

# Exploring a New CPD Model for Promoting Chinese Teachers' Success: A Review Paper

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**Abstract:** People's ideas are constantly evolving with changes in society and the times. This attracted more attention to the issue of continuous professional development for Chinese teachers. The traditional approach to professional development only addresses issues relevant to the current situation and may not be sufficient to support teachers' growth in more complex and challenging contexts. This paper examines the environment and context of teacher professional development, focusing on both domestic and international educational theories and practices. It proposes a systematic solution that is aligned with the current state of teacher professional development in China.

**Keywords:** CPD; Teacher Professional Development; Teaching Professional.

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## 1. Introduction

Professional development originated in academia outside of education and usually refers to the evolution of any professional category from "non-professional" to "mature professional" specialization. In 1966, the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Labor Organization (ILO) issued the *Recommendations on the Status of Teachers*, which stated that education should be recognized as a profession that requires rigorous and continuous research and a sense of mission and responsibility in teaching students (Wan, 1984). With the progress of society, teacher professional development began to flourish in Europe and in the United States and gradually expanded to all countries. After 1990, Chinese scholars began to pay more attention to teachers' professional development and carried out a lot of practical explorations. Education development is a problem that many educators have been very concerned about, which resulted in their commitment to research. All schools have gradually begun to realize the problem of teacher sustainable development and explore and develop education from a sustainable perspective.

At present, "professional development" in education represents all formal and informal activities teachers participate in during their career journeys, such as academic education, teaching, and research training, conference exchanges, and theoretical practice. For teachers, "professional development" can also represent their whole careers and lives, including the pre-service learning and growth and post-service development stages (Raduan, 2020). The discussion on teacher professional development mainly aims to improve teachers' ability in professional psychology and professional performance and related activities throughout their career path. These activities are mainly initiated by schools or teachers and carried out in a small range of spontaneous behaviors characterized by low frequency and accidents. The overall promotion of the country and professional development training activities based on "on-the-job training," (Van der Klink & Streumer, 2002) have generally begun, and combined with the reform of the national teaching system and teaching curriculum, have gradually improved systematic professional ability. On this

basis, more scholars pay attention to the issue of teacher professional development, and teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) has become the leading research object and content, which emphasizes the concept of teacher lifelong development and believes that teacher professional development is a planned, and continuous lifelong process that runs through teacher development (Cetin & Cetin, 2017).

With the change in the Chinese social and cultural environment, individuals born after the year 2000 and even those born after 2010 have emerged as the primary participants in the contemporary education industry (Min & Wu-er, 2021). Distinguished by a markedly distinct social background and environment compared to previous generations, they bring forth their unique cultural perspectives and values. The cohorts born after 2000 are actively shaping the present world and experiencing rapid development, particularly in China. Their notable resilience and innovative prowess pose new challenges to the professional capabilities of educators. Effectively guiding them to acquire knowledge and skills in the educational process by helping them respond to the demands of current societal tasks becomes a pivotal challenge for teachers' professional competence and, consequently, advances the trajectory of teachers' professional development. As education targets undergo continuous refinement in both classroom and societal consciousness, it is evident that teachers' ongoing professional development will emerge as a critical concern for all educational institutions and educators in the foreseeable future.

In the contemporary world, global competition predominantly centers around the pursuit of talent. Education, being the exclusive avenue for nurturing talent, undeniably contributes significantly to advancing social progress (Zwetsloot, 2020). Teachers, serving as the executors of educational activities and carriers of educational content, shoulder an indispensable responsibility that cannot be overlooked. In the current landscape, the teaching profession has evolved into a "gradually maturing profession. In this process of evolution, teachers, as a profession, are both learners and teachers (Qu, 2014). The professional level of the teaching profession must be based on the professional

development of teachers themselves (Gao, 2004); so against the backdrop of an increasingly intricate social division of labor and the impetus of professional specialization, China's achieving sustainable development in teacher professionalism has become paramount (Ingersoll & Perda, 2008).

In the context of education in China, the importance of teachers' CPD has gradually become known to schools and individual teachers. However, due to the limitations of the original model, the practical application is still only suitable for dealing with a single problem at the present stage. Therefore, this paper examines the environment and context of teacher professional development, based on both domestic and international educational theories and practices.

