



**“...they feel that they have a voice and their voice is heard”: Towards Participatory Forms of Teachers’ CPD in Oman**

**A Critical Inquiry**

**Submitted by**

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## **Abstract**

The area of teachers' continuing professional development (CPD) is of growing interest internationally. In Oman, where this issue is given a lot of attention, the Ministry of Education spends a lot of money each year to provide many CPD opportunities for in-service TESOL teachers. However, the effectiveness of these initiatives and the impact they have on teaching and learning is questionable. This has been reflected in a number of research studies which have been conducted locally and which focus on various issues relating to teachers' CPD but these studies have not addressed the issue critically. Given this, the current study attempts to critically examine the CPD system in the in-service TESOL context in Oman, and to improve the Government's applied CPD strategy through suggesting a participatory model of CPD in Education.

The study is situated in the critical paradigm and followed a multi-methodology transformative design using mixed methods to develop an understanding of the investigated issues from a macro and micro level. The study started with a quantitative phase using an online questionnaire and 331 English teachers and Senior English teachers responded to it. Phase two of the study was comprised of a case study to look in detail at the CPD system in Oman. Three schools were chosen for the case study with 18 participants/teachers. Semi-structured and focus group interviews as well as observations were used to collect data at this stage. The same 18 participants joined the action research (phase three) stage of the study to introduce them to the participatory model of CPD. This phase included three workshops and online discussion sessions, following this one focus group interview and 6 individual semi-structured interviews were conducted to see teachers' reaction to the intervention; the participatory model.

The findings showed that in-service TESOL teachers in Oman who participated in this study hold different beliefs about teaching as a profession and have different reasons for becoming teachers. The findings revealed that a key source influencing teachers' CPD participation is their beliefs, and that participants' hold a wide range of beliefs about CPD. Moreover, the findings disclosed that participants have experienced different types of activities which were mostly offered to them through the Ministry of Education in structured ways (e.g. INSET courses); yet, these did not respond to teachers' individual needs.

The study further indicated that the centralised top-down nature of the current CPD system seems to negatively affect the success of CPD in the in-service TESOL context in Oman. The study recommends that the role of teachers themselves in the provision of CPD is significant; the way teachers are currently marginalized and seen as grateful recipients of CPD do not provide the conditions for intelligent and responsive teaching profession. Furthermore, the evaluation of the participatory model of CPD adopted in this study showed that this model has positively impacted on participant teachers' CPD and three aspects of change were noticed: teachers' beliefs, their practices about CPD, and change in students (e.g. their reading habits).

The findings revealed that this model has enabled participant teachers to make decisions regarding their CPD and encouraged them to play the role of critical reflective practitioners as well as prepared them to be future transformative intellectuals. Therefore, recommendations include the need for more informal, participatory and collaborative forms of CPD to be added to the current CPD system in Oman. The study further calls for new policies and practices to improve the teaching force in the country. These include stringent criteria for teachers' selection and recruitment, developing strong educational policies regarding the initial teacher formation, considering teachers' beliefs in any in-service CPD initiative, and raising teachers' awareness to become responsible for their life-long career development. Most significantly, on the basis of the study findings, there is a need to reform teachers' CPD in Oman to include dedication to building character, community, humanitarianism and democracy in young people.

## **Dedication**

O'Allah Almighty! All praise and gratitude be to you.

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## List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

<b>CPD</b>	Continuing Professional Development
<b>PD</b>	Professional Development
<b>INSET</b>	In-service Education and Training of Teachers
<b>TESOL</b>	Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages
<b>ELT</b>	English Language Teaching
<b>EFL</b>	English as a Foreign Language
<b>MOE</b>	Ministry of Education
<b>SET/s</b>	Senior English Teachers/s
<b>TT</b>	Teachers Trainers
<b>C1</b>	Cycle One= the term used in Oman to refer to primary schools (Grades 1-4)
<b>C2</b>	Cycle Two= the term used in Oman to refer to preparatory schools (Grades 5-10)
<b>PB</b>	Post Basic= the term used in Oman to refer to secondary/high schools (Grades 11-12)
<b>TTCs</b>	Teacher Training Colleges= colleges for training primary teachers to get diploma in teaching
<b>SQU</b>	Sultan Qaboos University
<b>GE</b>	General Education= name of the previous educational system in Oman



<b>BE</b>	Basic Education=the name of the reformed educational system in Oman
<b>EFM</b>	English For Me= name of the English text book used currently in the reformed BE system

# Chapter One: Setting the Scene

## 1.1 Introduction

Educational reform movements in Oman and around the world are setting ambitious goals for students' learning. Many factors can contribute to achieving these goals. In fact, the changes in classroom practices demanded by the reform visions ultimately rely on teachers, their learning, and transforming their knowledge into practice (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Wermke, 2012; Avalos, 2011; Borko, 2004). This realization has led educational policy makers and scholars to demand continuing professional development (CPD) opportunities for teachers to help them enhance their knowledge and develop new instructional practices (Borko, 2004).

Such CPD of teachers has arguably been perceived as a significant way to improving schools, and enhancing teaching and learning. For example, teachers' CPD has consistently been shown by research literature to be a vital component of teachers' growth, well-being and success and accordingly of successful school development (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Hargreaves, 2000; Day, 1999; Hargreaves, 1994). This is because, it has confirmed that there is greater potential for classroom and school improvement if teachers are given the opportunity for reflecting, accessing new ideas, experimenting and sharing experiences within school cultures and if school leaders encourage suitable levels of challenge and support (Muijs & Reynolds, 2000).

Recent efforts which focus on trying to understand the possible impact of teachers' CPD on developing schools, increasing teachers' quality and improving the quality of students' learning have led policymakers and researchers to focus on understanding the effectiveness of such opportunities. As the OECD TALIS (2009) study revealed, in most countries teachers' CPD is generally not meeting teachers' needs. Due to such concerns, studies in many international contexts focussing on diverse subject areas have attempted to explore the effectiveness of teacher CPD programmes, why teacher CPD has failed to live up to its development potential and ways of improving CPD effectiveness in the future (e.g. Antoniou & Kyriakides, 2013; Kelly & MacDiarmid, 2002; Lamb, 1995).

In the Sultanate of Oman, the setting for this study, despite the huge amount of money spent each year on the in-service education and training of teachers (INSET) and other forms of CPD for teachers, the situation is no better than the international context mentioned above. This has been reflected in a number of local researches conducted in Oman questioning the real impact of some offered INSET courses on the classroom practices of teachers (for example, Al-Balushi, 2009; Al-Ghatrifi, 2006). Besides, there appears to be a mismatch between teachers' beliefs and practices and the CPD system in Oman (AL-Lamki, 2009). Given this and the fact that all previous studies conducted in my context have not addressed the issue critically, my research project endeavoured to critically examine the effectiveness of the CPD activities run by the Ministry of Education in Oman for teachers and the possible influences these activities might have to improve schools, increase teacher quality and improve the quality of student learning that have emerged as key priorities most often in literature and research studies conducted on this topic. Specifically, I investigate the challenges associated with TESOL teachers' CPD in Oman and the opportunities for developing CPD in the EFL in-service context. As such, the specific focus of the inquiry in this thesis is on English (TESOL) teachers teaching in Omani schools.

The main aim of this introductory chapter is setting the scene for this study by introducing an overview of teachers' CPD with specific focus on the Omani context. The chapter starts by explaining the problematic issue that forms the focus of the study and then sheds light on the nature of the study by briefly introducing its design, methodology and methods used. The chapter moves to presenting the significance of the study and my personal interest in this investigation. Next, it highlights the study aims and the research questions. This will be followed by definitions of key terms that will be used in the study and then provides the thesis outline.

## **1.2 Problematic issues and the focus of the study**

Although the Ministry of Education in Oman is providing CPD opportunities for in-service teachers in different subject areas as a way of promoting and/or enacting educational change, evidence from local research has shown that the role of these CPD opportunities in effecting change is questionable. In particular, the effectiveness of INSET courses and other CPD forms offered to English teachers was questioned (AL-Balushi, 2012; AL-Hakamani, 2011; Al-Lamki, 2009; Al-

Balushi, 2009). For instance, AL-Balushi (2009) investigated the impact of an in-service course on TESOL teachers' perceptions of and their classroom practices regarding teaching stories to young learners. The researcher found little changes in participants' perceptions and no noticeable change in their classroom practices when the course was over. In general, a number of these studies have called for doing additional research to investigate the contribution of the Omani CPD system to English teachers' learning and growth. Therefore, conducting research to investigate the challenges related to the CPD of TESOL teachers, and creating opportunities to develop CPD in the in-service EFL context in Oman is vital.

Moreover, the so-called "Arab Spring" or specifically "Omani Spring" seems to have had some negative consequences on teaching as a profession in the ELT context in Oman and the attitude of some teachers towards professional development. This is because, one of the requirements to be appointed as an English teacher in Oman is to have a Bachelor degree in teaching English as well as an IELTS certificate with at least 6.0 overall score. Yet, many Omani male and female teachers who graduated from a number of institutions inside or outside the country could not score 6.0 in IELTS despite having a degree in ELT, and accordingly were not recruited. This has resulted in hundreds of Omani EFL teachers waiting for 5 years or more without getting a job opportunity.

On February 2011 and during the "Omani Spring", thousands of young Omanis including many unemployed teachers protested in streets fighting against corruption in the government and demanding substantial political reforms, better living conditions, higher salaries and solutions for unemployment. Consequently, the Government worked hard to respond to their demands. In response to unemployment requests, about 50,000 Omanis were employed within a month including all graduate teachers waiting for years. Thus, all ELT graduates were recruited even if they did not score the required IELTS. However, the stakeholders at the Ministry of Education were aware that those teachers were not qualified enough to start teaching English at schools not only due to their language barriers but also because they spent a number of years at home after graduation meaning that they probably needed to be updated with some teaching knowledge and skills to do their job properly. Therefore, an intensive 200 hours INSET course was designed for those newly appointed English teachers

including methodology and language training as well as having practical elements of school tasks.

Nevertheless, as a teacher trainer who participated in designing and delivering this course, I have noticed that the majority of those teachers were not doing their school tasks and coursework. They looked unmotivated to join the training sessions and lots of absences among participants were recorded daily. I remember that the directorate general of the human resource development department visited us in one of the training sessions for that course and asked the course participants about their views and benefits from the course. They frankly told him that they did not understand why they were undertaking such vocational training since they had graduated with a Bachelor degree. They said that their degree provided them with all the skills and knowledge needed to teach English at schools and to do their job successfully overtime. They seem to be unaware of the significance of teacher education and training for new teachers as well as teacher CPD for any teacher, and that teachers' learning never ends at a specific stage.

Bearing this incident in mind, I wanted to tease out some of the key issues that might contribute to those and other TESOL teachers views about CPD, their beliefs, and the sorts of activities they were offered and how far these meet their needs. As a starting point for examining teachers' CPD in Oman, I thought of exploring teachers' beliefs about teaching as a career/job, their PD and personal growth in order to explore the link between these issues. This is because a recent body of research proposes that there is a relationship between teaching as a career and CPD (Coldwell, 2017; Vries et al., 2013; Maskit, 2011; Wai Yan, 2011). Thus, it is significant to investigate teachers' beliefs about their job to see whether such beliefs have any influence on teachers' participation in and benefit from CPD. By doing so, this research is based on the supposition that a better, deeper understanding of the beliefs teachers hold about the profession and its relation to their CPD offers a precise understanding of the functioning of the educational system within which they work.

The study goes further by investigating teachers' CPD experiences to dig deeply into the CPD opportunities offered to TESOL teachers by the Ministry of Education in Oman and the factors affecting their benefit from such opportunities.

This study is also an attempt to contribute towards the improvement of the current applied CPD system for in-service TESOL teachers in Oman. This is done by introducing a group of TESOL teachers to the participatory model of CPD in education (a form of CPD that help teachers to actively participate in their CPD process) as a way of improving the Omani CPD system. This is because many Omani voices have called for providing those teachers with the chance to play more active roles in their CPD process (e.g. AL-Lamki, 2009, AL-Yafaee, 2004). Hence, by activating teachers' voices and their active participation, this study is seeking a change in the Omani educational CPD system. Having said that, the rationale behind conducting this study is not only due to the problematic issues in the context I mentioned above but also to my personal interest in this investigation as I detail below.

### **1.3 Significance of the study**

This study has its roots in my own experience as an in-service teacher trainer (hereafter TT) who designed and delivered many INSET methodology courses for ELT teachers in Oman and noticed that trainees were effectively participating with me in the course by doing the activities and showing willingness to try out these activities inside the training room. However, when I visited schools to see evidence of my training; I realized that my courses appeared having very little or no impact at all on participants/trainees' real classroom practices. I have noticed that those teachers were teaching something covered in the course (e.g. using a number of strategies to teach vocabulary) the same way they used to teach before joining the course as if they have not attended it.

In fact, I have been appointed an in-service teacher trainer in 2005 and since then I noticed that year after year, EFL teachers are coming to my INSET courses and/or workshops lacking the motivation to join INSET and the enthusiasm to do the course activities and requirements as I mentioned in the previous section. I believe that the problem became worse after 2011(the Omani Spring mentioned in the previous section) and the following years. This is because during these years I have noticed that many teachers including both novice and experienced EFL teachers have negative attitudes towards CPD. For instance, some of them refuse to join the courses/workshops or any other CPD event/activity they were

nominated for. Others even told me frankly that CPD is a waste of time and effort. All these reasons have encouraged me to do research in this topic.

