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RESEARCH ARTICLE



## Reframing motivation as ‘investment’ in teacher continuing professional development

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### ABSTRACT

This study is framed within Norton’s notion of ‘investment’ to explore the factors influencing teachers’ reasons and decisions to participate in continuing professional development (CPD) activities. Data were collected from 522 junior high school teachers in the Central region of Ghana using a survey and in-depth interviews. The findings reveal that teachers more frequently participated in informal CPD activities than in organised ones. Also, motivation to participate in CPD activities extended beyond intrinsic and extrinsic motivators to include sociocultural factors such as the nature of teachers’ identity and agency, which were shaped by existing contextual conditions in teachers’ professional practice. Such social conditions increased teachers’ expectations of resources from CPD participation. Therefore, teachers invested in CPD activities where their expectations of resources from participation outweighed the cost to be expended on such involvement. The study opens up a debate for rethinking teacher motivation to include the notion of ‘investment’ to provide a much deeper understanding of the complexities involved in teachers’ reasons for participating in CPD activities.

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Continuing professional development (CPD); motivation; investment; participation; Ghanaian teachers

## Introduction

Teacher continuing professional development (CPD) is a social practice that requires teachers to make decisions and choices about how and why to participate, in congruence with their goals, values, or beliefs (de Vries, Jansen, and van de Grift 2013; Peirce 1995). This makes investigating what could motivate teachers or make them unwilling to participate in CPD activities worthwhile, as this has also been identified to increase CPD program effectiveness (Kelani and Khourey-Bowers 2012). As a result, teacher motivation attracts greater attention from relevant researchers in education.

Within CPD studies, evidence suggests that teachers participate in CPD activities for varied intrinsic and extrinsic reasons. These include the need to increase knowledge about teaching and learning (Avidov-Ungar 2016; Calleja 2018); the willingness to learn for personal and professional development (Appova and Arbaugh 2018; Heystek and Terhoven 2015; McMillan, McConnell, and O’Sullivan 2016; Zhang, Admiraal, and Saab 2021); and career-related reasons (McMillan, McConnell, and O’Sullivan 2016; Ng 2010).

A commonality among the many present studies is the use of motivational theories to explain teachers' reasons and participation in CPD activities. However, motivational theories have been criticised as more psychological than social and inadequate for explaining social factors that may affect teachers' participation (Darvin and Norton 2015; Lee 2014). Also, in recognition that CPD is influenced widely by social, economic, and political contexts of teachers' professional practice (Borko 2004; Desimone 2009; Hardy 2012), a more sociological lens must be adopted in explaining teachers' reasons for its engagement.

In this light, the current study applies the theorisation of 'investment', which allows possible examination of motivation and significant social factors as they coalesce to affect teachers' participation decisions. The study uses the 'investment' notion as a sociological complement to the psychological construct of motivation (Darvin and Norton 2017) to enhance a deeper understanding of teachers' participation in CPD activities.

### *The study context*

Teachers' participation in CPD activities has been a focus of many educational reform policies and initiatives. This is due to the significance of CPD in fostering quality teaching, students' learning, and enhanced learning outcomes (Guskey 2000; Hardy 2012). While jurisdictions may have different policies on actual participation, teachers' participation in CPD is generally linked to either renewal of qualification licences and career advancement or salary benefits. Participation can also be compulsory or optional (Geldenhuys and Oosthuizen 2015). For instance, participation is mandatory in Australia, the United Kingdom, and Germany, while in Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Spain, it is optional yet connected to teachers' career advancement and salary benefits (de Vries, Jansen, and van de Grift 2013).

In Ghana, a coherent CPD policy framework is absent, affecting how CPD is enacted and practised (Abakah 2019). Although there is the Pre-Tertiary Teacher Professional Development and Management (PTPDM) policy introduced in 2012 to streamline teacher CPD activities, its central tenets are yet to be implemented on a larger scale. Captured in the PTPDM policy is an emphasis on a competency-based approach to teacher professional development programs, where teachers are required to participate in practical in-service training to equip them to meet specific demands in the teaching profession in Ghana (Ministry of Education 2012). Teachers' career progression is thus to be tied to their participation and engagements in CPD activities, where evidence of participation and professional growth determine the basis for advancement and awards.

However, in practice, very few opportunities are offered for teachers' professional development (Abakah 2019). Most teachers participate in in-service training at the schools or cluster-based levels, workshops, and continuing education. Available studies also reveal that CPD activities for teachers in Ghana consist of fragmented events with limited teacher participation (Abakah, Widin, and Ameyaw 2022; Asare et al. 2012; Atta and Mensah 2015). Therefore, to improve teachers' involvement, there is a need to understand the factors that influence teachers' uptake or participation in CPD activities in Ghana. Such research would provide valuable insights into CPD program effectiveness and foster evidence-informed policy, design, and practice implementation. Using Junior High school

(JHS) teachers (Grade 7–9) in the Central region of Ghana as a case study, the current research addresses the following research questions:

- (1) To what extent do Ghanaian JHS teachers participate in CPD activities?
- (2) What factors influence their decisions to participate in CPD activities?