## 2. Review of Related Literature

The teaching profession comes into being with the emergence of human society, which promotes the inheritance and development of society. It is one of the oldest professions in human society. As a profession, teachers' social function, quality requirements, and occupational labor characteristics are constantly changing. Teacher professional development is the product of the development requirement of the times. In 2009, Chinese scholar Fu Bajun published *Professional Characteristics of University Teachers* (Fu, 2009), pointing out that the professional characteristics of teachers are affected by the nature of education, showing a variety of characteristics, including high education, specialization, personalized teaching, research spirit, service to society and other characteristics, which requires teachers to have a very high coping ability. Under the dual requirements, the problem of teacher professional development has become an issue that all school reforms and national reforms must pay attention to..

### 2.1. Continuing Professional Development

American scholar Richard Geadber first proposed the concept of continuous professional development (CPD) in the 7th century of the last century. After years of research, it was updated and improved. In 1986, the Architectural Conference stated that "continuous professional development refers to the lifelong behavior of practitioners to systematically maintain, improve and expand knowledge and skills in practice. In this way, we develop the qualities necessary for the occupation of the individual." (Zhou, 2009). Therefore, the concept of CPD did not appear in the field of education at the beginning, but with the continuous improvement of people's awareness of the importance of education development, CPD also expanded to the field of education.

CPD is relatively mature in the field of medicine. In this field, CPD is referred to as a continuous, long career process of acquiring new knowledge, technical skills, learning skills, computer skills, management skills, interpersonal skills, and attitudes. The acquisition of this skill in the process enables physicians to practice adequately in specific areas (Fikar et al., 2002). From this perspective, the continuous professional development of teachers can be regarded as the teacher's active participation in practice and the need for professional changes at each stage together with others in a specific environment with its own attributes. At the same time, the teacher can take the initiative to reflect to maintain the continuous improvement and development of their own professional knowledge, skills, and comprehensive quality. From the perspective of connotation, the sustainable professional development of teachers can be understood as the development of teachers cannot be dried and fishing, and

we must constantly create favorable conditions and opportunities for their future development and lifelong development so that the development appears more promising (Wang, 2008).

Teachers' continuous professional development is the further improvement and deepening of teachers' professional development. Whether the developed teachers can continue to develop and how they can continue to develop is the fundamental path to ensure the professional development of teachers. Continuous professional development is seen as a long career process linked to a broader set of concepts. Compared with teacher professional development, it pays more attention to the sustainability, autonomy, and common development of the organization of teacher professional development so that teachers pay attention to practical opportunities, active learning, and academic content closely related to school practice (Garet et al., 2001).

Teachers improve their own professionalism through learning, including professionalism in their existing work, professionalism in developing new knowledge and skills, and expertise in developing new teaching and learning strategies. Its core lies in teachers' self-development ability, aiming at promoting the common development of all teachers and even the whole education system. At the same time, teachers' continuous professional development has the characteristics of advanced nature, continuity, stability, autonomy, and commonality, and it is a never-ending development process. Therefore, teachers must have the consciousness and practical action of living, learning, and developing. According to Thomsom and Zeuli (1999), the first step in continuing professional development is to realize "transformational learning". The most important is to "change the original belief, knowledge and practice habits." "In the professional development of teachers, a place is needed where one can increase knowledge and do transformative learning. Eventually, teachers will also make conscious choices about the whole process and outcome (Loucks-Horsler et al., 2003).

Lamb and Reinders (2016) put forward the theory of teacher-autonomous development to explore teachers' autonomy as learners in teacher development. As the subject of professional development, teachers should constantly improve themselves and reflect on their own behavior in daily life and work. Altun (2011) proposed combining INSET theory and teacher professional development. Through the elaboration of teacher professional development, combined with the importance of INSET in this aspect. The application of INSET in teacher development has profound significance. Hardman et al. (2009) proposed to develop training plans from the school perspective to include teacher professional development, i.e., school-based training. To investigate the impact of school-based teacher development programs, it is found that teachers' performance changes significantly after training, which improves classroom quality. School-based training becomes the first choice to achieve CPD. Wong and Nicotera (2003) proposed the idea of peer tutoring, which is whether peer tutoring plays an advantageous role in teacher development and promotes teachers' sustainable development. They confirmed the role of peer counseling in the study and derived specific practices and behavioral extensions from the results of its four aspects.