In addition, this study developed from my continuous research interest in the field of in-service teachers' professional development (Al-Balushi, 2012; Al-Balushi, 2009). In general, while the study intends to contribute towards the emerging body of research as regards investigating teachers' CPD both locally and internationally (e.g. Nolan & Molla, 2017; Dadds, 2014; AL-Balushi, 2012; AL-Hakamani, 2011), the critical elements of it related to introducing the participatory model of CPD as a "new addition" to the CPD system in Oman as an attempt to improve this system was expected to have greater values. This is because in adopting a participatory model of CPD, I hope to not only improve the experience of CPD for teachers in Oman but also to contribute to understanding its potential more broadly. Moreover, there is a paucity of literature addressing the spectrum of CPD models (Kennedy, 2005), and limited research done in this respect internationally (e.g. Coldwell, 2017; Reilly & Literat, 2012; Harland & Kinder, 1997) and to the best of my knowledge none done locally. This study seems to be the first attempt in Oman trying to introduce an additional model to the CPD system in the country.

#### **1.4 The nature of the study**

In order to investigate the challenges associated with CPD in the in-service teaching context in Oman, and to improve the CPD system, the study adopted a critical paradigm serving as a theoretical lens. The critical paradigm is informed by critical theory and believes in conducting research to emancipate people in an egalitarian society (Troudi, 2015; Crotty, 2009). A critical educational researcher aims not only to understand or give accounts of behaviours in a society but to change these behaviours (Mack, 2010). As a critical researcher, it is my intention to contribute to changing the CPD system in my country by carrying out the investigation reported in this thesis (details of the adopted philosophical stance will be explicated in the fourth chapter of the thesis).

The study adopted a multi-methodology transformative design that used mixed-methods. The plan was to use multi methodologies (case study and action research) with mixed researching methods both quantitative and qualitative such

as online questionnaires, observation, and interviews. As a critical researcher, I believe that such a design provided me with the structure for developing a “more complete and full portrait of our social world through the use of multiple perspectives and lenses”, which allowed me to understand the “greater diversity of values, stances and positions” (Somekh & Lewin, 2005:275) of my participants (TESOL teachers and Senior English teachers/SETs); thus to gain a richer understanding of the CPD system in my country.

The study followed three different phases. The first phase was quantitative where an online questionnaire was designed and sent to a stratified selected sample of in-service TESOL teachers and SETs with the aim of exploring their beliefs about their job (teaching) as well as their beliefs and experiences related to CPD. The second phase of the study was qualitative and entailed the construction of a case study to investigate in-depth the CPD system in Oman. The third phase of the study comprised an action research to contribute to improving and changing the CPD system by adopting the participatory model of CPD in Education and evaluating it.

#### ***1.4.1 The study's contribution to knowledge***

The present study can contribute to existing knowledge through suggesting the implementation of the participatory model of CPD in Education to the CPD system in Oman, with an explanation of its implementation framework. This includes the possible benefits of adding this model to the CPD educational system in general and to in-service TESOL teachers' professional growth and learning in particular. Through the participatory model and the activities involved in it, such as workshops and online discussion group, teachers were helped to actively participate in their CPD process. As such, the results of the third stage of the study can provide a useful body of knowledge for educators (including educational policy makers, educational researchers, teacher trainers, supervisors, senior teachers and teachers) in Oman, and should lay a foundation for future studies in this area. Moreover, this model can be proposed to policy makers at the Ministry of Education in Oman to see its effects on the CPD of teachers of other subject areas as well not only English teachers.



## 1.5 Aims of the study and research questions

Given the above mentioned trends and referring to the problematic issue in my context mentioned earlier, the general aim of this study is to examine in-service TESOL teachers' CPD and to improve CPD in the TESOL context in Oman. This overarching goal is brought to fulfilment by several separate objectives which are:

- ❖ To explore Omani in-service TESOL teachers' beliefs about teaching as a profession and their beliefs towards CPD.
- ❖ To critically examine the roles of the different CPD opportunities offered by the Ministry of Education in Oman to in-service TESOL teachers' CPD and the impact they have on teaching and learning.
- ❖ To introduce the participatory model of CPD in Education to a group of TESOL teachers in Oman to contribute to improving the Government's current CPD strategy in the in-service context.

In order to achieve the overall aim of the study and to fulfil the above objectives, the project explored the following interconnected research questions:

1. What are the beliefs of in-service TESOL teachers in Oman about teaching as a profession?
2. What are those teachers' beliefs towards CPD?
3. Do the offered CPD opportunities by the Ministry of Education in Oman meet in-service TESOL teachers' needs?
4. What are those teachers' perceived factors that facilitate or inhibit their benefit from the offered CPD opportunities?
5. How do in-service TESOL teachers in Oman react to the participatory model of CPD?

## 1.6 Definition of key concepts

Several key concepts are used throughout the following chapters which need to be defined because sometimes these terminologies are used interchangeably in the literature. For the purpose of the current study, the following definitions have been used:

**CPD:** or continuing professional development refers to professional development as being continuous and ongoing, lifelong oriented in the process of continuous learning and change (Curtis & Cheng, 2001). It is an ongoing action which should not end at a specific stage of teachers' professional life.

**PD:** or professional development means all natural learning experiences and the activities consciously planned which teachers, groups or schools can benefit from either directly or indirectly and which contributes to improve the quality of education, teaching and learning in the classroom (Day, 1999).

**INSET:** or in-service education and training of teachers is 'any education or training that is for people in employment (in this case practising teachers) and that is relevant to the working life in the broadest sense' (Stone et al., 1980:2). INSET primarily aims at improving teaching and learning.

## **1.7 Thesis outline**

This thesis is organized into (7) chapters. Following this introductory chapter, Chapter (2) presents the background to the study. I will start by providing a general overview of the context. This is followed by discussion of education in Oman in general and teacher education in specific. The chapter then discusses ELT in Oman and the PD of ELT teachers in the in-service context by detailing all the particular elements and relevant issues.

Chapter (3) reviews relevant literature, providing a theoretical background to the study reported in this thesis. First, it identifies the key concepts and issues related to teaching as a profession and CPD, and relates these issues to the context of the current study. Then, it discusses how teachers' beliefs affect their benefit from CPD activities and the significance of investigating teachers' beliefs in order to evaluate the impact of CPD initiatives/activities on teachers' classroom practices. Next, I emphasize additional ways of evaluating CPD and review international models of CPD to identify gaps in the CPD system in Oman. This will be done by reviewing and critiquing studies conducted in various international contexts and in the local Omani context which focused on teachers' CPD.

Chapter (4) examines the methodology used for this study by providing a detailed account of the research paradigms adopted, the study design and phases. It also explains and justifies the data collection methods used and nature and size of the research sample. I also present the piloting process of the research tools, and the procedures for collecting and analysing data. I explain how my plan has been translated into action and describe the steps I have undertaken to develop each

data collection tool that was suitable for its planned purposes. This chapter further points out the ethical considerations and how issues relating to research quality were addressed.

Chapter (5) presents the data analysis and thus highlights the findings of the study, and interpretations of these findings. The research questions the current study is trying to address will guide the data analysis. The main issues raised from the data will be focussed on and illustrated with evidence from different sources of data (online-questionnaires, interviews, observations and clips from the online discussions). Chapter (6) deliberates on the key findings of this study in relation to my research questions, the study context and the reviewed literature. The chapter discusses the challenges associated with teaching as a profession in Oman and TESOL teachers CPD and ways of improving the current applied CPD system, so it can be more beneficial for learners, teachers and schools.

Chapter (7), the final chapter, summarises the key findings/outcomes of this research. I will also talk about the current study's contribution to knowledge, implications and recommendations. I further comment on the limitations of this research and suggest directions for further studies in Oman. The chapter ends by shedding light on my personal insights from conducting this study and what I have learnt from this experience.

## **1.8 Summary of Chapter One**

This introductory chapter provided an overview of my research topic. It clarified how the Ministry of Education in Oman is concerned about Omani teachers' CPD by spending a lot of money on that and offering many CPD opportunities for in-service TESOL teachers. It then discussed the problematic issue by showing how these offered CPD opportunities are questionable in relation to their contribution to teachers' professional development and educational change with reference to international research findings and the local context. The chapter explained the significance of the study, the methodology adopted in the study, its aims and the investigated research questions. It further provided definitions of key concepts that will be used throughout the thesis. The chapter concluded by listing the different chapters of the thesis. Having done this, the research moves on to provide a detailed account of the study context.

## **Chapter Two: Overview of the Context**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The prior chapter set out the case for this study and the purpose of this chapter is to contextualise the study by providing important background information about education in general and teacher education and development in specific. This chapter starts by outlining some background information about the Sultanate of Oman and its current educational system. It will then give an account of teacher education in the pre-service context and teacher education and development in the in-service context. This will be followed by talking about ELT in Oman since the current study is investigating the CPD of English teachers. The chapter will then list in detail all the CPD projects and activities the Ministry of Education has offered for in-service TESOL teachers in Oman.

### **2.2 The Sultanate of Oman: An overview**

The Sultanate of Oman is an Islamic country and Arabic is the country's official language although there are some other languages which are spoken in different parts of Oman such as Swahili, Kamzari, Shihri, Mehri, Zedjali, Lawati and Balushi. Such linguistic diversity is a result of the social fabric in Oman which is unique encompassing people from many different ethnic groups (e.g. Arabs, Balushis, Zanzibaris/Sawahilis, Lawatis). Regarding Oman's population, according to the recent population statistics revealed by the Omani National Centre for Statistics and Information on the 4<sup>th</sup> of January 2017, the total population in Oman had reached 4,552,688. Omanis constitute about 54% of the population with over 2,400,000 Omanis recorded, while expatriates comprise about 46% of the total population with over 2,000,000 expatriates recorded in Oman (NCSI, 2017). With such a big proportion of expatriates in the general population most of whom are from India, the Philippines, Bangladesh and Pakistan, as well as from many other western countries, English is widely and increasingly spoken in Oman and considered as a foreign language and also functions as a lingua-franca among Omanis and expatriates. In other words, English language is used as a common means of communication between speakers of different first languages.

## 2.3 The development of education in Oman

Before 1970, traditional education in Quranic schools called "Kuttab" was provided the primary source of education in nearly all states in Oman, where students studied the Holy-Quran and basic reading, writing and arithmetic principles (MOE, 2010). Al-Hammami (1999) commented that these "Kuttab" were located in private houses, mosques and even under the trees in some areas. The main aims behind such traditional education were helping students to memorize the Holy Quran and to prepare them for jobs in government departments such as the judiciary and the legal Zakat (charity) collection (MOE, 2010). In 1969, there were only three private schools in Oman, located in the two main cities: Muscat in the north of the country and Salalah in the south. These schools had over 900 male students taught by 30 teachers (MOE, 2010; MOEa, 2005). These schools were specified for boys only and there were no schools for girls.

Having said that, the education system in Oman has witnessed dramatic development in the last few decades with the ascension to the throne of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos bin Said on the 23rd of July, 1970. This is because education has been given high priority by his majesty Sultan Qaboos and the new government in order to develop a domestic work force, which was and continues to be considered by the government as a vital factor in the economic and social progress of the country (MOE, 2016; MONE, 2010). One of the most prominent tasks that has been achieved during this period was the establishment of a Ministry of Education (henceforth MOE) in Oman to be responsible for all matters related to education in the country (MOEa, 2005). Moreover, the government under his Majesty Sultan Qaboos has stipulated that all Omani people have the basic right to study for free no matter their age, so that they can develop their abilities to learn and adapt to changes around them (AL-Hammami, 1999).

As a consequence of these things, the quality of access to education has increased rapidly since 1970. For instance, within the MOE which is located in Muscat (the capital city), there are now 11 directorates of Education located in the eleven governorates of the Sultanate (Muscat, Dhofar, Musandam, Al-Buraimi, Al-Dakhiliyah, Al-Batinah North, Al-Batinah South, Al-Dhahirah, Al-Sharqiyah North, Al-Sharqiyah South, and Al-Wusta). Each of these directorates

is responsible for the schools located in it, teachers, students, curricula and everything related to Education while the MOE is responsible of all directorates. Furthermore, the number of schools has jumped from three private schools in 1970 to 1068 public schools and 530 private schools in 2016. In addition, the number of students has also increased. In 2016 over 540,000 pupils comprising almost equal numbers of boys and girls ( 268501 girls and 271567 boys) were enrolled in public schools, 518 students in special education schools, and 101860 students in private schools (MOE, 2016). Teacher education has also developed as a key element in the general process of the educational development as will be highlighted below.

## **2.4 Teacher education in Oman**

At the beginning of the educational development, most teachers who taught in Omani schools were non-Omanis; mainly from other Arab countries. However, as education was extended to all Omani people there was a huge demand for teachers and one which could not simply be supplied by the non-Omanis. In fact, the Omani government has always appreciated the importance of Omani teachers in participating in the development of education (MOEb, 2005); thus, attention was paid to pre-service teacher education.

### **2.4.1 Pre-service teacher education**

During the 1970s and 80s, the MOE in Oman concentrated on spreading education for all Omanis as quickly as possible. Thus, there was an urgent need to recruit many Omani teachers. During that time the focus of teacher recruitment was on quantity rather than quality (MOEa, 2005), so a number of programmes were applied for this purpose. These pre-service programmes aimed to prepare primary teachers, and accepted student teachers who had completed grade seven upwards, with student teachers enrolled for up to three years depending on their last school leaving certificate. At the end of these programmes, trainees received the “Diploma of Elementary Education” (MOEb, 2005). On completion of their preparation programmes, teachers started teaching in primary schools.

By the mid-1980s the above pre-service teacher preparation programmes were cancelled and replaced by programmes delivered in teacher training colleges (henceforth TTCs) which enrolled students who had completed their grade twelve on a two year diploma (MOEb, 2005). Moreover, Sultan Qaboos University (SQU) was opened in 1986 as the only governmental university in the country at that time and the College of Education within this also took responsibility for pre-service teacher education with the TTCs. By the late 1990s, these TTCs were upgraded to degree level TTCs aiming at qualifying all Omani teachers at degree level (MOHE, 2014). With increasing numbers of Omani teachers graduating from these institutions each year, so Omanization in the teaching sector started to spread all over the country (AL-Ghatrifi, 2006). The latest Annual Educational Statistics Book (2016) has shown that today there are over 56,500 teachers teaching in Omani public schools, and out of those, over 82% are Omanis while only 17% are expatriates (MOE, 2016).