## Literature review

### *Teacher continuing professional development (CPD)*

Within the field of education, CPD is a contested term. It is often conceptualised from a policy accountability perspective, that is, to improve teacher quality and professional competence (Caena 2011; Day and Sachs 2004; Guskey 2000) to include a perspective of lifelong learning practices among teachers (Borko 2004; Creemers and Kyriakides 2013; Swennen 2013). According to Guskey (2000, 16), CPD refers to ‘those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills, and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve the learning of students’. Guskey’s (2000) definition surmises the purpose and functions of CPD, that is, to change teachers’ classroom practices for improvement in student learning. This is reiterated by Sharma and Bindal (2013) in their definition of CPD as a long-term process that involves regular opportunities and experiences planned systematically to promote growth and development in the profession to improve students’ learning.

CPD is multifaceted and transcends from participation in isolated events to include continuous learning activities throughout teachers’ working lives. Teachers can engage in various learning activities within or outside the school as part of their CPD. This may include (a) activities that focus on updating professional knowledge and skills such as reading professional literature/textbooks, education reform policy documents, participation in further studies, workshops, training, and conferences; (b) activities with a reflective focus such as action research, peer meetings, feedback from colleagues or students, intended to improve teaching practice; and (c) collaborative activities within and outside the school including professional dialogue, peer coaching, team teaching, research, and mentoring to produce supportive benefits that lead to better teaching and learning outcomes (Cheetham and Chivers 2001).

Teachers are encouraged to participate in these activities to improve teacher quality and student learning. However, teachers vary widely in the extent to which they participate in these CPD activities (de Vries, Jansen, and van de Grift 2013; Kwakman 2003). One of the reasons attributed is their motivation to do so.

### *CPD and motivation*

Motivation and learning are mutually connected. Motivation provides a more psychological basis for why people behave in particular ways; hence, to Patton (1990), motivation is concerned with explaining variations in behaviour. Similarly, to Martin and Dowson (2009, 328), motivation is ‘a set of interrelated beliefs and emotions that influence and direct behaviour’. To be motivated is, therefore, to be ‘driven to do something’ and ‘having a reason’ to do so (Goetsch 2011, 89).

According to Bassett-Jones and Lloyd (2005), two fundamental assumptions underly motivational theories: (1) human beings are hesitant and require some external impetus (stimulus) to engage in specific activities, and (2) motivation is internally stimulated. These assumptions provide two types of motivation: extrinsic and intrinsic motivation. Whereas intrinsic motivation represents people's innate tendencies and willingness to participate in a given activity for its own sake (Porter, Bigley, and Steers 2003), extrinsic motivation refers to participation in an activity for reasons other than the inherent satisfaction of the activity (Ryan and Deci 2000).

Both intrinsic and extrinsic motivators influence teachers' decisions to participate in CPD activities. Intrinsically, teachers participate in CPD activities for personal desire and willingness to learn for increased classroom performance, recognition, or job satisfaction. In studies by Avidov-Ungar (2016) and Calleja (2018), it was found that willingness to learn to develop professional knowledge, beliefs about the importance of CPD, the need to change classroom practices, and a sense of responsibility towards student learning influenced teachers' decisions to participate and engage in CPD activities. Focusing on participation in further studies, Amponsah, Ampadu, and Thomas (2021) found among Ghanaian teachers that the need to be grounded in subject matter, curriculum, and assessment knowledge were the three most important factors contributing to teachers' motivation to participate in CPD.

Teachers' extrinsic motivators for engaging in CPD are based on certain separable consequences (Deci et al. 1991). In professional development literature, teachers' extrinsic reasons have been identified to include the mandatory nature of some CPD activities for teachers, incentives for participation, the need for career advancement, salary increment, job security, seeking collaborative partnerships, and professional and interpersonal relationships (Appova and Arbaugh 2018; Heystek and Terhoven 2015; McMillan, McConnell, and O'Sullivan 2016; Ng 2010). While both intrinsic and extrinsic factors are essential to give some impetus to teachers' CPD uptake, it has been found that motivation for promotion and career advancement exerts a more substantial impact on teachers' participation in CPD than intrinsic motivators (Mok 2001).

### *From motivation to 'investment'*

A new concept increasingly gaining attention as a significant explanatory construct in understanding learners' motivation in language learning is 'investment' (Darvin and Norton 2017; Kramsch 2013). Although used in various research studies (Chang 2011; Lee 2014; Ollerhead 2012), the 'investment' notion is yet to be applied to examine teachers' motivation for learning and participation in CPD activities. Hence, the present study contributes to filling such a knowledge gap and admonishes its feasibility in application to teacher learning and participation in CPD activities.

Investment holds that learners' commitment to engaging in learning is not just a product of their motivation but also the mediation of their identity, agency, and power, all shaped by learners' interaction with the social environment (Darvin and Norton 2015; Peirce 1995). Learners invest in learning activities to acquire a broader range of symbolic and material resources, which is believed to increase the value of their cultural and social capital (Peirce 1995). Therefore, learners' participation depends on their expectations to have a good return on that investment. In this instance, investment

is argued to evoke an economic metaphor where learners must acquire capital to redeem for a profitable return (Dörnyei and Ushioda 2001). Hence to foster participation or engagement, returns on investment must be commensurate with the effort of learning or participation (Darvin and Norton 2017). Kramsch (2013) notes that investment has strong economic connotations that 'accentuate[s] the role of human agency and identity in engaging with the task at hand in accumulating economic and symbolic capital, in having stakes in the endeavour, and in preserving in that endeavour' (195). While learners' desire to acquire resources may be equated to instrumental or extrinsic motivation, Guskey (2000) argues that such motivation does not account for the learners' complex identities or shifting desires. Investment rejects such dichotomies about learners' identities as good/bad or motivated/unmotivated. It recognises that the power conditions in different learning contexts can position the learner in multiple and often unequal ways owing to varying learning outcomes (Darvin and Norton 2015).

