
Challenges Faced by College Teachers to Continuing Professional Development

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ABSTRACT

Continuing Professional Development is essential for college teachers to stay current with educational practices, content knowledge, and pedagogical strategies. This paper focuses on the challenges to the professional development of teachers in Punjab. The data was collected from randomly selected 180 college teachers by administering Tyagi and Kumar's (2023) "Teachers Continuing Professional Development Challenges Scale". The findings showed no significant gender difference in the challenges to continuing professional development of college teachers whereas a significant difference was observed based on the nature of the institution, and designation. Additionally, it was found that male college teachers faced more challenges related to infrastructure, institutional support, availability, time management, attitude, and motivation in continuing their professional development, whereas female teachers faced peer and financial challenges to their own continuing professional development. Teachers working in Aided colleges have more infrastructural, institutional, availability, peer, financial, time-management, and motivational challenges to continuing professional development, however, the teachers working in self-financed colleges have more attitudinal challenges in their continuing professional development. Moreover, the findings also indicated that assistant professors have more infrastructural, availability, peer, financial, and time management challenges, whereas, associate professors have more attitudinal and motivational challenges in their continuing professional



development. The study emphasizes that addressing different challenges requires differentiated professional development.

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Professional development for teachers refers to the ongoing learning process that educators engage in to enhance their teaching skills, knowledge, and effectiveness in the classroom. It plays a critical role in improving student outcomes, adapting to new educational trends, and meeting the demands of a rapidly changing educational environment. Professional development is an essential part of professional life (Barak *et al.*, 2010) and may help address the 'vagueness around the concept of professionalism (O'Sullivan, 2011). American Association for Higher Education (2006) observed continuous professional development as a reflection of learning and academic goals, which needs students and faculty to be involved with outcomes of learning expectations of the community, and administrators, and an improved process of assessment. Padwad and Dixit (2014) addressed CPD as a planned, continuous, and lifelong process that helps teachers to develop their personal and professional qualities; by improving their knowledge, skills, and practices, leading to their empowerment, improvement, and development of their organizations and pupils. Antoniou, Kyriakides, and Creemers (2015) described that continuous professional development ensures that you and your knowledge stay relevant and up to date with continuous improvement.

Braga, Jones, Bulger, and Elliott (2017) defined continuous professional development as the conscious updating of professional knowledge with an improvement of professional competence throughout an individual working life. It is a commitment to being professional, up-to-date, and continuously seeking to improve. Calleja (2018) highlighted continuous professional development as assistance to advance in one's career and move to new positions where you can lead, manage, influence, coach, and mentor others. They further asserted that CPD capabilities keep pace with the current standards of others in the same field. Going by the above definitions, continuous professional development was termed as a personal aspect related to the updation of knowledge, experience in participation, competencies in teaching, and innovative training opportunities by attending seminars, workshops, symposia, and conferences.

In the constantly changing context of an educational institution and a university teacher's everyday practice, the concept of continuing professional development has become especially relevant. With the increasing growth in the creation of a more extensive pool of knowledge in different fields and the



development of different teaching methodologies, teachers must constantly train to stay relevant and applicable (Hashim *et al.*, 2021). Professional development enables and empowers teachers to deepen their content knowledge and gain new skills essential to improving their teaching performance by integrating advanced technology into the process that will foster a greater understanding among the students. Even, professional development supports teachers to enhance their competencies, endure enthusiasm, and enable them to offer quality education to their students. Darling-Hammond (1999) and Sparks (2002), noted the importance of teachers' learning in promoting change at the college level. College teachers encounter numerous barriers in their professional development endeavours. Professional development is often ineffective because college teachers work in different disciplines, have varying levels of experience, and face distinct institutional, technological, and student-related challenges. Continuous professional development is of great significance and relevance in educational settings as it ensures that the benefit of the teachers transforms the learning process of the students in a very positive manner. It is essential for personal growth, professional advancement, and maintaining high educational standards.

Objective and Hypotheses: Based on the above discussion, the present paper is focused on finding out the significant differences in the challenges faced by college teachers to continuing professional development based on their gender, type of college, and teaching position. Based on this objective, the following hypotheses are phrased:

H0₁ There is no significant difference in the challenges faced by college teachers to continuing professional development based on gender

H0₂ There is no significant difference in the challenges faced by college teachers to continuing professional development based on type of college

H0₃ There is no significant difference in the challenges faced by college teachers to continuing professional development based on designation

Research Methodology

Research Design: For this study, a descriptive research design is implemented.

