Okas, van der Schaaf, & Krull, 2014). They found that experienced teachers had lower levels of self-efficacy in using ICT than younger teachers. Young teachers had higher levels of self-efficacy in utilizing a new technology (Okas et al., 2014; Zakaria, Saidin, & Mohamad, 2017). Therefore, special training is suggested for experienced teachers to keep up with the current students' interests and learning styles.

In their study, Okas, van der Schaaf, and Krull argue that experienced teachers tend to show more concern on students learning what is taught in their study, therefore, no wonder that the 4<sup>th</sup> position of experienced teachers' need is dealing with student's evaluation and assessment (with the level of agreement 50%). Knowing how to do proper student evaluation and assessment is considered important by teachers as they need to make reports on the student's learning achievement (Gultom, 2016). Experienced teachers feel the necessity of improving their knowledge of using or even designing some kinds of measurements to evaluate their students' progress by adjusting them to the objectives in the syllabus. According to Sanders & Vogel, the results of the assessment function not only as feedback for the student that talks about their progress, strengths, and weaknesses but also to judge the effectiveness of instructional and curricular adequacy and to inform policy (Sanders & Vogel, 1993).

The fourth rank of the CPD area needed by novice teachers is the teacher's communication skill in the classroom. According to Farrell (2009), teacher communication used in the classroom has three main roles: to elicit relevant knowledge from students, to respond to things that students say and to describe the classroom experiences that they share with students. Thus, a teacher's communication skill is very essential for teachers. The urgency of developing novice teachers' communication skills in this present study is in line with Ngang, Hashim, and Yunus's study which investigated the related soft skills needed by novice teachers in their workplace (Ngang & Chan, 2015). Their findings showed that teamwork skills and communication skills were the two most important soft skills components needed in the workplace and can be gained from their teaching professional training. CPD activities in improving novice teachers' communication skills will help novice teachers to be able to convey their thoughts with clarity and confidence in written and oral forms.

## CONCLUSIONS

Novice and experienced teachers have some similar and different areas of CPD that needs to address. Based on the order of importance, novice teachers agree that they currently need professional development in (1) knowledge and understanding of learner's characteristics and (2) pedagogical competencies in teaching the subject field, (3) knowledge about curriculum or syllabus, (4) teacher's communication skill in the classroom, and (5) teaching and learning approaches. Meanwhile, the experienced teachers need CPD in the following areas (1) knowledge and understanding of learner's characteristics, (2) pedagogical competencies in the subject, (3) Information and Communication Technology, (4) students' evaluation and assessment, and (5) teaching and learning approaches. Therefore, pedagogical area of CPD is agreed as the most needed area to develop. However, training on technology usage for teaching is highly demanded by the experienced teacher's group.

It is suggested that English senior high school teachers should be more enthusiastic in improving their professionalism and increase their frequency of involvement in continuous professional development programs. Teachers are suggested to do more independent activities based on their preferences and current needs. The teachers are expected to be more aware of various selections of activities that might be appropriate to use in improving their professionalism. Policy makers are suggested to arrange CPD programs based on the participants' needs and learning styles. The suitability and effectiveness of the program must be put into consideration. Professional trainings on the usage of ICT in teaching and as a tool of sustainable professional development effort are on high demand. Future researchers are suggested to explore the effectiveness of other CPD activities by involving more numbers of respondents. Replication of the study involving all EFL teachers in the same city or in national context is recommended.

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