Unlike motivation, which presupposes a relatively unitary, fixed, and ahistorical learner who desires access to material resources that are privileged to him/her, investment regards learners as social beings with a complex identity that changes across time and space and reproduces in social interaction (Darvin and Norton 2015). As learners' identity is recreated in social interaction, their motivation increasingly grows complex, affecting their self-conceptions, which can affect their orientations and motivations towards learning (Pittaway 2004). Thus, the social context is highly significant in influencing reasons for participation or engagement in learning, justifying the need for a more sociological lens to investigate teachers' reasons for participating in CPD activities.

## Methodology

### *Research design*

This paper focuses on teachers' participation in CPD activities in Ghana and the factors influencing their participation decisions. An embedded mixed-method research approach was used to explore the research problem holistically, utilising a survey (quantitative approach) within a predominantly qualitative study (Creswell et al. 2011). The aim was to generate complementary databases that include information that has both depth (using qualitative interviews) and breadth (from the survey) regarding the phenomenon under study (Teddlie and Fen 2007). The approach thus helped obtain valuable 'opinions and insights and facts and figures' from the research participants (Nabhani, Bahous, and Hamdan 2012, 439). The research approach was also considered appropriate to explore motivation (quantitatively) and investment more qualitatively. Pittaway (2004) and Darvin and Norton (2015) argue that motivation cannot adequately capture what investment purports because of its rigorous quantitative research demands, while investment serves a qualitative purpose. Therefore, by combining the survey and interviews, I could capture what motivation and investment could not capture alone in a single study, thereby enriching the study's findings.

The study began with the data collection and analysis of the quantitative survey, which served the purpose of a secondary data set to the qualitative in-depth interviews (Creswell 2013; Johnson and Onwuegbuzie 2004). Hence, the survey data provides a snapshot of teachers' participation in CPD activities and standardised reasons for participating.

Analysis of the survey results also informed the planning and design of the content and data collection processes for the qualitative interviews as teachers explored their CPD participation experiences in detail.

### **Research participants**

The research cohorts were trained teachers in public junior high schools (JHS) (Grade 7 to 9 teachers) within Ghana's Central region. These teachers were selected from 12 out of the 20 districts in the Central region of Ghana. In all, 522 teachers participated in the study. They were chosen using multiple probability and non-probability sampling techniques (Teddlie and Fen 2007), making it possible to exclude more units to arrive at a concise sample for the study (Kumekpor 2002). These strategies were used owing to the absence of a finite sampling frame for teachers and the relatively large nature of the region under consideration.

Twenty teachers were purposefully selected after participation in the survey for the qualitative interviews. Patton (1990) suggests that a few information-rich cases can be sampled purposefully in a qualitative study to enhance understanding of the investigated phenomenon. By purposeful sampling, four districts were specifically rather than randomly selected from the 12 districts based on their rural/urban characteristics. After participating in the survey, five teachers from each sampled district were selected using an opportunistic sampling strategy. This strategy involved selecting cases using specific characteristics that are typical, negative, or extreme to develop further events occurring during data collection (Onwuegbuzie and Collins 2007). Characteristics for inclusion were participation in at least five CPD activities, years of teaching experience, and specific subject teaching.

This study applied ethical procedures, which describe the 'rules of morally good conduct for researchers' (Gomm 2008, 365). The University of Technology Sydney ethics committee granted the ethical clearance for the conduct of this study. Written permission was also obtained from the Central Regional Educational Directorate, Cape Coast, to conduct the study on teachers within the region. Ethical principles of informed consent, confidentiality, anonymity, and the right to withdraw were all adhered to (Morgan and Symon 2004).

### **Data collection and analysis**

A total of 522 questionnaires were self-administered, out of which 456 were used for analysis after incomplete questionnaires had been removed. Questionnaire items were adapted from the *Teaching and Learning International Survey* (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) 2014) and included mainly 'Yes' and 'No' and Likert-scale questions (see Appendix A). Each questionnaire had a front cover with an informed consent sheet and information about the research. It also had special coding to easily identify teachers for qualitative interviews. However, teachers were made aware of this, and their responses were de-identified before the analysis. Survey results were analysed using SPSS version 21, and descriptive statistics were obtained.

After quantitative analysis, respondents were traced and contacted to participate in face-to-face in-depth interviews. The face-to-face approach generated more detailed responses to explore the phenomenon in depth. This approach thus allowed for better explanation and clarification of questions, thereby increasing the likelihood of valuable responses (Creswell 2013). Teachers were asked specific questions about their participation experiences on why they chose to participate or not in CPD activities. Interviews were carried out with teachers in their respective schools. Each interview lasted between 20 to 30 minutes and was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim for data analysis. Data were analysed thematically in relation to the research questions, and the process was guided by Braun and Clarke's (2006) criteria for thematic data analysis, which involved the following procedures: familiarisation with data, generating initial codes, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes, and producing the report.