Broadly speaking, the MOE has realized that the pre-service teacher preparation programmes have considerable effects on the quality of any educational system (MOEa, 2005). This realization has led the MOE to hold discussions with the institutions responsible for Omani teachers' pre-service education to ensure that those teachers are prepared for the job practically as well as theoretically. These discussions have resulted in increasing the time specified for teaching practicum inside classrooms, and to intensify training teachers on specific methodological issues related to the subject areas they will be teaching in the future (MOEa, 2005). Thus in general, whilst the focus at the beginning of the development of the national education system was on quantity, the MOE has gradually realized the importance of quality in training Omani teachers and in parallel with attention to this in pre-service provision, this has led to a growth of interest and attention to the in-service education of Omani teachers as well.

#### ***2.4.2 In-service teacher education***

The MOE believes that the successful implementation of any developmental initiative depends on a trained cadre provided with the knowledge and skills needed (MOE, 2012). There is, therefore, a need for high quality in-service education of teachers to help to tackle the inadequacies of pre-service teacher education (MOEa, 2005). Moreover, to provide the on-going support that

teachers need to develop as professionals. Accordingly, the MOE runs many central in-service education and training (INSET) courses in the main training centre in Muscat for teachers and other employees in the MOE. Through these courses, the Ministry is seeking to upgrade and develop the competencies of its staff.

At the beginning, however, these central courses were only targeting some limited specialties such as special needs teachers and physical education teachers (MOE, 2012). Therefore, in order to provide good quality training for the maximum number of different subject area teachers in all governorates of the Sultanate, the department of human resources development adopted a cyclical model of INSET courses. This model entails the selection of the trainers who are going to run the training courses in all 11 governorates of the Sultanate. Then, those trainers are trained centrally in the main training centre. After they complete their central training, the trainers go back to their governorates and cascade the training they got to other teachers, senior teachers and supervisors. This has resulted in increasing the numbers of INSET courses, and the numbers of participants joining these courses (MOE, 2016; MOEa, 2005).

It can be seen from the above that the Ministry uses both central and regional INSET courses to disseminate training, so largest numbers of teachers could benefit from it. This means, some of the INSET courses are run centrally through the main training centre in Muscat while others are run regionally in the different governorates of the Sultanate. The annual report for training and human resource development (2012) for example revealed that the total number of INSET courses offered for teachers in the academic year 2012 were 920 central and regional courses. As a result of these courses, 770 teachers from different subject areas were trained centrally (in Muscat) and over 37,000 teachers were trained regionally (in the eleven governorates) (MOE, 2012). In the last academic year 2015-2016, over 1000 training courses were developed and implemented in all educational governorates (MOE, 2016). A good number of these courses are for English teachers since English Language Teaching has and continues to be an important area of the school curriculum that has evolved considerably over the years in Oman.



## 2.5 ELT in Oman

ELT or English language teaching is a relatively new enterprise in Oman. It was introduced into the Omani Education system in 1970. In fact, Oman is one of many developing countries around the world which recognise and value English as a very important international language and a tool for achieving multiple purposes. In 1970 and when His Majesty Sultan Qaboos came to power, English was accepted by the government as the only official foreign language in the country; thus, huge budgets and resources were allocated for implementing it through education (Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2016; AL-Issa & AL-Bulushi, 2012). Consequently, all governmental schools started to teach English as a main subject. The provision was initially made for students to receive English from grade 4 to grade 12 (a total of 9 years). To achieve this purpose, at the beginning the government relied on imported curricula from some neighbouring countries but by the early 1980s, the MOE recruited foreign experts to design new curricula and to write in-house courses which took into consideration the Omani environment and culture (Al-Ghatrifi, 2006). Therefore, the earlier course-books in Oman have been written by well-known ELT publishers such as Longman (Al-Lamki, 2009).

In spite of that, facts and figures about ELT in Oman under that old 9 year system show that the vast majority of Omani students who finished 9 years of English instruction and started to join the different public and private higher education academic institutions lacked the ability to use English appropriately and effectively in all four skills whether in their social life or at work (Al-Mahrooqi & Denman, 2016; Al-Jardani, 2015; Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi, 2012). This also impacted on the extent to which the hundreds of students who were (and continue to be) awarded scholarships annually to undertake first degrees in English-speaking countries were adequately prepared to do so, with students needing to undertake further study in their respective foundation programmes (Al-Issa & Al-Bulushi, 2012 citing Al-Issa, 2009b, 2010a).

As a response to this situation, the government revolutionized ELT in the last two decades as part of a wider process of reform evidenced by the introduction of a new educational system called Basic Education in 1998 as is discussed in more detail below. With respect to ELT in particular, the starting age of instruction was

lowered to grade 1, a greater emphasis on communicative language teaching techniques was introduced and educational technology promoted in the teaching of ELT alongside other national curriculum subjects. As a result, a new course book was designed for ELT and is currently in use at all governmental schools (Al-Jardani, 2015).

### **2.5.1 Reform of ELT in Oman**

The education system in Oman has been through two main developmental stages: General Education (henceforth GE) and Basic Education (henceforth BE). The GE system (1970-1997) consisted of three levels: the primary level was 6 years (Grades 1-6), the preparatory level was 3 years (Grades 7-9) and the secondary level was 3 years (Grades 10-12). In this system, English language teaching started from grade 4 until grade 12. That was a total of 9 years of ELT with about 600 hours of English language instruction (Al-Hammami, 1999). The aims of teaching English in this system, according to Al-Lamki (2009) were to provide Omani learners with a fairly limited language knowledge which can enable them to carry on studying English after leaving school, and to use it as a tool of communication with different private and governmental bodies inside and outside the country.

Evaluations of the GE system undertaken in the late 1980s and early 1990s, highlighted some key drawbacks within that system and subsequently recommendations were suggested to improve it (Al-Hammami, 1999). This led to the development of the BE system in 1998 which is still in place today (MOE, 2016). In this system, the schooling years are still 12, but they have been broken down into two levels: 10 years at BE Levels and 2 years at Post Basic Level. The BE consists of two cycles: Cycle One covers Grades (1-4), and Cycle Two covers Grades (5-10). The Post Basic Level covers Grades (11-12) (Al-Jardani, 2015).

With respect to English instruction, the hours of instruction have been increased by lowering the start age from grade 4 to grade 1. English lessons have also been increased to 40 minutes per day; hence, extending the total number of English language instruction hours to 1,200 per year. Such increase in the number of instruction hours reflects the changes in the aims of ELT curriculum in Oman. English is now recognized as a pre-requisite for the national development of the

country to meet the challenges and demands of the 21st century, instead of considering it as a merely tool of communication, as it was in the old GE system (Al-Badwawi, 2011).

Accordingly, a new course book called *English for Me (EFM)* has been introduced in the new BE system. The EFM course books provide students with the knowledge, attitudes and skills that young Omanis will need in order to succeed in this rapidly changing society (Al-Lamki, 2009 citing MOE, 1999b). The course books are based on communicative language teaching methods; unlike the previous course book series which was based on memorizing information, and introduced concepts of interpreting and applying elements of the curriculum. The (EFM) course books are based on learner-centred approaches which embrace the principle of learning by doing and take into consideration the individual differences among learners (Al-Lamki, 2009) and through the adoption of mixed-ability teaching techniques, such as the use of small group work. To meet these ELT reforms, the roles and responsibilities of those delivering the reforms have been changed and new jobs added as will be explained below.

### ***2.5.2 English teachers and Senior English teachers in Omani schools***

English teachers are key contributors to ELT in Oman. In Cycle One BE (grades 1-4) where co-education is applied, all teachers of English are female. The MOE explained that the concentration of female teachers in the first cycle of BE is likely due to the natural tendency of women to assume a maternal role (Rassekh, 2004). Therefore, it is not surprising that the latest Educational Statistics Year Book (2016) shows that the numbers of female English teachers in Omani schools are more than double the numbers of male English teachers. A total of 7164 male and female English teachers are recorded in Oman in the year 2016; out of those more than half (4,991) are females compared to 2,173 males (MOE, 2016).

In Cycle Two BE and the Post Basic Education stage, English teachers are from both genders. This is because co-education is only applied at Cycle One BE, so when students finish grade four, they are segregated where girls join Cycle Two female schools and boys join Cycle Two male schools. In all Cycle Two female

schools English is taught by female teachers and in all male schools English is taught by male teachers. This policy extends into to the Post-Basic Education stage as well.

Teachers are recruited from a variety of sources. Firstly, expatriate teachers are still in use in some governorates (see section 2.4.1 above for statistics). With respect to Omani English teachers, these are graduates of different government and private institutions inside and outside the country. They are varied in their teaching experiences as well; some are beginning teachers whereas others have many years of experience in teaching English. While experience has helped many English teachers to teach the reformed EFM course book, many beginning teachers faced numerous challenges in teaching this course book effectively. This was reflected in a number of studies conducted in Oman examining the understandings and practices of novice English teachers in Omani schools (e.g. Al-Balooshi, 2009; Al-Bahri, 2009). For instance, Al-Bahri (2009) did a case study with some beginning Omani English teachers questioning how they cope with the complexities of real classrooms in their first year of teaching. The researcher noted that novice/beginning teachers might not have sufficient experiences to cope alone with the teaching challenges. She found that beginning teachers' understandings and practices can develop in collaborative environments such as working with colleagues and Senior English teachers (SETs). Similar findings were reported by Al-Balooshi (2009) who emphasized the important role of more experienced teachers in supporting beginning teachers' learning.

Concerns about novice teachers' delivery of the curriculum led to the introduction of a new job entitled Senior English Teacher/SET which was created by the MOE to offer individualized and continuous support for English teachers in Omani schools in the reformed phase (Al-Abrawi, 2009; Al-Lamki, 2002). Individuals were appointed to this new position as heads of English sections in their schools and were given the role of supporting and providing advice to teachers of English at schools. From my own experience of being a SET, my role was mainly mentoring English teachers at my school beside my teaching duties. I was responsible for observing English teachers, conducting post-lesson discussions with them and writing reports about their performance. I also conducted meetings and discussion sessions with my English staff, arranging workshops, team

teaching, peer observation events, and many other English teaching related activities such as English open days, reading seminars and assembly programmes. All these activities were aiming at developing a reflective teaching culture, as well as helping both beginning and experienced English teachers to tackle the challenges they face in teaching. To conclude, SETs were identified as having an increasingly important role to monitor and develop English teachers' performance inside and outside the classroom (Al-Sinani, 2009).

### ***2.5.3 Regional English inspectors/supervisors***

Regional English inspectors/supervisors are other key contributors to ELT in Omani schools. In the old GE system, Omani and expatriate English teachers got direct support from their inspectors (the term used at that time) where every educational region had a number of inspectors who reported English teachers' performance to the English Department at the Ministry. The inspectors provided support to teachers through inspection visits to schools and lesson observations (Al-Lamki, 2009:8). Teachers used to follow the recommendations by their supervisors to make changes to their teaching methodologies and techniques.

In the reformed BE system, however, the job titles of the inspectors have been changed to supervisors and new job descriptions for supervisors have been produced. The role of supervisors has shifted from inspecting teachers' work to mainly encouraging teachers to be reflective practitioners through guiding and supporting SETs (Al-Lamki, 2009). For example, the supervisor now attends a lesson with the teacher and the SET, the teacher teaches the lesson and both the SET and the supervisor observes him/her. After the lesson, the SET conducts a post-lesson discussion with the teacher through encouraging him/her to reflect on the taught lesson and both the teacher and the SET agree on some points for future improvements. After that, the supervisor and the SET reflect on how the post-lesson discussion went and what alternative techniques the SET can use to encourage teachers to be more reflective.

To conclude, supervisors are now responsible to monitor and develop the performance of SETs as professionals and as leaders of their teams (Harrison & West, 2001 cited in Al-Lamki, 2009). This was meant to change supervision of English teachers to a more school based model in which SETs work closely with

the teachers of English at schools, with the English supervisors' role now being to mentor SETs to do their job successfully.

#### **2.5.4 English language teacher trainers**

English language teacher trainers (henceforth TTs) are other key contributors to ELT in Oman. TTs are responsible for designing, delivering and evaluating INSET courses for English teachers. Previously, these courses were run by expatriate native English speaking teacher trainers (Al-Balushi, 2012, 2009). Yet, the MOE thought of qualifying Omani in-service English teachers to do this job. Therefore, now the majority of the training team (24 out of 25) are Omani teacher trainers (I am one of them) who are responsible for designing and conducting INSET courses for TESOL teachers in the different 11 Omani governorates. According to Etherton and Al-Jardani (2009), Omani trainers originally started this job by shadowing an expatriate native speaking Regional Teacher Trainer/Advisor for a whole year; developing an understanding of the roles and responsibilities of the trainer through observation and discussion. Then, the Omani TT gradually became involved in planning and delivering courses. This was done through co-tutoring the course/s with the native English speaking trainer/s. Next, Omani trainers became solely responsible to teach INSET courses in their regions.

Under the current system, however, new Omani English language TTs go through a different process when they are appointed. They are provided with a 25-hour (one week) trainer training course in which they explore the theoretical and practical issues of training and being a trainer (Etherton & Al-Jardani, 2009). Based on my experience of being an Omani English language TT, I think that both experienced and novice Omani trainers go through various stages that enrich their training skills and help them become successful EFL trainers. For example, Omani TTs are visited and observed by the experienced native English speaking training advisor from the main training centre. In these visits, Omani TTs have the opportunity to discuss and reflect on their progress and training skills, and to identify personal objectives for further development. Additionally, Omani TTs are encouraged to attend and/or present at both local and international ELT conferences; their participation in these conferences being funded by the MOE.

