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EXAMINING THE CURRENT PRACTICES AND TYPES OF CPD ACTIVITIES FOR TEACHER EDUCATORS

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Abstract

The engagement of teacher educators in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is critical for enhancing the quality of teacher education and responding effectively to ongoing educational reforms. This study examined the current practices and types of CPD activities for teacher educators in education degree colleges using quantitative data analysis method. The quantitative study involved a survey of 384 teacher educators from education degree colleges, employing descriptive statistics, independent sample t-tests, and one-way ANOVA to analyse the current practices of CPD engagement across demographic variables. The quantitative results revealed that teacher educators' overall engagement in CPD was at a moderate level (Mean% = 54.84), indicating partial but inconsistent participation across CPD dimensions. Gender-based analysis showed a significant difference only in leadership and management skills, while age-related analysis revealed that younger teacher educators demonstrated stronger engagement in research and language-related skills, whereas older educators showed greater strength in pedagogical and management-related areas. Concerning the rank positions and types of degrees, there was found some significant differences in some areas but not all. This study would contribute evidence-based guidance for improving CPD policy and practice in Myanmar education degree colleges.

Keywords

Continuous Professional Development Activities, Teacher Educators, etc.

Full Article

Introduction:

Teacher Educators (TEs) are the cornerstone of a robust education system. They are the experienced professionals responsible for educating, mentoring, and shaping future teaching practitioners. One of the main goals of the Department of Teacher Education, focusing on Continuous Professional Development (CPD), is to create a professional culture that values reflection, teamwork, and new ideas. Therefore, it is critical to examine how CPD is currently being implemented in Myanmar, to what extent it meets the needs of teacher educators, and how it can be strengthened to align with national education goals.

Swennen, Lunenberg, and Korthagen (2008) argue that teacher educators must not only model good teaching practices but also develop unique competencies as adult educators, curriculum developers, and researchers. Similarly, Kennedy (2014) highlights that CPD must be continuous, collaborative, and connected to educators' professional contexts to produce meaningful impact. However, many teacher educators in developing contexts face challenges such as a lack of institutional support, insufficient funding, and limited access to relevant CPD programmes (Villegas-Reimers, 2003; Avalos, 2011).

For this study, the researcher developed the questionnaire for the engagement of teacher educators' professional development based on the Adult Learning Theory and Social Learning Theory. Adult learning theory explains self-directed, experience-based adult learning and social learning theory explains peer learning, communities of practice (Bandura,1977; Wenger, 1998;

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Vol. – VI, Issue-4, March 2026

Farnsworth et al., 2016; Allen et al., 2020). Both theories align with continuous professional development nature and teacher educators' context.

Purpose of the Study:

The purpose of the study is to analyse the current practices and types of CPD activities among teacher educators in continuous professional development according to demographic variables such as gender, age, rank positions and types of degree.

Operational Definition of Key Terms:

Continuous Professional Development Activities:

The activities that include the continuous process in which teacher educators maintain and enhance their professional skills, knowledge, attitudes, and competencies throughout their careers.

Teacher Educators:

Teacher educators are professionals who are responsible for the education and training of prospective teachers, typically within teacher education institutions.

Literature Review:

The literature on Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for teacher educators in Myanmar situates professional learning within the country's evolving teacher education system and ongoing educational reforms. Teachers must regularly engage in "professional learning activities" aimed at enhancing their teaching methods if they want to improve their material competency and instructional expertise and delivery (Akiba & Liang, 2016). For professional learning to be effective, it must not only focus on material but also on active teacher application through a combination of learning, collaborative engagement, exemplars of best practices, independent reflexivity, and ongoing iteration (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Teacher educators often operate within a highly centralised, top-down policy environment, which can constrain professional autonomy and limit opportunities for meaningful participation in reform processes. According to Westrup (2009), the quality of teacher educators determines the quality of teacher education.