## Findings

This section presents the survey results (part I) and the in-depth interviews (part II). These findings help address the study's research questions:

- (1) To what extent do Ghanaian JHS teachers participate in CPD activities?
- (2) What factors influence their decisions to participate in CPD activities?

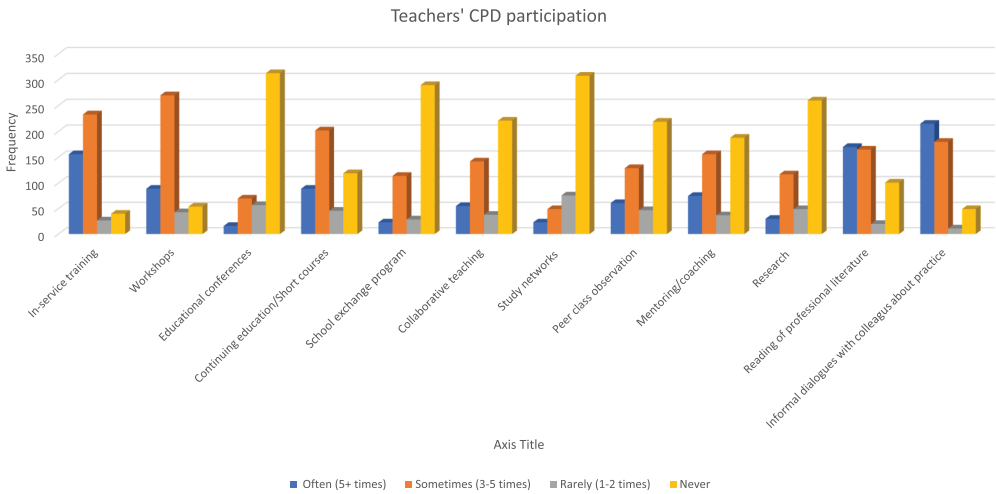
### *Part 1: Survey results*

#### *Teachers' demographics*

Data were collected from participants on the following demographics: age, gender, professional qualification, and work experience. According to the descriptive results, about 67% of the participants were aged between 31 and 50 years, with approximately 66% being males. The highest qualification of the teachers in the study was a postgraduate degree (4.8%); however, most had obtained further education after pre-service education (64.4%). The most experienced teachers had taught more than 21 years (13.2%).

#### *Extent of teachers' participation in CPD activities*

The results reveal the majority of teachers had participated in in-service training (91%), workshop (88%), and continuing education (74%) activities. However, the extent of participation was somewhat infrequent. In contrast, most teachers often engaged in self-initiated CPD learning practices, such as informal dialoguing with colleagues to improve practice (about 47.4%) and independent reading of professional literature (37.3%). Furthermore, the majority of the respondents had never participated in an educational conference (68.6). See [Figure 1](#).



**Figure 1.** Extent of teachers’ participation in CPD activities.

**Reasons for participation in CPD activities**

Using a scale of 1 to 6, where 1 represented the least significant factor and 6 the most significant factor, teachers were asked to rank their reasons for participation in CPD activities. From the results, teachers primarily participated in CPD activities to professionally develop themselves as teachers (53.4%) and to enhance their pedagogical and content knowledge (20.2%). Interestingly, career progression/promotion was the least significant motivator for teachers’ participation in CPD activities (3.1%), although it featured predominantly during the qualitative interviews. See Table 1.

**Table 1.** Teacher motivational factors for CPD participation.

Reasons for participation	Mean	SD	Std error mean	T-values
Compulsory nature	3.78	1.682	079	47.729
To develop professionally as a teacher	1.79	1.084	051	35.111
Enhance pedagogical and content knowledge	2.59	1.051	049	52.382
Career progression and promotions	4.79	1.273	060	79.843
To improve student learning	3.20	1.410	066	48.241
Integrate technology in my teaching	4.83	1.167	055	87.866

**Part II: Qualitative results**

This section explores in-depth the factors or reasons why basic school teachers in Ghana participate in CPD activities or otherwise. Using Norton’s (1995) investment notion, teachers’ responses have been broadly clustered around the following themes: (1) teacher motivation for CPD participation and (2) teacher investment in CPD. These broad themes will be explored below.

### *Teacher motivation for CPD participation*

The results identified diverse motives instrumental in teachers' decisions to participate in CPD activities. The motivators explored below instigated and sustained teachers' participation in CPD activities.

*Teachers' intrinsic motivators/reasons.* Intrinsic motivators were related to expectations of immaterial gains from participation, which Peirce (1995) argues are based on individual teachers' attitudes towards their learning. Generally, personal desire for learning and the need to learn to improve student performance underlined teachers' reasons for participating in CPD activities. Some of the reasons identified were the need to increase professional knowledge (in content and pedagogies) and willingness to learn for personal and professional development, all of which aimed to improve teachers' competencies for improved student learning.