Generally speaking, all the above activities can contribute to the PD of the Omani in-service TTs. Participating in these PD activities can also help those TTs to do their job in a better way and thus contribute positively to developing the performance of English teachers through the INSET training courses they design, deliver and evaluate. The MOE has also focused on English teachers' training and their CPD through providing some professional learning opportunities for them as will be explained in the next part of the chapter.

## **2.6 INSET courses and CPD activities for English teachers**

From the old GE system and continuously through the reformed BE system, the MOE has acknowledged the need to support Omani English teachers by providing them with learning opportunities in parallel with the support English teachers get from their SETs and RSs. To achieve this aim, each year the MOE offers a number of structured formal INSET courses and some CPD activities to TESOL teachers to develop them as professionals. In this study I will include the structured formal in-service teacher training courses/INSET as part of CPD within the other CPD activities offered to TESOL teachers as will detail below.

### ***2.6.1 INSET training courses for ELT teachers in the GE system***

Structured formal INSET training courses are offered to in-service teachers of English and are conducted in training centres equipped with facilities to run INSET courses in all 11 Omani governorates. The MOE started providing INSET courses for English teachers teaching in Omani schools within the old GE system. These courses were delivered by expatriate teacher trainers mainly from Britain. Each governorate, except remote ones like Wusta and Musandam, had a well-qualified expatriate TT responsible for training English teachers.

The majority of the INSET courses offered by the MOE during the old GE system were, however, language courses. This is because, most of the Omani English teachers at that time were diploma holders. In their two-year diploma programmes, English teachers studied the majority of the modules in Arabic and very few were taught in English. Therefore, the INSET courses at that time were aiming primarily at improving the English language competence of Omani English teachers with a fairly limited focus on methodology. Table 2.1 below shows a

detailed description of these courses (adopted from West, 2004a in Al-Lamki, 2009:7).

**Table 2.1: Training courses for teachers of English in GE system**

Course	Description
RELIC	Regional English Language Improvement Course. It was designed to raise the level of language competence of in-service English teachers who had received two years of training in a TTC prior to commencing teaching. It was a day release course, extending over two years, with a minimum of 300 contact hours. It was intended to raise teachers' language competence from post-Beginner to Intermediate level. Teachers were assessed by a Preliminary English Test (PET) type examination compiled in co-operation with University of Cambridge Local Examinations Syndicate (UCLES).
PLC	Preparatory Language Course. This course replaced the RELIC course. It was intended to improve language skills of the teachers who had not attended the RELIC. Teachers were assessed by the UCLES PET examination.
SICs	Summer Intensive Courses. Teachers from the two most remote regions (Wusta and Musandam) without a teacher trainer were brought to Muscat for Summer Intensive language courses, varying in length from three to four working weeks, to raise their language level.
HOTDC	Higher Omani Teacher Development Course. It was designed to enhance the methodological skills of serving teachers. Thus, it was based on the English curriculum used in schools. This was offered to the teachers who had a language competence equivalent to IELTS band 5.5.
PICOT	Professional Course for Omani English Teachers. It replaced the HOTDC course. It was a day release course extending over one year with 100 contact hours. Teachers were assessed on assignments, with one final assignment focusing on a study of a child.

To sum up, the MOE was keen to train Omani English teachers no matter how much this would cost (Al-Lamki, 2009). Therefore, the above mentioned courses were offered to them annually. Once each group of teachers completed the course another group directly started the next course. As a way of encouraging



teachers' attendance to these INSET courses, they were released for one day per week for the whole year, and for a whole week in intensive blocks.

### ***2.6.2 INSET training courses for ELT teachers in the new BE system***

The reform of ELT in Oman through the adoption of a new system (BE) and applying/using the reformed curriculum (EFM) as stated above resulted in a pressing need for training teachers of English to enable them to teach the new course books effectively and appropriately. Thus, a number of INSET courses were run by the MOE aiming at upgrading English teaching and learning performance in Omani schools (Al-Balushi, 2012; Al-Balushi, 2009; Etherton & Al-Jardani, 2009; Al-Ghatrifi, 2006) and to contribute to teachers' professional development. There were two main INSET methodology courses; one was targeting primary teachers and the second was targeting lower secondary teachers. The upper secondary teachers were offered some induction workshops. These courses and workshops aimed at equipping teachers with the strategies and skills to help them better understand and implement the new EFM curriculum at schools. Moreover, another course was offered to Senior English teachers to give them a brief introduction to the role of SETs in BE schools.

Despite the importance of these INSET courses for English teachers and SETs, during the period of change and Omanization of teacher trainers, the need arose to develop and standardize the offered courses as a way of supporting the implementation of the new English curriculum. Thus, the above mentioned courses were developed by the Omani training team. Trainers used their experiences of working on and evaluations of previous training courses, and their knowledge of the educational context, to identify the needs of the future participants (Etherton & Al-Jardani, 2009). The previous courses were renamed as the Cycle 1, Cycle 2 and Post Basic Education qualifying courses. Moreover, the SET course was revised and developed to meet the needs of the newly appointed SETs in BE schools. In addition, some new courses were added; Table 2.2 shows a detailed description of these courses.

**Table 2.2: Developed INSET training courses for teachers of English in the BE system (Adapted from Al-Balushi, 2012)**

Course	Description
Methodology courses	Aimed at introducing the new or updated methodologies for the reformed curriculum (EFM) focusing on all teachers teaching grades (1-12) in the country. For example, <b>Cycle One</b> course is for primary teachers teaching grades (1-4), <b>Cycle Two</b> course is for preparatory and lower secondary teachers teaching grades (5-10) and <b>Post Basic</b> course is for upper secondary teachers teaching grades (11-12). Each of these courses aims to equip teachers with strategies and skills for a better understanding and implementation of the EFM Curriculum enabling them to deal with the specific age group they will be teaching.
SET Course	Aimed at helping newly appointed SETs to help them with coaching and mentoring skills needed to become successful mentors at their schools. In comparison to the previous SET course, this one has been expanded to a 75 hour comprehensive training course.
Research for professional development course (RPD)	Aimed at encouraging the growth of a research culture in ELT in Oman. It focuses on supporting teachers to conduct action research in their own context to improve teaching and learning and find solutions to their teaching problems. The course has a minimum of 80 contact hours.
Language Development Course (LDC)	Many English teachers who had graduated from private universities from neighbouring countries were teaching in Cycle 1 BE schools with very low English proficiency. Thus, the LDCs aimed at upgrading those teachers' language proficiency through pre-intermediate and intermediate language courses; each course had 100 contact hours and delivered through the use of <i>face2face</i> materials from Cambridge University Press.

These remain the main courses that are currently conducted by Omani TTs, although there have been a number of additions in recent years to support teachers classroom communication skills and the introduction of a new phonics teaching course. Participants in these courses are both Omanis and non-Omanis since as mentioned earlier, there are still some non-Omani English teachers teaching in Omani schools. Training in these courses is always conducted in English (Etherton & Al-Jardani, 2009). Recently the MOE has also implemented

an ambitious national project to improve CPD by establishing recently a specialised centre for professional training of teachers (MOE, 2014).

### **2.6.3 The specialised centre for training teachers**

The specialised centre for training teachers aims to improve the performance of teachers, develop their skills and evaluate their performance. Thus, the centre is currently running a number of courses targeting many teachers from different subject areas. For instance, the Associates Course for all senior teachers of all subject areas, the Arabic Experts Course targeting one teacher of Arabic in each (Grade 1-4) school, the Mathematics and Science Experts Course targeting one teacher from each major in each (Grades 5-10) school, and the Expert Supervisors Course targeting one-third of educational-supervisors to enhance their skills in supervising and developing teachers (MOE, 2014).

Nevertheless, out of all INSET courses run for all subject teachers at this centre, only two courses are run currently for ELT. Started in the 2016-17 school year, one of these courses is called ELT Experts and targets Cycle Two and Post Basic teachers and another one is for newly qualified English teachers. The design of both courses is the same. A portion of this is run through centralised face to face delivery at the specialised centre in the capital and a further portion utilises the existing English teacher training capacity in the regional educational governorates. The courses also utilise e-training activities. This means that the decision makers at this centre might believe that the new courses are designed to complement the existing provision of the formal structured INSET courses and workshops offered currently for English teachers to upgrade teaching and learning in Omani schools and probably to contribute to TESOL teachers' professional learning and development.

Having said that, both courses mentioned above are generally targeting all schools in the Sultanate. It provides English teachers with the updated techniques in teaching, learning and reflecting on their work (MOE, 2014). At least one teacher from each school in Oman is expected to attend these courses; however, if any teacher from any school could not join a specific course for some reasons, the MOE may exempt him/her provided that the Ministry has accepted the reasons. These longer courses are not the only events available for English

teachers in Oman; some CPD events/activities are also provided for those teachers by the MOE.

#### **2.6.4 CPD activities**

The MOE provides a number of activities to contribute to the CPD of English teachers in parallel with the longer formal INSET courses provided for them. For instance, each school in Oman receives a budget each year for teachers' PD. For TESOL teachers, the SET prepares a PD plan annually in cooperation with his/her English staff. This plan includes many activities such as team teaching, peer observations, visits to other schools, workshops, and discussion sessions. These activities are planned and run by different staff members from school as well as other educationalists from outside school throughout the year. Furthermore, the MOE offers online courses with some institutions like the British Council, it also offers to small numbers of teachers international visits to other countries like the USA where English teachers can visit schools there and reflect on their experience when they come back. From offering all these activities, the MOE is aiming mainly at improving the quality of teaching and learning in schools besides contributing to teachers' professional learning and growth. Table 2.3 details some other CPD activities offered and/or facilitated by the MOE for in-service TESOL teachers.

**Table 2.3: Other forms of CPD activities for English teachers**

CPD Event	Description
SETs and Supervisors Meetings [SETSM]	Senior English Teachers/SETS and RESs/Supervisors in BE schools meet occasionally throughout the school year with teacher trainers to discuss issues relating to their role of supporting ELT and English teachers at their schools.
Regional Conferences	The MOE runs a number of ELT conferences each year in the different governorates and in Muscat. English specialists from the Ministry and hundreds of English teachers, SETS and supervisors from all educational governorates in Oman participate in these conferences through presentations, discussions, workshops and displays. Some guest speakers from outside Oman are also invited. These conferences are usually between one to three days.

ELT conference at SQU	This is another annual national ELT conference organized by the Language Centre at Sultan Qaboos University/SQU in which current issues, theories and practices of ELT related to the Omani context are discussed. Each year the MOE funds many English teachers, Supervisors and TTs to attend and/or present at this conference.
International conferences	The MOE also funds each year a number of English specialists to attend and/or participate in international ELT conferences like TESOL ARABIA (UAE) and IATEFL (UK).
British Council ELT events	The British Council in Oman offers a number of events each year for English teachers such as workshops, online courses, seminars, and presentations. The MOE facilitates these events by advertising for them in schools.

Nonetheless, due to their teaching duties and workload at schools, many teachers may not have the time and/or the inclination to participate in these activities. Al-Balushi (2012) found that many teachers are reluctant to participate in some of these activities. It is also noticeable from the above mentioned that CPD opportunities are always offered to teachers from the MOE and there are no CPD activities initiated by teachers themselves; an issue that needs to be investigated in my viewpoint.

All in all, although INSET courses are the most widely available form of support activity offered to TESOL teachers in Oman, as can be noticed from the above discussion, there are some other forms of CPD being applied such as cascading where SETs attend workshops and then cascade them to their teachers at schools. Furthermore, coaching/mentoring where SETs mentor their teachers at schools to support their learning and supervisors mentor SETs to help them do their job successfully. Additionally, the action research form of CPD where English teachers are encouraged to carryout action research in their own context. However, these CPD forms are given less attention than the INSET courses; so these forms need to be investigated to see their effectiveness.

## **2.7 The top-down nature of the CPD system**

From all the above mentioned, it can be said that INSET courses and the other CPD activities offered to EFL teachers are based on a top-down policy from the old GE system and even through the new reformed BE system. In the old GE

system, teachers were offered formal INSET courses as well as being professionally supported by their regional inspectors. In terms of the INSET training, teachers were nominated by their inspectors to join these courses and they had no choice in which course to attend. Regarding the inspectors' support, teachers were mainly given instructions from the Ministry which guided them on how to teach the course books. Regional inspectors' used to inspect whether teachers were following the Ministry's prescriptions.

Despite the reform in ELT and the introduction of the SETs' job, the supervisors' job, and the addition of some CPD activities and other models, these activities are still monitored and planned at the level of the Ministry which reflects a very top-down policy of teacher education and development followed by the Ministry of Education. For instance, teachers are not expected to actively participate in their PD process; they make no decisions regarding the content of INSET courses and do not self-select to take part in these courses as observed by Al-Lamki (2009). Given this and taking into consideration the number of local studies that question the role of some offered courses in affecting educational change as mentioned earlier in section (1.2, Chapter 1), my study investigates the effectiveness of the courses/activities offered by the MOE for in-service TESOL teachers, teachers' role in these activities and to propose ways for developing the CPD system in Oman.

## **2.8 Summary of Chapter Two**

The educational history of the Sultanate of Oman has undergone rapid development both quantitatively and qualitatively. Therefore, a number of INSET courses and other activities are offered to English teachers to contribute to their professional learning and growth. However, the effectiveness of these courses/activities need to be taken into consideration to establish how far these are able to improve schools, increase teachers quality and improve the quality of students' learning which is their intention. These issues will be discussed in details in the following chapter which reviews both local and international research literature to provide some core principles and criteria which can inform an understanding of what constitutes effectiveness with respect to support for teachers CPD which can inform a critical evaluation of the quality of CPD activities and/or forms.