Across international contexts, CPD is recognised as a critical factor in improving teaching effectiveness, learner outcomes, and organisational performance. CPD is compulsory for teachers in half of the countries in the European Union and many of the states in the USA (Eurydice, 2003). CPD is broadly recognised for significantly contributing to teachers' professional and personal development while playing an important role in the life of educational organisations, which can improve teaching and learning (Cecep Somantri & Harris Iskandar, 2020).

In Myanmar, CPD opportunities for teacher educators include formal training programmes, mentoring, action research, peer learning, and ICT-supported professional learning. However, the literature identifies persistent challenges such as limited institutional capacity. Addressing these challenges requires strategic planning, adequate resource allocation, and alignment with national education reform priorities to ensure that CPD initiatives are relevant, equitable, and capable of producing lasting professional and institutional impact.

Methodology:

Sampling:

This study employed simple random sampling to select participants from education degree colleges. The sample size of 348 teacher educators from 25 education degree colleges was determined by using Yamane (1967) sampling formula as follow.

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$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne2}$$

Research Method:
A quantitative research design was applied to examine the current practices and types of CPD activities. For this study, descriptive statistics, independent sample *t*-test and one-way ANOVA analysis were employed to explore the variations among gender, rank positions and types of degree.

Instrumentation:
This study examined the current practices and types of teacher educators' CPD activities in education degree colleges. To investigate the variations, this study utilised ten factors to examine the CPD activities, namely (1) Supports for Educational Reform, (2) Upgrading Pedagogical Competency, (3) Upgrading Academic Qualification, (4) Upgrading English Language Skills, (5) Upgrading ICT Skills, and (6) Practices for Continuous Professional Development Activities. (7) Developing Research Skills, (8) Upgrading Specific Pedagogical Skills Area, (9) Developing Leadership and Management Skills, and (10) Equity and Inclusion.

Quantitative Data Collection Procedure:
The quantitative data were collected to examine the current practices and types of CPD activities in which teacher educators are engaged. Quantitative data analyses were conducted with Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) v 22.

Results of the Study:
Descriptive Statistics for the Engagement of Teacher Educators' Continuous Professional Development:
Teacher educators' engagement in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) was categorised into ten factors: educational reform, pedagogical competency, academic qualification, English language skills, ICT skills, practices of CPD, research skills, pedagogical skill areas, leadership and management, and equity and inclusion.

The descriptive statistics results show that teacher educators in Education Degree Colleges had a moderate level of engagement in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) across several factors. It was clearly seen that teacher educators had the highest mean percentage in upgrading academic qualifications (Mean % = 81.86), which showed a robust dedication to academic progression. Moderate engagement was seen in factors such as upgrading specific pedagogical skills, upgrading English Language skills, upgrading ICT skills, and equity and inclusion, with mean percentages ranging from around 56% to 64%. Developing research skills, leadership and management skills, and specific pedagogical skills areas showed relatively lower engagement, though still above the midpoint. The overall mean percentage (54.84%) suggests that while teacher educators are actively participating in CPD, their engagement is stronger in academic upgrading than in skill-based or practice-oriented dimensions, highlighting areas that require further encouragement and institutional support.

Comparisons of the Engagement of Continuous Professional Development of Teacher Educators by Gender:
To examine gender differences in the engagement of CPD among teacher educators, a descriptive analysis and an independent samples *t*-test were conducted. The independent samples *t*-test results revealed no statistically significant gender differences in most Continuous Professional Development (CPD) domains, including support for educational reform, pedagogical competency,

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e - Journal of English Language, Literature & Criticism
Vol. – VI, Issue-4, March 2026

academic qualification, English language skills, ICT skills, research skills, specific pedagogical skills, equity and inclusion, and overall CPD engagement ($p > .05$). The only significant difference was observed in leadership and management skills ($t = 2.389$, $df = 382$, $p = .017$), where male and female teacher educators differed in their level of engagement. This suggests that while CPD engagement is generally consistent across genders, leadership and management development remains an area where gender-based variations exist. This finding is congruent with Li's (2019) findings, in which male teachers had more positive attitudes and confidence in using technology than females; more positive attitudes in developing leadership and management skills. This finding also aligns with Kairys' (2018) findings in which male and female teachers both recognised leadership skills needed for senior roles, but they rank different skills differently; male teachers emphasised business and strategic skills while female teachers emphasised cognitive and interpersonal skills.