### 2.2. Teacher Career Development Cycle

In 1966, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Labor

Organization (ILO) published Recommendations on the Status of Teachers, stating that education should be recognized as a profession that requires rigorous and continuous research and a sense of purpose and responsibility in teaching (Wan, 1984). At present, "professional development" in education refers to all formal and informal activities teachers participate in during their careers, such as academic education, teaching and research training, conference exchanges, theoretical practice, etc.

In the study of the teachers' profession, scholars summarized the model of teachers' career stages into many different stages as social characteristics changed (Kwee, 2020). For example, Fessler(1992) proposed the eight-cycle theory of teachers' profession based on the characteristics of teachers' self-reports. Marso & Pigge (1994) cited the attention stage theory and divided the teacher growth process into four stages according to the different attention content. Katz (1972) discussed the four stages of teacher career development; Unruh & Turner (1970) discuss three stages of instructional development. Raduan (2020) directly divides teacher careers into pre-service learning growth and post-service development stages. Based on different career development models, under the influence of social characteristics, the characteristics of the teacher profession and individual needs and concerns have different concerns. Many scholars have conducted research from the perspective of the teacher profession.

### 2.3. CPD and its Implementation in China

School perspective: Since the CPD concept came into being, all schools have paid attention to it. The implementation status of CPD in Chinese schools mainly includes the following aspects:

Professional training: The school organizes various kinds of professional training regularly or irregularly, covering subject knowledge, teaching skills, information technology, and other aspects to meet the needs of teachers' professional development at different levels (Deng, 2019).

Academic exchange: Teachers are encouraged to participate in academic conferences, seminars, and other exchange activities to conduct academic discussions and experience sharing with peers, broaden their horizons, and update their knowledge (Li, 2009).

Teaching observation: Organize teaching observation activities so that teachers can learn from each other and improve together by listening to lectures and evaluating lessons (Tang, 2007).

Teaching reflection (Shen & Liu, 2004): Teachers are encouraged to carry out teaching reflection, constantly summarize experiences and lessons, and improve teaching methods and strategies through self-assessment and peer evaluation.

Personal perspective: With the development of information technology, more and more teachers begin to pay attention to their own development. Teachers began to improve their professional quality and teaching ability by reading professional books.

Independent learning (Pu, 2009): Many Chinese teachers learn independently by reading educational books and periodicals, watching online courses, participating in webinars, etc. This kind of learning method is flexible and convenient and can meet the individual learning needs of teachers.

Collaborative research: Some teachers will actively

participate in scientific research projects or educational reform projects. The aim is to delve into educational issues and explore new teaching methods and strategies through teamwork. This collaborative research method helps enhance teachers' scientific research ability and teaching innovation ability (Liu, 2010).

### 2.4. Professional Nature of Teacher

The role of teachers is not only to impart certain textbook knowledge to students but to adopt specific teaching methods in specific environments and promote the growth of students through specific ways according to the actual development of students and educational goals and requirements. The teacher's role is to help students grow; in other words, teachers promote students' growth (Dobber et al., 2017). The role of teachers is a complex professional role. Developing into this role requires a complex, long-term learning process (Labaree, 2000).

From the beginning to the present, the teaching profession has become a very important profession. It belongs to a profession and is a professional, so it needs to achieve continuous professional development. At present, in many studies, the professional characteristics of teachers are more in the following three aspects:

First, teachers must serve society, which is a vision of cultivating talents. This is his professional function. It can also be the purpose of service. The teaching profession carries great social significance, which makes the social culture inherit and make the society more civilized and progressive (Monteiro, 2015).

Second, the formation of teachers is slow, must go through a long period of professional training because they have a lot of professional knowledge and professional skills on a career basis (Murray & Male, 2005). In China, to obtain a professional qualification certificate for the teacher profession, the state also has a series of general norms for this profession, including ethics, knowledge, ability, and other qualities (Fu et al., 2015).

Third, teachers have relatively large autonomy in their careers and can be responsible for handling and deciding certain things (Sehrawat, 2014). In other words, they have their own professional rights, including the treatment of textbooks, the choice of educational methods, the observation of students, the feedback of educational results, and so on.

### 2.5. Analysis of Teachers' Salaries

The future development prospect of a country's educational cause is closely related to the construction of schoolteachers. In the process of investment and the construction of educational causes, we must pay more attention to the level of teachers. The salary level of teachers will directly affect teachers' enthusiasm for professional development and significantly impact the implementation process of education reform (Ghenghesh, 2003).