## **Chapter Three: Literature Review**

### **3.1 Introduction**

In order to position this study within the existing body of literature in both mainstream and EFL teacher education and development, the current chapter will shed light on several areas of research in this domain. This will be presented and organised around the research questions the current study is investigating as stated in Chapter One. I will first identify the key concepts involved in this study such as professionalism, CPD, INSET and teachers' beliefs, consider their origins, and discuss their significance in teachers' learning and growth with an emphasis on adult learning theories. In the next part, I will review CPD models with particular focus on the models applied in Oman to identify gaps in the Omani educational CPD system. Through the discussion which follows I will present ways of evaluating such CPD models. This will be followed by a consideration of effective CPD and the factors facilitating or inhibiting teachers' benefit from CPD. In the final part of this chapter, I will delve into the participatory model of CPD adopted in the current study, its' importance for the Omani CPD system and its' principles. Together, all parts in this chapter will establish a rationale for the study.

### **3.2 CPD of teachers: An introduction**

In most countries, teachers are expected to continue learning throughout their career in order to adapt to the changing needs of their society and its children after their initial teacher preparation programmes (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Vries et al., 2013; Day & Sachs, 2004). Such kind of learning is called professional development (PD) or continuing professional development (CPD). PD or CPD has attracted increasing attention in recent years. Faced with rapid changes, demands for high standards and calls to improve quality, teachers have a need to improve their teaching skills and update themselves through PD (Craft, 2000). Ultimately, all teacher CPD is perceived as a significant way for improving schools, increasing teachers' quality, and enhancing students' learning (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Hargreaves, 2000; Day, 1999). In fact, every modern proposal to reforming, restructuring, or transforming schools and governments emphasise teachers' CPD as a main vehicle in efforts to bring about needed changes (Vrikki et al., 2017; Guskey, 1994).

However, many researchers around the world have questioned the effectiveness of CPD in delivering the desired changes. For instance, Meiers and Ingvarson (2005) argue that there is limited evidence-based research on the links between teachers' CPD and improvements in students' learning outcomes. In the same line of argument, Olson et al., (2002) highlight that in the US, for example, there is no national data that has examined CPD over time, or linked CPD participation to both changes in teaching practices and students achievement (cited in Antoniou & Kyriakides, 2013). Questions are always being raised regarding the effectiveness of all forms of CPD and with such questions and concerns have come an increased demand for demonstrable results. Funding agencies, policy makers, the general public and legislators all want to know if PD programmes and initiatives are really making a difference (Guskey, 1994) and if they do, what evidence is there showing that they are effective.

As a way of addressing these questions, CPD coordinators and professional developers have given serious consideration to a number of issues that can inform teachers' learning and thus can result in enhancing students' learning and school improvements. One important though insufficiently addressed personal factor which might affect teachers' learning is teachers' beliefs (Borg, 2015; Vries et al., 2013). This is because teachers' beliefs can be a clear measure of teachers' professional growth and their CPD (Kagan, 1992). In relation to English teachers in particular, Troudi (2005:118) highlights that "If any element is to be the core of a teacher education programme, it should be the teacher's view(s) of what language education is about and what he/she considers teaching to be". Despite the importance of teachers' beliefs in their learning, few empirical studies have considered the relationship between teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning and their CPD (Vries et al., 2013). This study is seeking to bridge this gap by investigating teachers' beliefs about CPD and their beliefs about the profession.

Another significant issue that needs to be addressed regarding teachers' CPD could be the effectiveness of the CPD activity or applied model to introduce or enhance attitudes, skills and knowledge of the participants. Many models are identified in the literature for teachers' CPD. Kennedy (2005) emphasizes that CPD can be organised and structured in a number of different ways for a number



of different reasons. Yet, a number of these models are criticised in relation to their contribution to teachers' learning and educational change (Yan & He, 2015; Lamb, 1995; Tomlinson 1988). In fact, although an increasing range of literature has focussed on particular aspects of teachers' CPD, there is a paucity of literature that has addressed the spectrum of CPD models (Moran et al., 2017; Kennedy, 2005) and the contribution of these models to teacher professional learning and growth. This study, hence, has tried to address this gap by investigating the CPD models used in my context for TESOL teachers and suggested an additional model to improve the CPD system.

Furthermore, in order to see the effectiveness of CPD on contributing to educational changes, professional developers (those with responsibility for CPD support initiatives) are increasingly interested in the issue of programme evaluation (Guskey, 1994). However, while the importance of CPD has been widely acknowledged, evaluation of the impact of CPD on teachers and teaching and learning has rarely been undertaken in a focused and systematic manner. Evidence from research about CPD evaluation show that current practices in the majority of cases seem to be limited to obtaining feedback on participants' satisfaction or summarising the activities undertaken (Edmonds & Lee, 2002; Guskey, 2000). In spite of that, the literature shows examples of studies which provided useful insights into how evaluation of CPD could be approached. For example, Guskey (2000) has developed a conceptual framework specifically for CPD evaluation at schools which distinguishes a hierarchy of impact levels including change in participants, the organization and students.

Finally, a further key issue that should be considered in relation to teachers' CPD is the paradigm shifts in theories of teacher learning in the past two decades and the contemporary approaches to teacher PD that have evolved in light of these. Key shifts include a move away from transmission models of teachers' learning to more constructivist views that assume teacher-learners to be self-directed in their own professional learning and growth (Beach, 2017; Hung & Yeh, 2013). Along the same lines, there is a growing awareness of the potential of teachers' collaboration to encourage their learning (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Hung & Yeh, 2013; Reilly & Literat, 2012; Borko et al., 2010). On the contrary, in Oman evidence from research showed that CPD is currently imposed on teachers

through INSET courses and workshops as well as other forms of CPD and that in-service TESOL teachers showed an interest in having a more active role in participating in their CPD process (AL-Lamki, 2009; AL-Yafee, 2004). All the theories, concepts, issues and concerns presented in this section will be discussed in details throughout the following parts of this chapter.

### **3.3 Teaching as a profession**

In the literature, various definitions and arguments are presented when discussing teaching as a profession. Goodwyn (2010) stresses that the teaching profession continues to struggle to define itself in relation to the other professions (in Fuller et al., 2013). Despite teaching 'fitting' the criteria of what constitutes a profession in terms of responsibility, knowledge, autonomy, and organization, the concept of the '*professional*' within education remains contested and debated (Fuller et al., 2013:2). Hargreaves (2000:152) states that if we ask teachers "what it means to be a professional" they will usually refer to two things: *professionalism* and *professionalization* as referred to in the literature. In his view, the first thing teachers will talk about in this regard is *professionalism* in terms of the quality of what they do; and of the conduct, demeanour and standards which guide it. He added that teachers will also talk about *professionalization* which normally has to do with how teachers feel they are seen through other people's eyes in terms of their status, standing, regard and levels of professional reward.

Therefore, some countries have raised teachers' salaries to give them status and power to compare them with other jobs in society in relation to such elements. However, this does not seem to be the case in Oman as Omani teachers despite receiving raises in their salary are dissatisfied with their status and are always complaining about it. Hargreaves (2000:152) himself questions the relationship between the quality of what teachers do and their status; he says "In teaching, stronger professionalization does not always mean greater professionalism". This suggests that even if some countries raise teachers' salaries and status, it will not necessarily result in improving the quality and standards of practice.

On the other hand, other writers have linked the profession of teaching to professional development and training. For example, Dean (1991:5) claims that one of the most widely accepted definitions for the term profession is "an occupation which requires long training, involves theory as a background to

practice, has its own code of behaviour and has a high degree of autonomy”, and all of these apply to teachers. Similarly, Craft (2000:7) stresses that “being a professional means taking responsibility for identifying and attempting to meet the professional development needs of oneself and one’s institution”. However, another discourse in this regard is that teaching especially good teaching is conceived as having less to do with training and education and more to do with the intrinsic or inherent qualities of character or the teacher’s personality, typically coupled with a deeply ‘caring’ orientation aiming very specifically at ‘making a difference’ to peoples’ lives (Moore, 2004:5).

Generally speaking, it seems that teachers’ intrinsic qualities cannot be separated from their PD needs as both are directly related to Hargreaves’ (2000) idea mentioned above about *professionalism*; the quality of teachers’ practices. In this respect, Raymond et al., (1992) indicates that the link between personal and professional dispositions makes it significant for teachers to have opportunities for examining their own teaching styles, histories and personal commitments. In their view, trying to discover and make explicit the origins of their commitment, and to understand the personal grounds underling their professional work, as well as to be clearer about the types of educational contexts that best suit their biographical dispositions are all important ways to assess the teacher development process and the suitability of CPD activities.

Similar observations were noticed in the literature and research studies reported in the TESOL Quarterly Journal on teacher development in the last 50 years by Canagarajah (2016). As regards my research, it focuses on teachers’ beliefs about teaching as a profession, their CPD and personal growth to see the link between these issues. This is because whilst the importance of CPD in relation to pupil outcomes is (relatively) well established, its relationship to career development has been subject to much less attention as Coldwell (2017) notices. He further emphasises that CPD can have an impact on teachers’ career progression and retention.

### **3.3.1 Teachers’ professional identity and professionalism**

Lortie (1975) produced one of the earliest analyses of the teaching profession in schools in the US. He perceives the teaching profession as essentially low status

and low paid and that therefore; people become teachers for reasons other than income or social standing. In his view, people enter teaching because of a need for strong interpersonal relationships within their work, because they possess a strong service ethic which is due to the influence of role models (parents or former teachers), and because of love of their subject. This sense of vocation strongly reflects the self-image and motivations of teachers (Pollitt & Oldfield, 2017). Rodgers and Scott (2008) remark that teachers are clearly people who bring themselves into their classroom and the formation of their identities includes an interplay between internal and external factors such as the institutional realities and teachers' decisions about how to express themselves in classroom activities.

The way teachers identify and see themselves as professionals is vital for many reasons, including their motivation, sense of self-efficacy and job satisfaction (Yuan & Zhang, 2017; Pollitt & Oldfield, 2017). Day et al., (2007:102) suggest that teachers' identity, "how teachers define themselves to themselves" involves three elements that reflect personal aspects, situational aspects and professional aspects. Personal identity is related to teacher's identity outside the school, like being a local volunteer or a mother. The situated identity is the context that the teacher works in and how this can impact on individual agency and by extension sense of self. Teachers' professional identity needs to be understood in the context of the school's culture and managerial practices, with teachers own performance as well as their students' performance. Some writers argue that managerialism is vulnerable to challenge from professional 'democratic discourse' (Day & Sachs, 2004; Sachs, 2003), in which resistant or 'transformative' professionalism balances public accountability with professional autonomy (Oolbekkink-Marchand et al., 2017; Sachs 2003).

Research has shown that teacher identity is shaped, "positively and negatively, by classroom experiences, organizational culture and situation-specific personal and professional events" (Day et al., 2006:190). Therefore, how managers deal with educational changes that teachers perceive to threaten their norms and practices is key to teachers' effectiveness and resilience (Pollitt & Oldfield, 2017; Gu & Day, 2007; Day et al., 2006). For such reasons, identity theories have gained popularity in teacher development programmes in TESOL (Canagarajah, 2016). Teachers' sense of positive professional identity is usually associated with

their job satisfaction and well-being which is a main factor in their effectiveness, motivation, professionalism in doing the job and commitment, while negative professional identity may lead to lack of commitment and even to leaving the teaching profession in some cases (Taylor, 2017; Gu & Day, 2007). This means, teachers' views about their profession and themselves as professionals do have an influence on them; issues will be discussed in detail later in section 3.4.6.2 on studies about teaching as a profession.

### **3.4 CPD and teachers' beliefs**

The current study is focusing on the CPD of Omani in-service TESOL teachers and explores teachers' perceptions/beliefs about their job and CPD. This means that the terms CPD and teachers' beliefs are key concepts in the current study which need to be defined and explained in relation to the main purposes behind conducting the study. Thus, in the coming parts of this chapter I will conceptualize the term CPD, examine the relationship between CPD and INSET, elucidate how teachers' learn and acquire new knowledge through CPD, and discuss examples of international and local studies that investigated teachers' CPD. This will be followed by a conceptualization of teachers' beliefs as another key concept in the study, emphasising the role of teachers' previously held beliefs in teachers' learning, and reviewing examples of research studies that investigated teachers' beliefs in relation to the issues I am investigating in my study.

#### ***3.4.1 Conceptualising the term CPD***

Although research recommended that PD is an essential way of improving schools' performance (Bolam, 2000; Hargreaves, 1994); PD as a term appears to differ between various educational concepts and traditions. Friedman and Philips (2004) contend that PD as a concept is ambiguous and contested. Taylor (1975), for example, recognises two aspects of the PD of teachers, which were: staff development and further professional study. Staff development was regarded as rooted in the needs of the institution. Further professional study means being orientated to the individual teachers' needs. Hargreaves and Fullan (1992), and Coldwell (2017) define PD as the formal and informal experiences of teachers through their careers. Waters (1998:30) describes it as the development that occur "when teachers are construed first and foremost as people, and is

predicated on the premise that people are always much more than the roles they play”.

Yet, Day’s (1999) definition of PD seems to be more useful drawing on elements which are relevant to current issues.