Comparisons of the Engagement of Continuous Professional Development of Teacher Educators by Age:

To assess whether there were significant differences in the engagement of teacher educators' CPD based on their age, a descriptive analysis was conducted. This analysis revealed differences in means and standard deviations for each factor of the engagement of teacher educators' CPD. This table provides an overview of how the engagement of CPD varies across different ages among teacher educators.

The results indicate that teacher educators across different age groups showed generally similar levels of engagement in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities, with only slight variations across domains. In educational reform, those aged 31– 40 years scored highest (M = 32.40), while the youngest group (25–30 years) scored slightly lower (M = 30.48). Pedagogical competency, academic qualification, and ICT skills were relatively consistent across all age groups, with only minor differences in mean scores. English language skills were highest among the youngest group (M= 52.36) compared to the middle-aged groups. Practices of CPD increased slightly with age, peaking in the 51–62 group (M = 42.73). Research skills were reported to be highest in the youngest group (M = 41.93) and lowest in the 41–50 group (M = 39.99). For pedagogical skills, the oldest group (51–62) scored the highest (M = 109.96), while leadership and management skills were also slightly stronger among the youngest (25–30 years, M = 38.20) and oldest (51–62 years, M = 37.68). Equity and inclusion showed consistent engagement across groups, with minimal differences. Overall, the findings suggest that CPD engagement remains relatively stable across age, with younger educators showing more strength in research and language skills, while older educators excel in pedagogical and management-related areas.

Besides, one-way ANOVA was conducted, which provides valuable insights into whether the differences in the engagement of CPD among teacher educators are statistically significant based on the age group. The ANOVA results revealed that most Continuous Professional Development (CPD) factors did not differ significantly across age groups, indicating relatively consistent engagement levels regardless of age. No significant differences were found in educational reform, pedagogical competency, academic qualification, English language skills, ICT skills, practices of CPD, pedagogical skills, or equity and inclusion ($p > .05$). However, significant differences were observed in research skills ($F = 2.676$, $p = .047$) and leadership and management skills ($F = 3.744$, $p = .011$), suggesting that engagement in these two areas varied meaningfully among different age groups. This indicates that while age does not strongly influence most aspects of CPD participation, it plays a role in shaping involvement in research development and leadership capacities. To provide further insights, a Post Hoc Test was conducted using the Games-Howell method. significant age-related differences in certain CPD factors. For research

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e - Journal of English Language, Literature & Criticism
Vol. – VI, Issue-4, March 2026

skills, teacher educators aged 25-30 years scored significantly higher than those aged 31-40 years (p<.05) and those aged 41-50 years (p<.05). Similarly, in leadership and management skills, the 25–30 age group reported significantly higher engagement than the 31-40 age group (p<.05). These findings suggest that younger teacher educators demonstrate stronger engagement in research as well as leadership and management development compared to their slightly older ones.

These findings are consistent with previous research highlighting the advantages younger educators often demonstrate in adaptability, innovation, and openness to new practices. For instance, Nguyen and Mohd (2018) reported that younger teachers are more effective in adopting higher-order thinking strategies, indicating their stronger willingness to engage with pedagogical innovations. Similarly, Abramo et al. (2016) found a negative relationship between age and research performance among full professors, suggesting that research productivity and engagement tend to decline with increasing age. Further support comes from Wang and Wu (2023), who emphasised that junior leaders play a vital role in enhancing team performance through shared leadership in scientific research contexts. This suggests that younger professionals may contribute fresh perspectives and higher engagement levels in both research and leadership development. Collectively, these congruent findings reinforce the present study's results, showing that younger teacher educators are more actively engaged in advancing research skills and leadership capacities, while older educators may rely more on experience rather than active engagement in these areas.

