

Mathematics Teachers' views on CPD provision and its impact on their professional practice

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This study investigates CPD provision in Saudi Arabia by critically examining mathematics teachers' views on their experiences and their views on the impact of provision from a teacher-as-learner perspective. A questionnaire was administered to 605 teachers representing three educational administrations in Saudi Arabia (Mecca, Taif, and Majmah). The data was analyzed from a socio-cultural learning perspective with the intention of teasing out the assumptions about knowledge, learning and context that underpinned provision. There was tentative evidence that knowledge was typically conceptualized as a transferable commodity that could be imparted to teachers in ways that was intended to influence their professional practices and development. Yet, from the perspective of the majority of teachers, it failed to have a large impact on their practice beyond the immediate. Most teachers' descriptions of how they spent their CPD were deemed to be passive and subservient rather than active participation in knowledge creation or offering leadership to others. It was concluded that teacher learning is best facilitated through long term, practice-focused, community of practice-based provision and should encompass all activity in which a teacher feels they have learnt irrespective of whether it took place as part of their daily work or at a provided CPD event.

Keywords: Mathematics Teachers' professional development - Continuing Professional Development - CPD provision- CPD impact - Teacher Education

INTRODUCTION

Concerns about the future of teacher professional programs were raised at a high level by the Ministry of

Education in Saudi Arabia due to the weakness revealed by teachers in the efficiency test that was administered to new teachers in the academic year 2003/2004 which shows only 27% of those participating teachers scored 40% of the total grade. Moreover, the percentage of teachers who benefited from short training programs (from 3 to 10 days) was only 5% of the teachers (El Abd El Karim, 2009). The continuing professional

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