*“professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute through these to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purpose of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives” (Day, 1999:4)*

Interestingly, the term continuing professional development (CPD) is more commonly found in the recent literature since 2000 (Wai Yan, 2011). In fact, the term ‘continuing’ is used to highlight PD as being ongoing, lifelong-oriented in the process of an ‘ongoing’ change process (Earley & Bubb, 2004; Curtis & Cheng, 2001). Similar to Day’s definition, teachers’ CPD is generally described as a learning process which embraces any activity that contributes to enhancing the professional career growth of teachers (Rogan & Grayson, 2003). Moreover, the teacher as a professional needs to be involved in his/her CPD across the various stages of his/her professional life to fulfil different goals and needs in his/her career (Day & Gu, 2010; Day, et al., 2007; Harrison, 2003). In the Omani context, CPD as a term is becoming more accepted recently as has been shown in many projects, documents and local conferences organised by the MOE (AL-Lamki, 2009). Hence, in the current study, the term CPD will be used instead of PD. It is further related to my personal belief that professional development is a continuous, ongoing action that does not end at a specific stage of the professional life of teachers.

Altogether, the current study adopts Gray’s (2005:5) definition of CPD: ‘CPD embraces the idea that individuals aim for continuous improvement in their professional skills and knowledge, beyond the basic training initially required to carry out the job’. In teaching, such development used to be called ‘in-service training’, or INSET, with the emphasis on delivery rather than the outcome. Arguably, the change in terminology signifies a shift in emphasis away from the employer and/or provider, towards the individual teacher. This means, individual

teachers should take responsibility for their lifelong career development, under the umbrella of the institutions/schools that employ them. This idea about CPD appears to be very relevant to my study because it stresses the process of learning more than the outcomes and that teachers should become fully responsible for continuing their professional development. Since my study is focusing on in-service TESOL teachers' CPD, the next section will discuss in detail CPD and INSET.

### **3.4.2 CPD and INSET**

INSET or In-service education of teachers means 'any education or training that is for people in employment that is relevant to their working life in the broadest sense' (Stone et al., 1980:2). The primary purposes of designing INSET courses are to upgrade the performance of teachers and enable them to perform more effectively as a result of such training and education (Perraton et al., 2002; Bolam, 2000; Eraut, 1995; Burgess & Galloway, 1993). In other words, the key aim behind INSET courses is improving teaching and learning. This is similar to Bolam's (2000) and Hargreaves's (1994) idea stated earlier that the quality of schools can be improved as a result of CPD. Thus, for a long time INSET has been a dominant model of structured or formal CPD in different educational settings (Goodall et al., 2005; Friedman & Philips, 2004; Craft, 2000).

For instance, Craft (2000) relates INSET to CPD and argued that both terms can be used to cover a wide range of events/activities designed to contribute to the learning of teachers, who have completed their initial teacher education course. She justifies that although sometimes INSET is seen in terms of going on an external course, the phrase is also used in a broader sense. Likewise, CPD is used sometimes in the broad sense to cover all forms of learning that experienced teachers undertake from courses to private reading to job-shadowing, but it is also used sometimes in a narrower sense of professional courses. From her viewpoint, the term professional development is also used sometimes to describe moving teachers forward in knowledge and skills, so in practice, it is possible to break down the distinction between CPD and INSET.

Conversely, Goodall et al., (2005) consider that INSET as a term is more limited than the term CPD. They think that CPD encompasses a wide range of approaches and teaching and learning styles in a variety of settings (inside or

outside school/work). Day (1999) also emphasises that INSET courses are not enough to contribute to teachers' CPD since an emerging paradigm is one that moves professional development away from the practice of attending training days and courses to the concept of continuing or lifelong learning.

To sum up, while Craft's (2000) idea of CPD and INSET has some relevance to my study as it investigates in-service teachers' CPD, I believe that CPD as a term is bigger than that. In my view, it is not enough for teachers to wait for INSET or other CPD events/activities to be offered to them by their institutions. I think that teachers should take full responsibility to identify and address their own CPD needs. This is important because today teachers' competence is not only judged through the quality of the training courses they attended or their initial qualifications, but also through the continued development of their teaching skills (Wermke, 2012). Every teacher needs to continue learning and developing throughout his/her career to be able to adapt him/herself to the changing needs of society and its children (Day & Sachs, 2004).

### ***3.4.3 Adult learning theories***

The literature of the past century has yielded a variety of theories, sets of assumptions, models, principles and explanations which make up the learning knowledge base of adults. Therefore, the drive to professionalise, which involved the need for developing a unique knowledge-base to adults' learning, was the context in which three of the field's most significant theory building efforts emerged: andragogy, self-directed learning and transformational learning theory. To begin with, the concept of andragogy according to Merriam (2001) was first proposed in 1968 by Malcolm Knowles as the art and science of adult learning which contrasts with pedagogy, the art and science of children's learning. She added that andragogy became a rallying point for those trying to define the adult education field and separating it from other educational areas. Andragogy is underlined by five assumptions which describe the adult learner as someone who: (1) has an independent self-concept and who can direct his/her own learning, (2) has accumulated a reservoir of life experiences that is a rich resource for learning, (3) has learning needs closely related to changing social roles, (4) is problem-centered and interested in immediate application of knowledge, and (5) is motivated to learn by internal rather than external factors.



Despite the importance of the above assumptions in describing adult learners, andragogy has been criticised. Brookfield (2003) calls it a “culture blind” theory, maintaining that self-directed learning as a concept and the concept of the establishment of a non-threatening relationship between the student and the teacher as a learning facilitator may neglect cultures and races which value the teacher as the main source of knowledge and direction. Some authors even questioned whether andragogy has achieved the status of a theory of adult learning. For instance, Hartree (1984:205) questions whether there was a theory at all, proposing that perhaps these were just principles of good practices, or descriptions of “what the adult learner should be like”, even Knowles (1989:112) himself came to concur that andragogy is less a theory of adult learning than “a model of assumptions about learning or a conceptual framework that serves as a basis for an emergent theory” (in Merriam, 2001:5).

Another model that helped describe adult learners as different from children is self-directed learning which appeared at the same time as Andragogy. Knowles (1975) himself has contributed to the literature of self-directed learning with a book which explained this concept and outlined ways of implementing it through learning contracts which could be related to the first assumption underlying Knowles's view of andragogy which is as learners mature, they become increasingly self-directed in their learning (Merriam, 2001). Self-directed learning is a process in which without the help of others, individuals take the initiative to plan, carry out, and evaluate their own learning experiences (Knowles, 1975). In essence, it is an informal process which mainly takes place outside the classroom. The learner makes decisions and takes responsibility for his/her own learning process where he/she determines his/her needs, sets goals, identifies resources, implements a plan for meeting his/her goals, and evaluates the results (Beach, 2017).

Brookfield (1985), however, warns that not all learners may prefer the option of self-directed learning and that a number of adults who are involved in self-directed learning also participate in more formal educational programmes, such as courses directed to teachers. Learners' non-preference for self-directed learning could be related to a lack of resources, internal motivation, confidence or independence. Despite that, self-directed learning has many benefits for

learners. For instance, learning occurs both at the learners' convenience and according to their learning preferences and it can be easily incorporated into their daily routines. The learner can be involved in isolated activities, such as researching information on the internet or in communications with peers and experts (Beach, 2017). Regarding my study, with its interest in raising teachers' awareness of the importance of initiating and taking responsibility for their CPD and self-directing their learning, I believe that both andragogy and self-directed learning theory make important contributions to understanding teacher learning theory, but that a third approach, transformational learning theory is most closely aligned with my understanding of teacher learning.

Transformational learning theory developed by Mezirow (2000, 1991), represents a social constructivist theory that applies primarily to adults. Transformative learning is described as "the process by which we transform our taken-for-granted frames of reference (meaning perspectives, habits of mind, mind-sets) to make them more inclusive, discriminating, open, emotionally capable of change, and reflective so that they may generate beliefs and opinions that will prove more true or justified to guide action" (Mezirow, 2000, p.7-8). Broadly speaking, the theory explains how adult learners interpret and reinterpret their experiences in social settings, where in groups they construct knowledge collaboratively, creating a culture of shared practices and meanings. Nonetheless, different theorists look at transformative learning through various lenses. For example, to Mezirow (2000), it is a rational process as the individual reflects on and discusses his/her views about the world. To Freire (2000) transformative learning is emancipating because Freire taught Brazilian workers how to read; he engaged them in a problem posing instructional approach, centered on the discussion of poor compensation and working conditions, helping them to change their thinking and strive for social change.

In the current study, transformational learning theory through both Mezirow's (2000) and Freire's (2000) lenses inform the participatory model of CPD in education that I adopt. This model is designed to engage the participant teachers in reflective discourse through challenging each other's' assumptions and encouraging all members of the group to consider various perspectives (Mezirow, 2000). Moreover, the model aims at emancipating the participant teachers

through helping them change their thinking (Freire, 2000) about CPD and empowering their voices through their active participation in their CPD process. Details of the participatory model and the assumptions underlying it will be discussed later on in the chapter. Having discussed adult learning theories, the following section accentuates teachers' learning through CPD as this is the focus of my study.

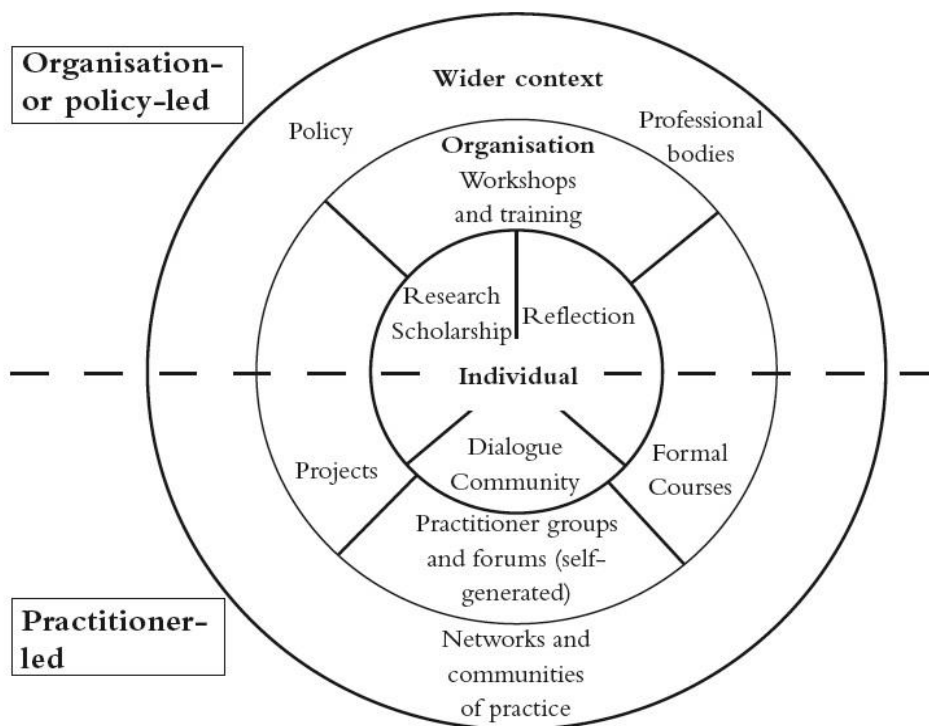
#### **3.4.3.1 Teachers' learning through CPD**

Putnam and Borko (2000) argue that learning in individuals, including teachers, is a constructive and iterative process in which people interpret events on the basis of their existing beliefs, dispositions and knowledge. Hence, 'what' and 'how' teachers' learn is shaped and filtered through the lenses of their existing beliefs, knowledge and practice. Rogers and Horrocks (2010) emphasise that adult learning (including teacher learning) is more effective by means of experiential learning where adults can actively participate in their learning process. Similarly, Adler (2000:37) states that teacher learning "is usefully understood as a process of increasing participation in the practice of teaching, and through this participation, a process of becoming knowledgeable in and about teaching". Borko (2004:4) explains that teacher learning can occur in a number of different aspects of practice, including the classroom, the school community, and professional development workshops or courses. It could happen in a brief hallway conversation with a colleague, or when counselling a troubled child after school.

Putnam and Borko (2000), however, remind us that little attention has been paid to teacher learning, either to how they learn new ways of teaching or their roles in creating learning experiences that are consistent with the re-form agenda. Likewise, Clarke, Lodge, and Shevlin (2012:1) stress that there has not been much attention paid to the "processes through which professional learning is acquired in teacher education". Moreover, Stes et al., (2010) and Lawless and Pellegrino (2007) all urge for more robust research to be done on the PD effects and the need for moving the CPD research focus from mere learning satisfaction of a specific programme to an understanding of whether participants actually learnt anything valuable, relevant and applicable to their daily practices. In this respect, Borko (2004) advises us that to better understand teachers' learning, it

must be studied within the multiple contexts where learning occurs (e.g. classrooms, schools, PD courses), and take into consideration both the teachers as learners and the social system in which they participate.

In order to emphasise the roles of both (the individual teacher and the social system) in the learning process, Appleby and Pilkington (2014) develop a model of teachers' professional learning to support their CPD; Figure (3.1) below represents this model. In the model, the individual sits at the centre of three concentric circles representing levels within which enabling structures and learning spaces can be enacted. Appleby and Pilkington (2014:35) believe that the circles allow us to bring together the individual, the locations of learning and the ways in which a professional (teacher) can learn. The individual is central in the process of learning in this model; he/she is placed at the heart of the model showing that individual practitioners (in the case of my study, the teachers) are the locus of CPD, of professional insight and wisdom. This means that the individual teacher is more than just a small component in the wheel; he/she is a person who comes with a history, a unique place in the world and a sense of the future.



**Figure 3.1: A model for supporting critical professional development (Appleby & Pilkington, 2014:35)**

Broadly speaking, while the individual is central, the model itself is divided into two halves to represent the way that individual learning can be practitioner-led or organisationally-led. The top half shows elements where organisations or policy-makers play a significant role in shaping learning activities for the teacher. In the lower half, shaping is largely instigated by the individual practitioners (teachers) and is led by their interests and priorities. As a way of bridging and connecting the two halves, Appleby and Pilkington (2014) present a series of circles that reflect different levels where learning spaces can be enacted and examined as well as the key structures for enabling learning within each level. I think that this model can possibly inform my study by providing a way of seeing all the learning opportunities (existing and potential) which can develop professional capital for both individuals (TESOL teachers in my context) and organisations (the MOE). Yet, these insights need to be complimented by an understanding of how teachers' acquire knowledge through such CPD opportunities. This will be explained below.