Sample: For the present study, one hundred eighty college teachers (89 Male & 91 female; 145 Aided College, 32 Self-financed College & 17 Government College; 100 Assistant Professor, 33 Associate Professor & 47 Professor) of Punjab (India) are selected by a simple random sampling technique.

Tools Administered to Collect Data: The data is collected by administering the *Teachers' Continuing Professional Development Challenges Scale*, standardized by Tyagi and Misra in 2023. This is a five-



point Likert scale having 38 statements consisting of eight types of challenges i.e. Infrastructural, Institutional, Availability, Peer, Financial, Time-Management, Attitudinal, and Motivational. The reliability of the scale was calculated by using Cronbach Alpha (0.95), indicating a high reliability. To check the item consistency of the scale, item validity was assessed by calculating the corrected item-total correlation, which was obtained through correlation between the score of the item total correlation, which was obtained through correlation between the score of the item and the score on total scale excluding that particular item. The correlations ranged from 0.435 to 0.705.

Data Analysis and Interpretation of the Results: The data is analyzed by employing t-test and One-Way ANOVA through SPSS.

Table 1 Comparison of Challenges to Continue Professional Development of College Teachers based on Gender

	Male	Female	df	t	Sig.
Infrastructural Challenges	15.12	15.47		.077	.93
Institutional Challenges	16.31	15.69		1.101	.262
Availability Challenges	17.51	17.05		.612	.541
Peer Challenges	12.38	13.67		.570	.569
Financial Challenges	13.34	13.44	178	.227	.820
Time-Management Challenges	16.93	15.80		.231	.818
Attitudinal Challenges	12.70	12.02		.442	.659
Motivational Challenges	19.76	18.91		.964	.336

The mean value is boldface.



Table 1 shows that the t-value is found to be not significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance on the scores of infrastructural, institutional, availability, peer, financial, time-management, attitudinal, and motivational challenges in the continuing professional development of college teachers. Therefore, H_0 “There will be no significant difference in the challenges of continuing professional development of college teacher based on gender”, is accepted.

Furthermore, the mean scores indicated that male college teachers face more institutional, availability, time-management, attitudinal, and motivational challenges, whereas female teachers face more infrastructure, peer, and financial challenges for their continuing professional development.

Table 2: Mean and SD of Nature of Institution and Designation of College Teachers on the Scores of Challenges to Continuing Professional Development

	Nature of Institution			Designation		
	Aided	Self-Financed	Government	Assistant Professor	Associated Professor	Professor
Infrastructural Challenges	15.69 3.95	16.25 3.94	13.92 3.96	15.87 4.06	15.09 3.62	14.80 3.96
Institutional Challenges	16.11 3.76	16.25 3.41	15.33 4.11	16.05 3.62	15.57 3.18	16.19 4.53
Availability Challenges	17.79 3.93	15.00 4.04	15.55 4.11	17.98 3.88	17.18 3.97	16.06 4.53
Peer Challenges	13.73 3.39	11.87 3.64	12.88 3.12	13.92 3.51	13.36 2.84	12.80 3.38
Financial Challenges	13.68 2.62	12.37 3.24	12.14 2.50	13.89 2.48	12.87 2.74	12.89 2.94
Time-Management Challenges	17.28 3.62	15.75 4.09	14.96 4.03	17.30 3.61	17.33 3.51	15.61 4.12
Attitudinal Challenges	12.62 3.08	12.37 3.03	12.59 2.92	12.67 3.26	12.57 2.27	12.63 3.13
Motivational Challenges	19.69 4.01	20.37 4.40	18.03 3.69	19.69 4.00	20.30 3.41	18.42 4.29

The mean value is boldface.



Table 3 One-way ANOVA on the Scores of Challenges to Continuing Professional Development of College Teachers based on the Nature of Institution

		Sum of	df	Mean	F	Sig.
		Squares		Square		
Infrastructural Challenges	Between Groups	75.175	2	31.58	1.12	.091
	Within Groups	2743.375	177	15.49		
	Total	2818.550	179			
Institutional Challenges	Between Groups	14.26	2	7.13	.49	.612
	Within Groups	2561.73	177	14.47		
	Total	2576.00	179			
Availability Challenges	Between Groups	59.54	2	29.77	1.19	.006*
	Within Groups	2664.46	177	15.05		
	Total	2824.00	179			
Peer Challenges	Between Groups	39.27	2	19.63	1.02	.181**
	Within Groups	2011.58	177	11.36		
	Total	2050.86	179			
Financial Challenges	Between Groups	62.30	2	31.15	4.49	.002**
	Within Groups	1226.68	177	6.93		
	Total	1288.99	179			
Time-Management Challenges	Between Groups	132.93	2	66.46	4.84	.009**
	Within Groups	2429.87	177	13.72		
	Total	2562.80	179			
Attitudinal Challenges	Between Groups	.463	2	.23	.02	.976
	Within Groups	1176.51	177	9.47		
	Total	1576.99	179			
Motivational Challenges	Between Groups	68.98	2	34.49	1.16	.102
	Within Groups	2317.27	177	15.92		
	Total	2486.18	179			