Comparisons of the Engagement of Continuous Professional Development of Teacher Educators by Rank Positions:

To find out if the position of affected how teacher educators engaged with CPD, a basic analysis was done. This looked at the average scores and standard deviations for each part of their opinions. The results show that engagement in Continuous Professional Development (CPD) factors varied slightly across rank positions, though the differences were generally small. Professors and lecturers scored highest in areas such as pedagogical skills (M = 111.93 and 110.73, respectively) and leadership and management (M = 38.52 and 37.96), indicating stronger involvement in advanced professional practices. Tutors and demonstrators, on the other hand, showed comparable or slightly lower scores in these areas, but their levels in domains such as educational reform (M = 30.92) and research skills (M = 40.81) were not far behind.

These are congruent with prior studies suggesting that senior teachers often demonstrate stronger engagement in leadership and advanced pedagogical competencies due to greater professional responsibilities, while early-career educators are more actively involved in foundational skills development (Nguyen & Mohd, 2018). Similarly, Abramo et al. (2016) found that research performance tends to vary with academic rank and seniority, with professors often displaying more developed capacities in academic and leadership domains. These findings collectively suggest that CPD engagement aligns with career progression, where junior educators focus on foundational competencies and senior academics demonstrate greater involvement in leadership and specialised pedagogical practices. Besides, one-way ANOVA was conducted, which provides valuable insights into whether the differences in the engagement of CPD among teacher educators are statistically significant based on the rank positions.

The ANOVA results based on rank position indicated significant differences in teacher educators' engagement with certain CPD factors. Specifically, ICT skills showed highly significant variation across rank positions (F = 7.238, p< .001), suggesting that proficiency and engagement in technology use differ notably by rank. Significant differences were also found in research skills (F = 4.513, p< .01) and pedagogical skills area (F = 3.643, p< .01), indicating that engagement in research development and specialised pedagogical competencies varied

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Literary Cognizance:An International Refereed / Peer Reviewed
e - Journal of English Language, Literature & Criticism
Vol. – VI, Issue-4, March 2026

meaningfully among different rank positions. There were no significant differences in other factors. These findings suggest that rank position influences the depth and focus of CPD participation among teacher educators, likely emphasising different areas of professional growth. To provide further insights, a Post Hoc Test was conducted using the Games-Howell method.

According to the results, there are significant differences in CPD engagement across ranks. Lecturers demonstrated higher ICT skills than Assistant Lecturers ($p < .05$), stronger research skills compared to Assistant Lecturers ($p< .01$), and superior pedagogical skills compared to both Tutors/Demonstrators ($p< .001$) and Assistant Lecturers ($p < .01$). These findings highlight that lecturers, likely due to greater teaching experience and professional responsibilities, are more advanced in integrating technology, conducting research, and applying pedagogical strategies. Similar congruent findings were reported in earlier studies, which revealed that educators with higher rank positions exhibit stronger ICT competency, research engagement, and pedagogical practices than their junior counterparts (Aslam et al., 2021; Tran et al., 2020). These consistencies underscore the need for targeted professional development opportunities for junior academic staff to bridge the competency gap.

Comparisons of the Engagement of Continuous Professional Development of Teacher Educators by Types of Degree:

The results by type of degree indicate notable variations in engagement across CPD factors. For educational reform, PhD holders (M = 33.25) reported slightly higher engagement compared to other degree groups, whereas BA/BSc holders scored the lowest (M = 30.24). Pedagogical competency was strongest among PhD (M = 98.20) and MEd (M = 97.20) holders, while BEd participants scored the lowest (M = 94.30). Academic qualifications were consistently high across all degree types, with only minor differences. English language skills were comparable, with MA/MSc holders showing a slight advantage (M = 51.09). ICT skills were highest among BEd and MEd holders, whereas BA/BSc and MA/MSc holders showed lower averages. Practices of CPD were relatively stable across degrees, with small variations. In research skills, BEd holders scored the highest (M = 42.57), while MA/MSc participants scored the lowest (M = 40.38).