#### ***3.4.3.2 Acquiring professional knowledge through CPD***

According to Eraut (1994:25), a central purpose of CPD is to bring participating teachers into contact with new ideas and knowledge. This is sometimes considered through updating generally, sometimes to stimulate self-evaluation and critical thinking, sometimes as part of the process of implementing a new mandatory policy, sometimes to disseminate a particular innovation. The research work of Shulman and his colleagues at Stanford University on knowledge growth has investigated the sources of teachers' knowledge, and how knowledge can be acquired, transformed and used in the classroom (e.g. Grossman, Wilson & Shulman, 1989; Shulman & Grossman, 1988; Shulman, 1986).

Shulman and his associates hypothesised that teachers draw on seven domains of knowledge (or sets of cognitive schemata) when they plan and carry on instructions: subject-matter content knowledge, pedagogical content knowledge, curricular knowledge, general pedagogical knowledge, knowledge of learners and their characteristics, knowledge of educational contexts, and knowledge of educational aims. Borko and Putnam (1995) argue that because Shulman and his colleagues' model explicitly addresses the content and structure of the

professional knowledge base of teaching; it can provide a useful conceptual framework for designing professional development programmes for teachers. In their view, the importance of knowledge is that it is particularly relevant to understanding and changing classroom practices.

However, Eraut (1994) questions how theory gets to influence practice and how people use the knowledge they have already acquired. He thinks that both are central to the goal of developing professional practice assuming that learning knowledge and using knowledge are not separate processes but the same process. The process of using knowledge transforms that knowledge so that it can no longer be the same knowledge. The problem is that people are so accustomed to using the word 'knowledge' to refer only to the 'book knowledge' which is publicly available in codified form, that they have developed only limited awareness of the nature and extent of their personal knowledge (Eraut, 1994). Troudi (2005) also states that it is not always clear how knowledge can be transferred practically so teachers can employ it in their classes.

In order to help teachers acquire and use knowledge, Appleby and Pilkington (2014) suggest using dialogic processes in learning. They explored the role of dialogue and discourse for professional learning. Within social constructivist paradigms, dialogue is seen as critical to the process of learning and meaning-making (Vrikki et al., 2017). Communities of learners in workshops, teams, forums and projects engage in discourse to share understanding and construct a culturally situated 'knowledge base'. Appleby and Pilkington (2014) argue that dialogue facilitates the exploration of practice and theorising around practical knowledge generating discrete, shared or professional knowledge. They added that the dialogic processes, therefore, can offer means of "sharing knowledge within the professional community and of enabling the interrogation of explicit learning and teaching theories in relation to subject-specific priorities" (p.52). In relation to my study, I adopted the participatory model of CPD to help teachers in my context use dialogic processes in learning and thus share knowledge within the professional community in which they are engaged; this will be explained in detail in section 3.8.1.2.

### **3.4.4 International research studies on CPD**

While the field of research on teachers' professional learning and development is relatively young, there has been a great deal of progress in the last 20 years or so (Borko, 2004). Avalos (2011) reviewed the publications in the journal of Teaching and Teacher Education over ten years (2000-2010) focussing on studies on teacher PD. He noted that during the ten years a large number of articles ( a total of 111 articles) have reported on research and interventions designed for teachers, with teachers and by teachers aimed at the professional learning of teachers, with an eye on whether these studies have any impact and change on teachers and students. The studies covered different geographical areas (23 western and eastern countries) and different research and development procedures. Avalos (2011) thematically organised these articles in terms of their main emphasis which were: factors influencing PD, effectiveness of PD, teachers' learning, facilitation and collaboration as well as other issues around these themes. Although classifying journal articles according to a single thematic emphasis might be artificial as they usually have more than one central focus, Avalos (2011) thinks that this was a sensible way to provide a synthetic overview of what has been published over that period. He concluded by stating how these productions bring out the complexities of teachers' professional learning and how research and development have taken cognizance of these factors and provided food for optimism about their effects, although not yet about their sustainability over time.

In fact, when reviewing the literature on teachers' CPD I realized that teacher education and the CPD of teachers continue to be at the center of the discussions on teachers' quality and students' achievement internationally. Hence, studies in multiple national contexts focussing on diverse subject areas have attempted to understand the possible impacts of teacher CPD on improving schools, increasing teachers' quality and improving the quality of students' learning. On the one hand, some researchers suggest that CPD of teachers offers an important potential way to help schools develop (Day, 1999). The underlying rationale is that high quality teacher CPD facilitates improvements in teaching practices, which can in turn be translated into higher levels of students' achievements (Day, 1999; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995) with some

studies providing empirical support for this (e.g. Garet et al., 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2000).

Thus, for example, Darling-Hammond (2000) reviewed the findings of a 50-state survey of policies, state case study analyses, the 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Surveys, and the National Assessment of Educational Progress in the United States. She revealed that there was an important relationship between teachers' quality and students' achievements. This attention to the quality of teachers has affected teacher-education and development programmes and led to more authentic models of PD which can begin as early as the pre-service stage of educating and developing teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2000).

On the other hand, many other researchers questioned the impact of CPD on teaching and learning. For example, Kelly and MacDiarmid (2002) examined professional development activities under the omnibus Kentucky Education Reform Act and found them lacking. The same study showed that analysis of professional activities revealed systemic weaknesses that were counterproductive to improve the quality of teachers. Chief among these weaknesses are system-wide ignorance of alternate PD events/activities and a failure to define engagement in PD beyond the cataloging of clock-hours or seat time. Analysis also revealed interesting differences in PD according to school level and district size. In the same vein, in the EFL context, Nicolaidis and Mattheoudakis (2008) investigated the long-term effectiveness of a PD programme (INSET course) for EFL teachers in Greek. A questionnaire was used to assess, among others, (a) teacher beliefs regarding the relevance of the knowledge acquired to their individual needs, (b) the extent to which they used the materials provided in the course, and (c) the usefulness of the subjects offered. The results of this study suggested that while there was possibilities for some change in teachers after attending a PD programme, they questioned the programme's temporal extent and width of application.

All in all, although the research base on CPD in education is quite extensive, for most parts, it has documented the inadequacies of CPD (Guskey, 1994). The literature has also shown the inadequacies of many research studies conducted in this area. In a meta-review of 36 studies mainly done in higher education in the



United States, Stes et al., (2010) concluded that only three (out of 31 studies) measured the impacts of PD on teachers' behaviour using pre and post-test methods. Thus, the challenge is not only to design effective, pedagogically sound CPD programmes but also to demonstrate the impacts that these programmes have had. In Oman, a number of studies have also emerged to question the effectiveness of CPD as will be discussed in the next section.

### ***3.4.5 Local research studies on CPD in Oman***

When reviewing the literature on the research done about CPD in Oman, I found a good number of published and unpublished studies in this area. In this section I report on those with direct relevance to issues I am investigating in the current study. That is those which investigated CPD in Oman (e.g. Al-Ghatrifi, 2016; AL-Aufi, 2014; AL-Hakamani, 2011; Al-Lamki, 2009).

In the pre-service context, AL-Aufi (2014) investigated the improvements of teaching quality for CPD of academics at the Colleges of Applied Sciences (henceforth CASs). He used questionnaires with 150 academics teaching diverse subject areas in six CASs, a semi-structured interview and a focus group discussion. He found a lack of a clear CPD policy at national and institutional levels and absence of a particular authority/unit concerning CPD issues in Omani Higher Education Institutions. Similar findings were reported in the same context in a recent study by Al-Ghatrifi (2016) who found lack of an effective framework for CPD at CASs. Although these studies were conducted in higher education, I believe that the outcomes of these studies may inform my study which focused on basic education. For example, AL-Aufi's (2014) study showed that the CPD of academics regarding the improvement of teaching quality in these colleges requires more focus and attention. The CASs where both above studies were conducted prepare trainee teachers of different subject areas including English to later join the teaching sector at Omani basic education schools. In my view, since AL-Aufi (2014) questioned the teaching quality at these colleges, this might possibly suggest that trainee teachers are not well prepared for the teaching job which can reflect later on those graduates' attitudes towards teaching and their teaching practice.

In the in-service context, the situation regarding the CPD of teachers is no better than the pre-service context. In fact, several factors and challenges have been raised by a number of Omani researchers about the effectiveness of the CPD programmes offered by the Ministry of Education (hereafter MOE) for Omani in-service TESOL teachers. A key factor affecting the effectiveness of the offered CPD programmes could be the CPD system adopted by the MOE for TESOL teachers. For example, Al-Lamki (2009) used questionnaires and semi-structured interviews to investigate the beliefs and practices related to the CPD of English teachers in Oman. In this study, 324 teachers responded to the survey. The researcher found that TESOL teachers expressed their desire to play an active role in their CPD process. However, the CPD system is planned and delivered following a top-down approach in which teachers' involvement in decision making regarding their CPD process seemed to be fairly limited. The results show how such mismatch may negatively affect teachers' confidence and motivation towards CPD. Al-Lamki's (2009) study was the first attempt in Oman I came across which investigated the whole CPD system in the TESOL in-service context, so I believe his findings have informed my study.

Another factor which could possibly influence English teachers benefit from CPD in Oman might be teachers' understanding and application of the CPD initiatives. In her study, AL-Hakamani (2011) stated that TESOL teachers in Oman are expected to form a community of practice in which collaboration is encouraged by regional supervisors and school administrations. As part of such collaboration, teachers are required to accomplish certain tasks as part of their professional growth and development such as reading and discussing educational articles, analysing students' work and results, team planning and teaching of lessons. However, AL-Hakamani (2011) has noticed that teachers perform these practices mechanically in order to complete the paper work required as part of such activities, without any clear focus or genuine intended outcome. As a result, she indicated that this effort has limited contribution to Omani TESOL teachers' professional learning and development. My study seeks to build upon these insights by examining the factors that inhibit English teachers' benefit from such CPD initiatives.

In sum, a number of other studies have attempted to investigate English teachers CPD in Oman. While these studies are valuable in providing different aspects and ways which could probably be considered to investigate CPD (e.g. teachers involvement in their CPD process, their needs, the role of teachers previous beliefs and knowledge), these researches have not investigated CPD comprehensively by taking into consideration the overall background of the Omani educational system, the different components of the CPD system and the factors which could be influencing the implementation of CPD (Al-Lamki, 2009).

### ***3.4.6 Conceptualising teachers' beliefs***

In the last few years there has been a vast amount of research studies which focussed on investigating teachers' perspectives of CPD internationally. This is due to the recognition that teachers' beliefs and perceptions play a major role in influencing their actions/practices (Borg, 2015; 2003). Hence, before investigating teachers' CPD practices, which is the core of the current study, it is significant to first understand teachers' beliefs about teaching generally and their beliefs about CPD in specific. The basic argument behind the significance of teachers' beliefs is that they play a vital role in determining teachers' perspectives and judgments about different situations in ways which might have an impact on their practice (AL-Lamki, 2009). Therefore, I will move on to define and conceptualize the term beliefs.

The vast amount of research studies on teachers' beliefs have shown various definitions for the term belief (Borg, 2011; Borg, 2001; Pajares, 1992). According to Mansour (2009), belief is one of the most difficult terms to define. In his view, 'beliefs can neither be clearly defined, nor do they have a single correct clarification' (p.35) because teachers' beliefs tend to be more experience-based than theory-based. Thus, in the literature various definitions of beliefs have been found. Such variation in trying to define and conceptualize beliefs have made them difficult to study. As Pajares (1992:307) clearly states that 'the difficulty in studying teachers' beliefs has been caused by definitional problems, poor conceptualizations, and differing understandings of beliefs and belief structures'. Borg (2001) further warns that beliefs could be problematic to study because they colour peoples' memories with their evaluation and judgment, and can frame their

understanding of events. She adds that when reading articles on beliefs caution needs to be exercised.

One of the particular concerns for researchers, and a source of much debate was the attempt to distinguish between beliefs and knowledge (Canagarajah, 2016). Some writers consider knowledge to be more objective and beliefs to be more subjective (e.g. Woods, 1996), while others such as Fenstermacher (1994) associate knowledge with facts and beliefs with personal values by stating that epistemologically knowledge is different from beliefs because it is related to factual propositions, while beliefs are related to personal values which might not have any epistemic merits. However, lots of researchers perceive them as synonymous, inseparable and/or interchangeable (Calderhead 1996; Kagan 1992; Pajares 1992; Clandinin & Connelley, 1987). For example, Kagan (1992:65) refers to beliefs as a “particularly provocative form of personal knowledge” and claims that most of a teacher’s professional knowledge can be regarded more accurately as belief. Clandinin and Connelley (1987) also argue that any effort in distinguishing between them faces the difficulty of determining where beliefs begin and knowledge ends. The argument here is that aiming to separate knowledge and belief is not a fruitful exercise given that in the teachers’ minds these constructs are not perceived or held distinctively (Borg, 2015; 2006).

In spite of trying to distinguish between beliefs and knowledge, some writers have tried to define the term belief by citing some of its common features. In this respect, Borg (2011:371) drawing on the work of Pajares (1992) and other researchers suggest that beliefs are ‘propositions individuals consider to be true and which are often tacit, have a strong evaluative and affective component, provide a basis for action, and are resistant to change’. Borg (2001:186) also defines a belief as ‘a proposition which may be consciously or unconsciously held, is evaluative in that it is accepted as true by the individual, and is therefore imbued with emotive commitment; further, it serves as a guide to thought and behaviour’. Both definitions by Simon Borg (2011) and Michaela Borg (2001) share some similar features about a belief related to being a mental state, is accepted to be true by its holder and is connected to people’s behaviours. For the purpose of this study, these features will be considered to form the basis of conceptualizing the term beliefs.