F-values represented in Table 3 show statistically significant differences in availability, peer, financial, and time-management in the challenges faced by college teachers based on types of college (Aided, Self-



financed, and Government) to continuing professional development at 0.05 and 0.01 levels. Hence, the hypothesis **H0₂** “*There will be no significant difference in the challenges of continuing professional development of college teacher based on their nature of institution*”, is partially rejected and partially accepted.

Furthermore, the mean scores (table 2) show that teachers working in Aided colleges mostly face availability, peer, financial, time-management, and attitudinal challenges, whereas teachers of self-financed colleges face more infrastructural, institutional and motivational challenges to their continuing professional development.

Table 4.3.4 One-way ANOVA on the scores Challenges to Continuing Professional Development of College Teachers based on Designation

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Infrastructural Challenges	Between Groups	41.23	2	20.61	1.31	.271**
	Within Groups	2777.31	177	15.69		
	Total	2818.55	179			
Institutional Challenges	Between Groups	7.91	2	3.95	.273	.762
	Within Groups	2568.08	177	14.50		
	Total	2576.00	179			
Availability Challenges	Between Groups	118.32	2	59.16	3.87	.023**
	Within Groups	2705.67	177	15.28		
	Total	2824.00	179			
Peer Challenges	Between Groups	40.58	2	20.29	1.78	.170*
	Within Groups	2010.27	177	11.35		
	Total	2050.86	179			
Financial Challenges	Between Groups	37.01	2	18.50	2.61	.076**
	Within Groups	1251.98	177	7.07		
	Total	1288.99	179			
Time-Management Challenges	Between Groups	99.36	2	49.68	3.57	.030**
	Within Groups	2463.44	177	13.91		
	Total	2562.80	179			



Attitudinal	Between Groups	.083	2	.041	.004	.996
Challenges	Within Groups	1676.91	177	9.47		
	Total	1676.99	179			
Motivational	Between Groups	79.01	2	39.50	2.49	.086**
Challenges	Within Groups	2807.84	177	15.86		
	Total	2886.86	179			

F-values represented in Table 4 show statistically significant differences in infrastructural, availability, peer, financial, time-management, and motivational challenges faced by college teachers based on the designation (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor) to continuing professional development at 0.01 level. Hence, the hypothesis **H0₃** “*There will be no significant difference in the challenges to continuing professional development of college teacher based on designation*”, is partially rejected and partially accepted.

Furthermore, the mean scores (table 2) indicated that the assistant professors mostly face infrastructural, availability, peer, financial, and attitudinal challenges; whereas, associate professors face time-management and motivational challenges and professors face institutional challenges to their continuing professional development.

Discussion and Conclusion

The overall findings show that college teachers face various challenges to their professional development at different levels. Furthermore, it signifies the need to increase the initiatives to continue professional development for them. Srinivasacharlu (2019) pointed out that the challenges of the present era require teachers to pursue continuous professional development to avoid being archaic and alienated. Tyagi and Misra (2021) also highlight that continuing professional development helps teachers improve their professional and instructional practices. The findings indicate the necessity of tailoring professional learning opportunities to meet the varied needs, contexts, and goals of each teacher. The findings of the study can be implemented to improve a teaching-learning process, the current practices, notions, knowledge, and opinions to make them reach the required standards for the professional development of teachers. Professional development is essential for empowering teachers, fostering lifelong learning, and ensuring educational excellence. Kaur (2013) suggested that professional training especially for in-service teachers is important to understand and implement the strategies to meet the education standards at the global level. As the findings illustrate assistant professors and associate professors face more challenges,



so senior and experienced teachers can provide leadership training, and mentoring skills, through Induction programs. The college management and administrators must provide opportunities to participate in various orientation programs, refresher courses, workshops, seminars, conferences, etc. organized by various agencies, which will help update their knowledge, skills, and competencies for their professional development.

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