Pedagogical skills were the strongest among PhD (M = 112.50) and MEd (M = 112.32) holders, while MA/MSc participants showed comparatively lower engagement (M= 105.88). For leadership and management, MEd holders scored the highest (M = 38.61), whereas BA/BSc and MA/MSc holders scored the lowest (M = 36.59 and 36.58). Finally, in equity and inclusion, PhD holders reported the highest engagement (M = 38.20), while MA/MSc holders scored the lowest (M = 36.70).

Besides, one-way ANOVA was conducted, which provides valuable insights into whether the differences in the engagement of CPD among teacher educators are statistically significant based on the type of degree. In examining engagement in CPD factors across degree types,the ANOVA results revealed both significant and non-significant differences. Most CPD factors, including educational reform, pedagogical competency, academic qualification, English language skills, practices of CPD, pedagogical skills area, leadership and management, and equity and inclusion, did not differ significantly by degree type ($p> .05$), suggesting that teacher educators' involvement in these areas remains relatively consistent regardless of academic qualifications. However, significant differences were found for ICT skills (F = 4.160, $p< .01$) and research skills (F = 8.973, $p< .001$), indicating that degree type influences engagement in these domains. These findings suggest that higher degrees may better prepare educators to integrate technology and strengthen research capabilities, aligning with prior studies that emphasise the role of advanced academic qualifications in shaping professional competencies in teacher education (Darling-

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Literary Cognizance:An International Refereed / Peer Reviewed
e - Journal of English Language, Literature & Criticism
Vol. – VI, Issue-4, March 2026

Hammond et al., 2017; Postholm, 2018). To provide further insights, a Post Hoc Test was conducted using the Games-Howell method.

According to the results, the post-hoc analysis of CPD engagement by degree type revealed significant differences in ICT and research skills. Specifically, PhD holders reported significantly higher ICT skills than those with MA/MSc degrees (Mean Difference = 6.617, $p < .001$), suggesting that advanced academic preparation enhances educators' ability to integrate and apply technology in professional contexts. Similarly, PhD holders demonstrated significantly stronger research skills than BA/BSc holders (Mean Difference = 2.031, $p < .001$), while BEd holders also outperformed MA/MSc degree holders in research skills (Mean Difference = 2.180, $p = .007$).

These findings align with prior research showing that advanced qualifications contribute to greater research engagement and digital competency among educators (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Postholm, 2018). They also suggest that CPD initiatives may need to tailor support for those at lower degree levels to strengthen research and ICT integration, ensuring more equitable professional growth opportunities.

Conclusion:

Concerning Demographic factors, the quantitative results revealed that teacher educators generally demonstrated a moderate level of engagement in Continuous Professional Development (CPD), with the highest participation in upgrading academic qualifications and moderate engagement in skill-based areas**.** Significant differences were found across some demographic factors.Only leadership and management skills showed a significant difference, with males engaging slightly more. Younger educators (25–30 years) showed higher engagement in research and leadership development. Significant differences appeared in ICT skills**,** research skills, and pedagogical areas with lecturers outperforming lower ranks.Educators with higher degrees (PhD, MEd) exhibited stronger ICT and research skills. Overall findings indicate that demographic factors influence the depth and focus of CPD engagement with younger, higher-ranked, and more academically qualified educators showing stronger involvement in research, leadership, and ICT related professional development.

Discussion and Recommendation:

Based on these findings, several suggestions can be made. First, institutions should design targeted CPD programmes that address the distinct needs of different demographic groups: providing younger educators with leadership mentoring and older educators with research skill refresher workshops. Second, technology integration training should be emphasised, particularly for lower-rank educators, to reduce ICT competency gaps. Third, gender-sensitive leadership programmes could encourage more balanced participation in management and decision-making roles. Finally, CPD policies should promote equal access, recognition, and institutional support across all levels of academic rank and qualification to foster continuous professional growth and ensure sustainable improvement in teacher education.

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Literary Cognizance:An International Refereed / Peer Reviewed
e - Journal of English Language, Literature & Criticism
Vol. – VI, Issue-4, March 2026

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e - Journal of English Language, Literature & Criticism
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