Teachers who participated in CPD for personal and professional development explained having done so to meet the complex demands of their work as well as the need to adjust to the constant changes in societies. Such teachers expressed the following:

There is the need to upgrade yourself to know the new things happening in your teaching field and broaden your professional horizon. For these reasons, I attend every workshop I am nominated to go to. I also do personal readings about emerging issues of what I teach and things around, and I am planning to undertake certain workshops outside what the GES [Ghana Education Service] provides. (District 1-participant 2)

The world is changing at such a fast pace, and as a teacher, I should be able to stay abreast of things so I can address my students' concerns. I am constantly learning new things in what I teach and even sometimes outside what I teach to develop myself both personally and professionally. (District 3-participant 4)

Another teacher emphasised that the positive utility of CPD towards teachers' learning and development compelled her participation:

Going for workshops and INSETs help us to learn collaboratively to improve what we do in the classroom. Teaching is such that, we must never relent in our learning. So, I always take advantage and participate when the opportunity comes. (District 4-participant 1)

Similarly, teachers who participated to increase their content and pedagogical knowledge in their subject teaching domains shared the following insights:

I go for workshops or seminars to increase my knowledge in what I teach to support students. As a teacher, I need to be 'concrete' in my subject area and be able to adjust my teaching methods to suit my students' needs. (District 1-participant 3)

Some of the workshops are beneficial and they expose us to new curriculum content and things we may not have learned during training colleges. So, I participate to acquire more knowledge. (District 4-participant 4)

Another teacher iterated the continual curricular changes and how that necessitated participation in CPD activities. She commented:

The curricula at the basic schools have periodically been changed. There are new elements not covered at the training schools so if there are workshops to increase and update our knowledge in them, I don't hesitate to participate at all. (District 2-participant 3)

Teachers' preceding responses underscore the critical outcome of CPD participation: to support better teaching practices of teachers and improved student learning outcomes. Teachers participated in CPD activities to acquire relevant knowledge to improve practice and enhance their students' learning.

*Teachers' extrinsic motivators/reasons.* In contrast, teachers whose expectations were more instrumentally or extrinsically driven identified having participated in CPD activities for external separable consequences. Such teachers identified promotion and career advancement factors, material incentives, and social capital as underlying their participation reasons. Unlike the survey results, promotions and career advancement dominated teachers' reasons for participation in CPD activities during the qualitative interviews. However, this was particularly the case for teachers' continuing education, which counted towards their upgrading and career progression. All the 20 interview participants admitted having participated in further studies on the expectations of promotions and increased salaries associated with their advancement. These teachers explained their reasons or motives for their continuing education uptake:

I decided to go for further studies because it is easier to get your promotion once you upgrade and have your degree, even without attending promotion interviews. (District 3-participant 2)

For participant 2 in district 2 and participant 4 in district 4, they engaged in continuing education solely for the expectation of salary increments:

My colleagues who had degrees were earning better than I did and the only way to get an increased salary for me was through an upgrade, so I decided to enrol in a degree course. (District 2-participant 2)

Even though I went back to school to better myself, to be frank, I did so because of promotion and the salary increment. (District 4-participant 4)

In effect, the possibility of career advancement and salary increments explains why the majority of the teachers in the study (64.4%) had upgraded their professional qualification through continuing education programs.

Another extrinsic reason identified by teachers was expectations of material incentives from participation. Teachers' expectations of incentives from participation included certificates to guarantee their participation and monetary incentives in the form of payment for costs of transport and food. Teachers considered the potential buy-ins of these incentives before the decision to participate. An ICT teacher who participated in a workshop, for instance, did so knowing there was a reward (laptop) at stake:

I participated in an ICT workshop because we [participants] were promised a laptop. So, when I was going, I knew I was going to get a laptop to help me in teaching as an ICT teacher. (District 2-participant 1)

For other teachers, it was the certificates:

From the invitation, I got to know we would be given certificates. When you participate, there must be something to show for it. So, when I knew I was going to be given a certificate, it was enough reason for me to go. (District 3-participant 3)

There must be something to show I participated in a workshop; when I realised certificates would be given free of charge, I made time to go. (District 4-participant 3)

In the last workshop I attended, we [teachers] were highly motivated, but this was because we were informed, that we will be given some transport allowance and also certificates will be given after our participation. (District 1-participant 2)

Teachers whose motivation was monetary explained their position:

For me, providing my transportation cost is necessary to decide if I'll go for this workshop or any INSET activity. It is not easy to travel and even get a regular transport to go by where my school is. So, if I'm invited to go for any training activity, I must consider my time, the distance of travel, and then I'll decide to go if there is an assurance that my time of travel will pay off. (District 4-participant 5)

Before I go for any workshop or seminar, I consider two things; if my transportation cost will be paid for and if my feeding will be taken care of. These basic things need to be provided because you cannot camp us from morning to evening without giving us food. (District 3-participant 1)

Furthermore, the need to establish social and professional connections also influenced some teachers' decisions to participate in CPD. These teachers expressed the desire to meet and seek potential mentors in resource persons in their subject areas. A mathematics teacher who otherwise would not have participated in a workshop did so upon the realisation that a renowned mathematician would be the program's resource person. She explained her reason for participation:

I was not selected for this particular workshop, but when I later found out Prof Kojo [pseudo] was the resource person, I did everything to be part. It was that desire to meet that man [resource person] and to tap into his knowledge and to ask him to be my mentor, and I'm glad I did. (District 2-participant 2)

Another mathematics teacher who also participated in seeking social connectedness explained:

Training sessions are also avenues to meet people in your field to have relevant discussions about things in different schools. In addition to the knowledge to be gained, I also participate to make new friends and expand my network. (District 1-participant 4)

Clearly, when presented with CPD opportunities, diverse intrinsic and extrinsic factors motivated teachers to participate in CPD activities.

