



CONTINUING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) PROVISION FOR SCIENCE AND MATHEMATICS TEACHERS IN SAUDI ARABIA: PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES OF CPD PROVIDERS

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Introduction

High quality teaching demands qualified, knowledgeable and skilful teachers throughout their career (Day & Sachs, 2004). According to Kennedy (2005), promoting quality education in schools requires paying more attention to the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of teachers which is considered an essential component for creating a positive impact on their pedagogy and teaching practices. The term CPD is used to "describe all the activities in which teachers engage during the course of a career which are designed to enhance their work" (Day & Sachs, 2004, p.3). CPD activities may include professional development meetings, attending internal and external courses and conferences, coaching and mentoring, joining PD networks, participating in reflective discussions, and conducting action research and investigations (The Training and Development Agency TDA, 2007, p. 4). Guskey (2002) describes three aspects for the aspired change as major goals for professional development programs. These are: change in teachers' classroom practices, change in their attitudes and change in their students' learning outcomes.

In recent years, there has been a call for a substantive change in Professional Development (PD) forms, models and practices in

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Abstract. *This study examines the perspectives of science and mathematics Continuing Professional Development (CPD) providers regarding the nature and status of CPD provision in Saudi Arabia. It was carried out during a time when current government reforms in Saudi Arabia have placed the teaching and learning of math and science in the schools at the core of its agenda. To achieve the study results, an open-ended questionnaire was developed and used in the data collection process. Twenty science and mathematics CPD providers completed the questionnaire. Data were analyzed inductively using thematic analysis. Three themes were elicited from the study analysis: CPD planning and delivery, assessing the impact of CPD, and views of effective CPD. The article concludes that the dominant model of CPD in Saudi Arabia is based on traditional notions that are focused on a single shot design (such as training courses and workshops). The study suggests increasing the scope of CPD efforts in Saudi Arabia to allow for other forms of CPD opportunities and that science and mathematics Saudi CPD providers require support and fine tune training in order to assure the success of the CPD efforts.*

Keywords: *continuing professional development, providers' perception, Saudi Arabia, science and mathematics education.*

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