

# Rethinking the Theory and Practice of Continuing Professional Development: Science Teachers' Perspectives

Nasser Mansour · Heba EL-Deghaidy ·  
Saeed Alshamrani · Abdulwali Aldahmash

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**Abstract** The aim of this study was to investigate science teachers' views of continuing professional development (CPD) provision in Saudi Arabia and science teachers' perspectives of the CPD contextual issues that have an impact on putting the learning emerging from the CPD programmes into practice. The study used mixed methods (open-ended questionnaires and interviews) with Saudi Arabian science teachers framed by a socio-cultural perspective. This study argues that science teachers' voices concerning their professional development needs should be the key guide for their CPD. Our study shows the significance of engaging critically with science teachers' voices and views of their CPD programme. One of the unique findings of this study indicated CPD programmes should take place at school where teachers have the opportunity to collaborate with others in an authentic context and where they can participate in the content of the CPD that directly meets their needs within their work context. The study has shown that science teacher development can be effective and successful when science teachers are able to talk with each other as part of the learning activities of the CPD programmes about what they are doing in the classroom, and how they can implement the ideas of the CPD programmes into their classroom and school settings. This might shed light on why teachers were either able or unable to put some aspects of their CPD learning into practice.

**Keywords** Continuing professional development (CPD) · Social construction of professional knowledge · Teacher learning · Socio-cultural perspective

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N. Mansour  
Tanta University, Tanta, Egypt

N. Mansour (✉)  
Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter, Heavitree Road, Exeter EX1 2 LU, UK  
e-mail: n.mansour@ex.ac.uk

N. Mansour · H. EL-Deghaidy · S. Alshamrani · A. Aldahmash  
The Excellence Research Centre of Science and Mathematics Education, King Saud University, Riyadh,  
Saudi Arabia

H. EL-Deghaidy  
Suez Canal University, Ismailia, Egypt

H. EL-Deghaidy  
American University, Cairo, Egypt