### *Teacher investment in CPD*

For intrinsic and extrinsic reasons, teachers considered whether to participate in CPD activities or not. However, actual participation depended on teachers' expectations (whether immaterial or material) and how proportionate their expectations were to their efforts to be spent on such participation. Teachers participated when there was equal leverage of expectation of resources and efforts or cost on participation. This explained their minimal and non-participation (investment) in some CPD activities,

especially where they perceived disproportionate benefits or expectations and costs involved in such participation. For instance, teachers disengaged or discontinued participation in CPD activities where their expectations were unmet, regardless of their motivational levels. A teacher shared the following experience:

There was a three-day training program for ICT teachers that I was nominated to go to. In the memo, it was stated that participants would be given laptops, but when we went, the organisers told us we were no longer going to be given the laptops. While what was taught was relevant most teachers did not show up again after the first day. (District 4-participant 1)

Another teacher, explaining what sustained teachers' CPD participation, noted:

We [teachers] usually attend the ones [CPD activities] that are important in terms of using the new knowledge in our classroom teaching but if we come and see the content are not what we need, unless there are other motivators such as transport allowance or certificates, else, we don't come again. You can tell from the reduced numbers of participants by the end of the program. (District 4-participant 5)

This scenario was also typical of teachers' participation in school-based in-service training (INSET) activities, where lack of incentives repelled most of the teachers' involvement. Teachers explained their experiences:

For school-based INSET activities, because we are not promised of benefits, usually we do not go. Teachers must get value for our time so you can't put us together and not give us water or drink or food. (District 3-participant 5)

A teacher in a different school corroborated:

As for the school-based INSETs, even though it helps, you will find out that teachers themselves don't even take it seriously. After all, there are no certificates involved, and hardly are we also provided some snacks and even water after participation. (District 3-participant 3)

Teachers' responses, especially on their reasons for non-participation, typify the investment notion in suggesting that teachers require more than motives to participate and remain participants in CPD activities. As captured in the investment notion, the study demonstrates that teachers' participation depended on how commensurate their expectations (both material and immaterial resources) were with the cost of being involved.

### *Teacher agency, identity, and investment in CPD participation*

Another postulation within the investment notion is that participation in CPD is influenced by the nature of teachers' agency and identity, affected by the broader contextual factors or situations within teachers' professional practice. Teacher agency results from an 'interplay of individuals' efforts, available resources, and contextual and structural factors' (Biesta and Tedder 2007, 137) that lead to teachers making choices in intentional ways to improve practice (Toom, Pyhältö, and O'Connell Rust 2015). Participation in CPD underscores that human agency on the part of teachers to act and have stakes in that engagement and their preservation in those activities (Kramsch 2013).

The study's results showed that, aside from motives, participation in CPD largely depended on teachers' willingness and capacity to act and engage in learning (Appova and Arbaugh 2018) based on their values and beliefs that CPD can bring about desirable changes in practice. This explained why CPD was mandatory, yet none of the teachers

participated owing to compulsion. Teachers were also agentic in their participation owing to CPD contextual challenges such as the limited CPD offering and, in some cases, non-existent opportunities. Such limited opportunities strongly influenced teachers' participation and their subsequent seeking of alternative avenues beyond what was provided to learn to improve practice. Teachers complaining about their contextual challenges and yet their uptake of CPD activities commented:

I can say we [teachers] are always motivated to learn but our major problem is we don't get the opportunity as often as we need . . . personally, it is because I rarely get the opportunity, especially in my subject area, that is why I always attend workshops or INSET when given a chance to go. Sometimes I even have to pay [for certificates] but with no support from my school, I still do go. (District 1-participant 3)

It is difficult to get such opportunities [to attend CPD] regularly, so I do participate because I can never tell when such an opportunity will present itself again, for we can be here for years without participating in a single workshop. I've even paid to participate in workshops and enrol in online short courses in order to acquire the knowledge to help the students in this school. (District 2-participant 2)

This means that teachers could be highly motivated and yet not participate in CPD activities because no opportunities are offered. The responses also suggest that in the absence of motives (intrinsic or extrinsic), teachers' agentic posture to act to change things in their professional practice, regardless of constraints, inspired their participation in CPD activities. However, this posture was influenced by some contextual challenges and underlined most of the teachers' self-initiated learning alternatives.

The findings also revealed how teachers' identity affected their decisions to participate in CPD activities. As explained within the investment notion, teachers in the current study demonstrated multiple and complex identities capable of changing desires and motivation within different social conditions (Darvin and Norton 2015). Teachers are unique individuals and professionals who demonstrate different needs and desires that reflect their personal characteristics, motivations, and aspirations (Avidov-Ungar 2016; Day 2004). Such changing identities accounted for some teachers' expectations and investment level variations depending on their social or professional environment. Interestingly, teachers who participated for more intrinsic reasons were in the middle stages of their careers (10–15 years).

In contrast, early career teachers (1–5 years) expressed external reasons for their participation. Teachers were also found to participate for varied intrinsic or extrinsic reasons, or both. These variations were complex and refuted the psychological conception of motivation that views teachers as having unitary or fixed identities and specific character traits to enable their participation in CPD activities (Darvin and Norton 2015).

