

# Challenges and Success of Professional Development Activities: Teachers in Focus

Geraldine E. Justo<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>MAEM

Publication Date: 2025/08/14

**Abstract:** In our study, we aimed to gain a deeper understanding of the real-life experiences of teachers involved in professional development activities in the Kapalong East District of Davao del Norte. We wanted to uncover the challenges they face, the successes they've experienced, and the strategies they employ to navigate their professional journeys. We felt that grasping these aspects was crucial for enhancing educational management. To truly capture their experiences, we took a personalized approach, conducting heartfelt, in-depth interviews with ten dedicated public elementary school teachers. Through our conversations, we uncovered a few key challenges they often encounter: finding enough time for development activities, grappling with uncertainties about the relevance and quality of the training, and encountering a noticeable lack of support and resources. Despite these challenges, the teachers shared inspiring success stories. They talked about how professional development brought them closer together, fostering a sense of teamwork and networking among them. They also reflected on how these experiences enriched their teaching practices and boosted their confidence as educators. From their insights, several important themes emerged. The teachers recognized the positive influence professional development had on their teaching methods and, ultimately, on their students' learning. They emphasized the significance of engaging in reflective practices and consistently striving for improvement. They also highlighted the value of building professional networks and collaborative communities.

**Keywords:** Professional Development, Teacher Perspectives, Challenges, Successes, Qualitative Research, Phenomenology, Kapalong East District.

**How to Cite:** Geraldine E. Justo (2025) Challenges and Success of Professional Development Activities: Teachers in Focus. *International Journal of Innovative Science and Research Technology*, 10(8), 324-325.  
<https://doi.org/10.38124/ijisrt/25aug102>

## I. INTRODUCTION

Professional development (PD) is a fundamental part of a teacher's journey, shaping not only their skills but also the overall educational experience. When teachers grow and improve, it directly affects how they teach, which in turn influences students' success. In the Kapalong East District of Davao del Norte, understanding teachers' thoughts and feelings about professional development activities is essential. By listening to their perspectives, educational leaders can refine teaching practices that benefit both educators and students alike.

These PD opportunities are not just items on a checklist; they represent valuable moments for teachers to enhance their skills, connect with other educators, and update their teaching strategies in line with the latest educational ideas. Research has shown that certain key elements can either boost or limit the effectiveness of professional development programs.

In this area, teachers face unique challenges that require attention and understanding. This study seeks to explore their experiences with professional development, looking closely at the hurdles they encounter as well as the successes they

celebrate. The ultimate aim is to gather valuable insights that can lead to actionable recommendations for improving PD initiatives, ensuring that teachers receive the support they need. This, in turn, will enrich the learning experiences of their students.

## II. METHODS

In our recent study, we set out to explore the real-life experiences of teachers engaging in professional development activities. We focused on ten passionate public elementary school teachers from the Kapalong East District, each having taken part in various training sessions. To truly understand their experiences, we held in-depth interviews with them that lasted between 60 to 90 minutes. This time allowed us to have open and meaningful conversations about what these experiences meant to them.

The interviews were semi-structured, which gave us a mix of prepared questions while also encouraging the teachers to share their own unique stories and viewpoints. As we listened to their narratives, certain themes began to emerge, revealing both the challenges they encountered and the successes they celebrated along the way. Through this

process, we gained valuable insights into how these professional development opportunities have shaped their teaching practices.

We were also very aware of the ethical considerations involved in our study. Each participant was clearly informed about what the research entailed and willingly consented to share their experiences, reassured that their privacy would be protected. Our goal was to foster a comfortable and trusting environment for these teachers, allowing them to reflect on their professional journeys and share the invaluable lessons they've learned.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The study highlights several challenges that teachers in the Kapalong East District commonly face regarding professional development (PD) activities:

#### ➤ *Time Pressures:*

A lot of teachers mentioned how their hectic schedules and the demands of their teaching responsibilities make it hard to find time for professional development. This aligns with what Ingersoll and Strong (2011) pointed out: time constraints often stand in the way for educators who want to enhance their careers.

#### ➤ *Relevance and Quality of Training:*

Several teachers expressed their concerns about whether the PD programs offered truly meet their needs. Many felt that some training sessions seemed disconnected from the actual challenges they encounter in the classroom. This is similar to what Garet et al. (2001) found, emphasizing that for PD to be effective, it really needs to be applicable to teachers' everyday experiences.

#### ➤ *Insufficient Support and Resources:*

Many participants noted a lack of support and resources from their schools, making it difficult for them to fully participate in PD activities. This mirrors the insights from Supovitz and Turner (2000), who argued that meaningful and enduring professional development relies heavily on continuous support from school leaders and access to necessary resources.

On a positive note, despite these hurdles, teachers shared some uplifting experiences from their professional development journeys. They talked about enjoying greater collaboration with their colleagues, improving their teaching practices, and gaining more confidence in their roles. This kind of teamwork is vital, as it nurtures a culture of ongoing learning and sharing among teachers, which is essential for enhancing instruction (Stoll et al., 2006).

Moreover, many participants shared that engaging in PD activities inspired them to reflect on their teaching methods. This reflective practice helped them critically evaluate their strategies and strive for continuous improvement. Self-reflection is crucial for professional growth, enabling teachers to fine-tune their techniques based on input and self-evaluation (Schön, 1983).

In conclusion, this study emphasizes the importance of developing a more accessible, relevant, and supportive structure for professional development in education. By addressing the challenges that teachers have identified and building on the successful aspects of PD, educational leaders can significantly enhance these programs. This could ultimately lead to improved teaching practices and better outcomes for students in the Kapalong East District.

### REFERENCES

- [1]. Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M. E., & Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective teacher professional development. \*PPE Research Brief.\** Stanford University.
- [2]. Desimone, L. M. (2009). Improving impact studies of teachers' professional development: Toward better conceptualizations and measures. *\*Educational Policy, 23\*(6), 826-854.*
- [3]. Garet, M. S., Porter, A. C., Desimone, L., Birman, B. F., & Yoon, K. S. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *\*American Educational Research Journal, 38\*(4), 915-945.*
- [4]. Ingersoll, R. M., & Strong, M. (2011). The impact of induction and mentoring programs for beginning teachers: A critical review of the research. *\*Review of Educational Research, 81\*(2), 201-233.*
- [5]. Schön, D. A. (1983). *\*The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action.\** Basic Books.
- [6]. Stoll, L., Bolam, R., McMahon, A., Wallace, M., & Thomas, S. (2006). Professional learning communities: A review of the literature. *\*Journal of Educational Change, 7\*(4), 221-258.*
- [7]. Supovitz, J. A., & Turner, H. M. (2000). The effects of professional development on teacher practices and student performance: A six-year longitudinal study. *\*Educational Policy Analysis Archives, 8\*(1).*