Currently, Chinese teachers can be divided explicitly into public teachers and private teachers according to the types of schools, and the salary components of the two are basically similar. Still, there are differences in the specific amount. It is mainly composed of basic salary, position salary, working years salary, and title allowance, among others. Teachers' salaries are mainly determined by age, professional level, working hours, and other conditions (Lu et al., 2014). According to the composition of teachers' salaries, other salary compositions are affected by teachers' professional

ability, apart from basic salary. Conley and Odden (1995) linked teacher salary with teacher career development and found that there was a deep connection between teacher salary and career development based on teachers' skills and knowledge. Mitchell (1988) proposed that teachers' professional ability could be enhanced through appropriate salary incentives. Jones (2013) studied teachers' performance pay and behaviors and found that performance pay incentives could change teachers' work efforts and behaviors. Therefore, there is a certain connection between the salary system and the professional competence of teachers.

In short, improving the incentive mechanism of teachers' income distribution within schools, effectively reflecting teachers' workload and work performance, and establishing an income distribution mechanism that reflects teaching and educating people and increasing the value of knowledge are the basic requirements for effectively protecting and improving teachers' salaries, protecting teachers' rights and interests, and ensuring teachers' peace of mind in teaching. An effective salary promotion mechanism can effectively motivate teachers to continue their professional development.

## 2.6. Teacher's Teaching Input

Teaching is a priority for universities and teachers. University teaching is an academic activity that requires teachers to invest time, energy, and emotion. Teachers' teaching input in each link of the teaching process will have different effects on students (Cinches, 2017), so teachers' teaching input should also be analyzed.

For local colleges and universities, teaching work is at the core of all the school's work, and teachers' teaching input directly affects the quality of personnel training, which is related to the future development trend of the college (Goe, 2007). The research results of the school-level education reform project of Beijing Union University in 2013 "Analysis of the Investigation Results of the Undergraduate Teaching Involvement of Beijing Union University Teachers," show that Through the analysis of teachers' time investment and energy investment in teaching, it is concluded that teachers' active investment in teaching is still lacking, and it is suggested that "teachers' teaching investment" should be regarded as an important factor of school review.

Therefore, to guide teachers to participate in teaching actively, the key is to establish a long-term incentive and restraint mechanism, including the construction of teacher teacher-teaching evaluation mechanism and sharing learning mechanism (He & Wang, 2024); Construct and improve the long-term mechanism of teachers' involvement in teaching; Promote teachers' continuous professional development and stimulate teachers' intrinsic motivation to devote to teaching (Utomo, 2018); Establish a teacher withdrawal mechanism to form a benign competition mechanism (Hanushek & Rivkin, 2003).

## 3. Conclusion

As a profession, teachers have a high social status, and the social responsibility they undertake is more important. From a social point of view, teachers must have a high professional ability to realize the vocational requirements of training talents and social service better. The salary range is related to the professional ability of teachers. To obtain a high salary, continuous professional development is needed. From the perspective of schools, teachers' teaching input directly impacts schools, and schools should build corresponding

decisions and mechanisms to provide favorable support for teachers' professional development. Therefore, teachers' continuous professional development is the same long-term behavior that every school and every teacher needs to continue to adhere to. This paper examines the environment and background of teacher professional development by combining educational theories and practices at home and abroad, and aims at the current situation of teacher professional development in China to provide reference for future research on CPD.

Teacher CPD is an important and growing field with great prospects and opportunities for future research. With the implementation of China's education strategy, the construction of teachers has become an important part of the country's development, and the goals and requirements of the construction of teachers have been clearly put forward. Secondly, the advancement of educational informatization and the individualization and diversification of educational demands have prompted teachers to constantly pay attention to the development of their professional abilities and professional qualities. At the same time, schools and educational scholars have also continued to pay attention to this field and explore new models of teacher professional development. It can be said that with the support of the policy background, the change of educational demand has promoted the deepening of the research and the clear direction of development. The future research will pay more attention to the improvement of teachers' professional quality, the innovation of teacher education and training, and the exploration of the mode of teacher career development and planning. These research directions will provide strong support and guidance for the continuous growth and progress of teachers.

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