Finally, the study found teachers' reasons for non-participation to be borne out of some contextual or cultural factors that prevented their participation despite being motivated. As highlighted earlier, one of such contextual challenges was the lack of CPD provision. Also, the inability to secure support from school authorities in terms of finance and the school or community characteristics, whether rural or urban, all influenced teachers' decisions to participate or otherwise in CPD activities. These cultural or contextual factors largely influenced the enactment of teachers' agency and contributed to their changing identities and teachers' expectations of resources from CPD

participation. Teachers who were challenged to participate owing to their schools' characteristics (rural schools) shared their experiences:

I had to decline participation in one INSET activity organised for teachers in our district, and this was because the venue was very far from the community where my school is. There is no regular transport to the place, so I just did not go after careful consideration. But if I had been promised any incentive, maybe I would have gone. (District 1-participant 5)

It is even difficult to get information about some of these [CPD] activities on time from where our school is. So, it is either you miss out on them or the venue is at the district education offices, and you will have to travel for long to go. All these things sometimes make it difficult to attend, though generally, we would love to be there. But I do go when I know I'll get something [incentive] for my hustle. (District 3-participant 5)

The responses suggest that, despite these challenges, teachers were most likely to participate when assured of possible returns that were commensurate with their efforts to participate, thus their investment. A teacher summed up how important it is for teachers to get value for their time and efforts before 'investment' in CPD activities.

If there is an INSET in the next village, you would have to foot your own bill; sometimes you would have to walk if you are even from a farther community, because you will not get a car to go ... then you go and are given GH¢5 (\$1) without food, water or anything. When it happens like this, you will not go the next time ... It is not like we don't think about the knowledge we may get to improve ourselves. We should also be able to get something tangible in return like transportation costs, certificates, and basic things like food and water. (District 1-participant 1)

Understandably, teachers expected returns from their participation to invest in CPD because of their social and contextual conditions. These professional contexts affected teachers' agency, identity, and participation in CPD activities.

## Discussion

This study is situated within the Ghanaian context and had two main objectives: (1) to investigate the extent of basic school teachers' participation in CPD activities and (2) to examine the factors that influence their decisions to participate in CPD activities.

The findings on teachers' CPD participation showed that teachers often participated in informal CPD activities more than in organised CPD. Similar findings have been observed by Amponsah, Ampadu, and Thomas (2021) and Abreh (2018) to conclude that informal and self-directed learning activities are prevalent in teachers' professional development practices. Abakah (2019) argues that though these practices exist among basic school-teachers, they rarely expand into a broader notion of CPD as teachers fail to recognise them as CPD. However, owing to their significant impacts on teachers' professional practice, there is an urgent need for their institutionalisation into the repertoires of CPD practices for Ghanaian teachers (Abakah, Widin, and Ameyaw 2022). Also, while the study revealed teachers' minimal participation in organised CPD activities, the low participation was identified as more of an issue of lack of access and provision of CPD opportunities, highlighting teacher CPD challenges in Ghana rather than teachers' unwillingness to participate.

Nevertheless, when participation opportunities prevailed, teachers did so for varied reasons. Intrinsically, teachers' principal reasons were to acquire relevant knowledge in pedagogy and content to improve their professional practice while helping their students learn. A study by Amponsah, Ampadu, and Thomas (2021) revealed that intrinsic factors (to acquire subject matter, knowledge of curriculum, and assessment knowledge) were the most important motivators for teachers in Ghana to participate in CPD. Even though teachers in the current study ranked intrinsic factors (to develop professionally as a teacher and enhance pedagogical and content knowledge) as the most important motivators in the survey, surprisingly, in the qualitative results, extrinsic factors underscored teachers' motives behind their participation in CPD activities.

As identified in the study, the most extrinsic motive for teachers' participation in CPD was career related: the need to progress professionally with a corresponding salary increase. Indeed, Mok (2001) found that promotion and career advancement exert a more substantial impact on teachers' participation in CPD than intrinsic motivators. In addition, teachers also participated to gain material resources such as certificates to validate their participation and monetary incentives.

Various studies have corroborated the study's findings on reasons or motivational factors for teachers' participation in CPD activities (Abonyi et al. 2020; Amponsah, Ampadu, and Thomas 2021; Avidov-Ungar 2016; Calleja 2018; Heystek and Terhoven 2015; Kwakman 2003; McMillan, McConnell, and O'Sullivan 2016). However, the current study further demonstrates that other significant social factors beyond motives mediate teachers' decisions to participate in CPD activities. These are captured within the notion of "investment".

Investment argues that the decision to participate in learning activities goes beyond mere motives to include contextual affordances within teachers' professional practice. The evidence from the study shows that, in addition to teachers' motives (intrinsic and extrinsic reasons), participation was equally mediated by costs of participation, teacher agency and identity, and resource affordances within teachers' professional contexts. Teachers participated where they perceived a good return (material and immaterial benefits) from their participation commensurate with their efforts or costs (travel costs, time spent, program costs, and certification costs) involved in such participation. In instances where teachers disparaged the relationship between efforts and returns, they disengaged from participation, as was reported to be the case in many school-based in-service training activities. Similar observations have been made to suggest that teachers will invest in CPD that they perceive as valuable when their learning benefits outweigh their precious time costs (Masuda, Ebersole, and Barrett 2013). Also, if teachers perceive that CPD participation will not help them achieve a return on their investment, they will be more likely to resist by dropping out or disengaging from participation activities (McKay and Wong 1996; Pittaway 2004).

In addition, the study revealed that participation in CPD was influenced by teachers' human agency and the nature of their identity, all of which were shaped by conditions in their professional contexts (Darvin and Norton 2015; Peirce 1995). In CPD literature, much has been argued about how the context influences CPD practices (Borko 2004; Hardy 2012; Timperley 2011). However, these social contexts are superficially explored in understanding why teachers participate in CPD activities or not. Contexts affect CPD differently, depending on a particular country's traditions, culture, customs, policies, and school conditions (Avalos 2011). Therefore, corroborating investment notions, this study particularly exposes the CPD contextual challenges in Ghana and how they interplay to affect

teachers' decisions and motivations for participation. The limited access to opportunities, the centralisation of CPD program activities, the different schools' characteristics, and the communities where schools were located affected teachers' decisions to invest in CPD participation. These contextual or cultural factors increased teachers' expectations from participation and cost expended on involvement and agency to invest in CPD. For instance, teachers from rural schools who had to travel for hours to participate in CPD were expected to be given some material incentives from participation, such as transportation costs and allowances for food. Teachers had to weigh in on these expectations before deciding to invest. Hence, although teachers may be highly motivated, they may resist opportunities for learning or participation in CPD activities owing to some contextual constraints within their social or professional environment. These constraints may include policy, funding, individual teacher characteristics, lack of school and collegial support, school characteristics, and the wider community settings where schools are located (Desimone 2009; Hardy 2012; Kwakman 2003; Timperley 2011).

The preceding discussion assumes that motivation is as much social as psychological. In CPD, participation is also influenced by the social conditions of teachers' professional practice; hence, as argued by Lee (2014) and Peirce (1995), it is inadequate to explain teacher motivation as a psychological construct, as has been done in many CPD studies. Further, Svinicki (2004) argues that learners' interpretation of a situation determines their motivation; hence, the source of motivation primarily resides in both the learner and the environment, with each influencing the other. Therefore, in understanding teachers' participation in CPD activities, such intricacies and interactions of teachers and their social environment or context cannot be ignored.

## Conclusion

There is considerably greater complexity in teachers' reasons for participation in CPD than reported in the literature. This study appropriately highlighted such complexities within the 'investment' notion. Three implications are, however, highlighted. First, in addition to teachers' motivation levels, participation in CPD is also informed by the extent of teachers' agency to act and participate and the nature of teachers' identity as fluid with multiple desires. Second, broader social, professional, or culturally contextual factors shape teachers' motivation, agency, and identity to affect their participation in CPD activities. Finally, CPD activities must equip teachers with significant resources, which must then be proportionate to teachers' efforts to expend on such participation.

The current study contributes to knowledge by applying investment to support calls to examine teacher motivation in CPD beyond intrinsic and extrinsic motivators' psychological lenses. Applying the investment notion provides the basis for understanding motivation as a collective endeavour between individual teachers and their practice context. Specifically in Ghana, the findings suggest carefully considering motivational factors and redressing CPD contextual challenges to increase teachers' involvement.

## Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

## Notes on contributor

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## Appendix A

### Survey questionnaire and interview guide

#### Section A: Demographics of respondents

1. Age:
2. Gender:
3. Highest professional qualification:
4. Subject teaching .....
5. Years of teaching:

#### Section B: Participation in CPD activities

6. Within the last 36 months, have you participated in any of the following CPD activities?

CPD Activity	Yes	No
In-service training		
Workshops/short courses		
Education conferences		
Higher academic study		
Observation visits to other schools		
Collaborative teaching		
Study networks among teachers		
Peer class observations		
Mentoring/coaching as part of formal school arrangement		
Collaborative research on a topic of interest professionally		
Independent reading of professional literature (e.g. journals, books, reports)		
Engaging in informal dialogue with colleagues on how to improve teaching		

7. How often have you participated in the said CPD activities within the last 36 months?

CPD Activity	Very Often 5+ times	Sometimes 3–4 times	Rarely 1–2 times	Never
In-service training				
Workshops/short courses				
Education conferences				
Higher academic study				
Observation visits to other schools				
Collaborative teaching				
Study networks among teachers				
Peer class observations				
Mentoring/coaching as part of formal school arrangement				
Collaborative research on a topic of interest professionally				
Independent reading of professional literature (e.g. journals, books, reports)				
Engaging in informal dialogue with colleagues on how to improve teaching				

**Section C: Reasons for participation in CPD activities**

8. What influenced your participation in any of the CPD activities? Please rank these influencing factors **using # 1 as the most significant factor to # 6 as the least influencing factor.**

CPD Activity	1	2	3	4	5	6
It was compulsory for me to participate						
To better develop myself as a teacher						
To increase my knowledge in the subject that I teach						
To seek promotion in my career						
To help my students learn better						
To be able to introduce new technologies in my teaching						
Any other factor? Please describe:						

**Semi-structured interview guide for teachers**

- (1) Could you describe your participation in any CPD activities in the last 36 months?
- (2) Of any of the CPD activities that you participated in, what influenced your participation?
- (3) What factors influenced your non-participation in those that you could not participate in?