In general, beliefs are significant as they provide ‘the best indicators of the decisions individuals make throughout their lives’ (Pajares, 1992:307), and they strongly affect people’s learning and working practices (Schommer, 1998). A key theme that emerges from the international studies that I will explore in the following sections of this chapter is that teachers’ prior beliefs affect how they perceive and act on various messages about changing their teaching. Teachers will only accept new information to the degree that it is consistent with their pre-existing beliefs (Pajares 1992) Thus, teachers’ prior beliefs play a vital role in influencing their learning and hence their benefit from CPD. The following subsection will discuss this area in more detail.

#### ***3.4.6.1 The importance of teachers’ prior beliefs***

Teachers come to the CPD initiatives with a number of expectations, knowledge and beliefs that serve as a filter in their efforts to acquire new ways of learning (Borko & Putnam, 1995). The literature has shown that these beliefs have a number of sources such as ‘apprenticeship of observation’ period; the process of watching teachers from primary school onwards (Lortie, 1975), or for language teachers, their own language learning experiences (Woods, 1996). Another source of teachers’ beliefs is their own teaching experiences; research has shown the powerful influence of teachers’ classroom experiences on their beliefs (Carter 1990; Calderhead 1996). A further source of teachers’ beliefs as documented in the literature could be teacher education (Phipps & Borg, 2007) though there has been much debate about the impacts of teacher-education on teachers’ beliefs as I will discuss in section 3.4.6.3.

As for the in-service teachers (who are the focus of this study), they will often have established ideas about teaching based on their experience in the classroom. Therefore, it is crucial that CPD initiatives explicitly address teachers pre-existing beliefs and acknowledge them (Cullen, 2004). This is because, teachers’ pre-existing beliefs act as a type of filtering through which they can interpret new information, and have strong influences on what and how they learn (Borko & Putnam, 1995; Pajares 1992). They create their own understandings and learn through interaction between what they already know and believe, and the new ideas/information they come in contact with to accommodate new experiences (Richardson, 1997). From the same viewpoint, Illeris (2002)

illustrates that learning happens through assimilation (adding new ideas to previously established structures) and accommodation (reconstructing established structures). He added that in this way learning occurs; structurally this involves the simultaneous of reconstructing several cognitive and emotional schemes and functionally it can change the learner's self and can provide him/her with new understandings and patterns of action.

By contrast, ignoring teachers' prior knowledge and beliefs have negative consequences. Evidence from research has shown that limited changes can result in teachers' classroom practices, they reject new ideas, and they will be demotivated. For example, in the EFL context, Lamb (1995) examined some participating Indonesian English teachers' reaction to an INSET course one year after the course. He found that very few of the ideas presented on the course were taken up in the way anticipated by the tutors, mainly due to the mediating effects of the participants' own beliefs about teaching and learning. Lamb (1995) further suggested that any INSET course which is seriously concerned with long term change in teachers' practices should take into consideration teachers' beliefs.

To conclude, teachers' beliefs play a pivotal role in teachers' lives because there is a relationship as discussed above between teachers' beliefs and their learning. According to Borg (2015), a key factor driving the increase in research in teachers' beliefs, has been the recognition of the fact that teachers are active thinking decision makers who play an essential role in shaping classroom events. This was coupled with insights from the field of psychology which have shown how knowledge and beliefs exert a strong influence on human actions; this recognition has suggested that understanding teachers' beliefs is central to the process of understanding teaching (Borg, 2006:1). I think that this is a broad but fundamental assumption which unites the body of work which will be discussed in the following parts of my literature review. This perspective on the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their learning has provided insights into the relationship between teachers' beliefs about teaching as a profession and how those teachers' think about their job, as well as their beliefs about CPD. Because teachers are likely to adopt characteristics of both belief dimensions, the coming sections will present some empirical studies that investigated both issues: teachers' beliefs

about teaching as a profession, and their beliefs about CPD. This will enable me to situate my study within the current body of research on CPD and highlight the ways in which this has informed my study design.

#### **3.4.6.2 Studies on teachers' beliefs about teaching as a profession**

While I found an increasing number of research studies that investigated the relationship between teachers' beliefs (especially language teachers) and CPD, there were fewer studies which investigated teachers' beliefs about teaching as a profession. Herein some examples which may influence my study will be presented (see Appendix 1, Table 3.1, for a summary of these studies). Work in this area has produced mixed findings. On the one hand, some of these studies found that teachers seem to have positive attitudes towards their job and are motivated to do it (Har Lam, 2012; Manuel & Hughes; 2006). To illustrate with an example, through the use of in-depth interviews, Har Lam (2012) explored 38 novice teachers' motivation for choosing a career in teaching and their views towards the job. The findings have shown that participants were conceptualized as falling into two groups: one group was exclusively motivated by 'internal satisfaction', the other group viewed 'teaching as a safe haven' but at the same time also appreciated teaching as holding its own internal satisfaction (p. 307). These results have informed my study because I wanted to know if teachers in my context have similar positive attitudes towards the job or not, and accordingly to see the effect of such attitudes on their beliefs about CPD.

On the other hand, other studies found that many teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs (Gao & Xu, 2014; Karavas, 2010; Weiqi, 2007). For example, through using a questionnaire, Weiqi (2007) examined 230 secondary school teachers' perceptions about job satisfaction in Japan. This study indicated that secondary school teachers are dissatisfied with their job generally and with dimensions such as the education system, student quality, leadership and administration, salaries and welfare, work conditions and achievements as well as work stress. Similar results have been reported in the EFL context in Greece (Karavas, 2010) and in China (Gao & Xu, 2014); both studies revealed that EFL teachers are dissatisfied with their status and their English teaching professional experience because they could not do what they ideally wanted to do as teachers, they were also dissatisfied with their salaries and with the scarce opportunities for promotion and CPD on offer.

Other studies reported conflict findings with teachers holding positive attitudes regarding their professionalism but also highlighting some negative factors influencing this. For instance, through using a questionnaire and focus group interviews, Day, Flores and Viana (2007) investigated teachers' sense of professionalism and their professional identity and if these have been affected in recent years in Portugal and in England. The findings suggest the existence of some strength in teachers' views on their professionalism, namely the significance of vocationalism, continuing learning and collaborative cultures. Yet, a number of limitations also emerged, such as feelings of ambivalence and conflict associated with increased bureaucracy, qualities of school leadership, cultures of loneliness, and the lack of understanding and ownership of the process of change.

In my context, one of the earliest and also one of the very small number of studies that investigated aspects of English teachers' career satisfaction and their motivation towards the job in Oman is one conducted by Albelushi (2003). Drawing on data from 190 questionnaires and 25 semi-structured interviews, Albelushi (2003) revealed that social relationships in schools and teachers' effort recognition are two key elements participants state are vital for their sense of job satisfaction. The researcher further argued that there is a strong relationship between the preparation of future Omani generations and the efficiency and quality of English teachers. She stated that the success or failure of the educational system is determined by the quality of teachers' contributions. While Albelushi's (2003) findings are worthwhile in relation to investigating this vital area of research in Oman, I would argue, however, that since the focus of this study was female EFL teachers and trainee teachers, the findings might not be applicable to all English teachers from both gender. In the same study, Albelushi (2003) emphasised that teaching is culturally considered as the most appropriate job for women, and this is a key reason that many females from Oman are joining this career. This may explain why there is a shortage of male Omani EFL teachers teaching in Omani schools. Yet, this is not confined to Oman, as researchers in other contexts found the same. As an example, Richardson and Watt (2005: 476) stated that in Australia, teaching has long attracted considerable numbers of women; thus, "the feminisation of teaching as a career in Australia has coincided



with a public perception that teaching ... is essentially work more suited to women”.

Overall, the previous studies represent inconsistency and present conflicting research findings, and this may itself indicate the need for additional research in this area. This is significant because teaching is a changing profession so over the years it has profoundly affected the work of teachers. Palmer (1998) claimed that the subjects we teach are integral to who we are as teachers; teacher identity and the sense of self (the ‘who’ of teaching) is organically related to the ‘what and how’ of teaching. Being disconnected from this essential component of teacher identity may possibly lead to some dissatisfaction and disillusionment that may prompt some teachers to question their decision to teach (in Manuel & Hughes, 2006:21).

#### ***3.4.6.3 Studies on teachers' beliefs about CPD***

Teachers’ beliefs related to continuing PD has been the focus of a growing literature in various contexts internationally (e.g. Vries et al., 2013; Borg, 2011; Wai Yan, 2011; Maskit, 2011; Phipps, 2007; Lamie, 2004; Bramald et al., 1995; Lamb, 1995; Prawat, 1992; Calderhead & Robson, 1991 ). A number of these studies have shown that a training context can help in increasing teachers’ knowledge and influencing their beliefs about teaching (Bramald et al., 1995; Calderhead & Robson, 1991), or by following a constructivist approach to teaching through encouraging discussion and reflection (Prawat, 1992). As regards my study, Table 3.2.a in Appendix 1 summaries some examples of international research studies which have some relevance to issues I was interested to investigate in this research.

It has been widely recognized that teacher education and teacher development are more likely to impact on what teachers do if it also impacts on their beliefs (Phipps & Borg, 2007). However, evidence from research has shown different findings in this regard; whereas some studies have supported such a claim others contradicted it. As an example, in the UK, Borg (2011) studied the impact of the Delta course (Diploma in English language teaching to adults) on 6 participants. He found that this course was positively correlated with teachers’ beliefs as there was clear evidence that the course had a considerable, if variable, impact on the beliefs of the teachers studied. The study also showed that teachers experienced

shifts in the previous beliefs they held about aspects of language teaching and learning.

On the contrary, other studies reported less positive conclusions when they analysed the impact of in-service teacher education and development on language teachers' beliefs (Phipps, 2007; Lamb, 1995). For example, Phipps (2007) investigated the impact of four months of an 18-month course on the beliefs about grammar teaching of a teacher of English in Turkey using qualitative measures. While he acknowledged an overall positive impact of the course, he concluded that, during the period of the study, 'there were few tangible changes to existing beliefs. Instead, many existing beliefs were 'confirmed, deepened and strengthened' (p. 13). My own experience of researching the impacts of an INSET course on English teachers' beliefs and their classroom practices in Oman (AL-Balushi, 2009) support Phipps' (2007) findings. This is because I have noted little changes in teachers' beliefs and no observable changes in their classroom practices when the course was over.

In my context, a number of studies were conducted to investigate teachers' beliefs about specific elements of CPD (e.g. A'Dhahab, 2009; Al-Belushi, 2009; Bani-Orabah, 2008; AL-Sawafi, 2006; AL-Habsi, 2004; AL-Ghafri, 2002). Appendix 1, (Table 3.2.b) gives an account of the studies which have some relevance to issues I was interested to investigate in my study. The findings of these studies provided useful insight into English teachers beliefs regarding some of the CPD activities used in the Omani education system such as (peer observation, class room observation, reflection, reflective writing, effective supervisory visits and professional development activities). However, all of these studies were limited in scope; they focused on issues related to peer observation which represent only one form of CPD except Al-Belushi (2009) who investigated other elements of CPD such as doing research, conducting workshops and participating in training courses. Despite that, this study like all other studies was narrow in its coverage and sample size; all these studies involved participants from one governorate only, typically the governorate where the researcher lived and worked, this means that while the results are useful they are not easily generalizable to other governorates and do not provide a comprehensive overview of the situation in Oman as a whole (Al-lamki, 2009).

In summary, understanding of the impacts of language teacher education and development on practising teachers' beliefs remains incipient and the issue merits much additional empirical attention (Borg, 2011). In response to this gap, I cannot assume that the INSET courses and other CPD opportunities being offered by the Omani MOE are having any impact on teachers' beliefs; therefore, this study investigates these issues. In fact, a recent body of research proposes that there is a relationship between teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning, and their participation in CPD (Vries et al., 2013; Maskit, 2011). Therefore, I have investigated such a relationship to have a better understanding of the Omani educational and CPD system.

### **3.5 An overview of CPD models**

Ingvarson (1998) used the term model in the context of staff development to refer to a design for learning which can embody some assumptions about where knowledge comes from in relation to teaching practice, and how a teacher acquires and/or extends his/her knowledge. He thinks that CPD models are specific processes and opportunities planned to help teachers develop professionally. Both Coldwell (2017) and Fraser (2005) state that CPD involves all activities teachers are engaged in to develop professionally. It includes a wide range of both formal and informal learning experiences which can vary from personal learning such as private reading to attending courses organised by local authorities. These CPD activities have different sources such as the school itself, school networks, and other external providers like local authorities, universities, colleges and private sector providers. Those providers have used different models of CPD overtime. For instance, in England, since 1988 the major educational reform initiatives were based on a technicist view of teaching assuming that change can be 'delivered' in a linear way from the 'centre' to teachers to implement it in their classrooms (Dadds, 2014).

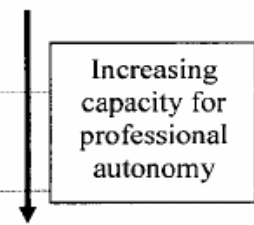
Contemporary approaches to teacher CPD have, however, evolved along with the paradigm shifts in teacher learning from a transmission model of education that considers the role of teacher-learners are best seen as self-directed as well as social learners. Thus, more emphasis is placed on engaging teachers in inquiry-based learning activities and/or collaborative learning such as building a learning community for professional development (Peercy & Troyan, 2017).

Moreover, Sawyer (2001) determined that, over the years, the focus for PD initiatives has shifted from a deficit approach (focusing on content knowledge: use of external expertise) to a technical approach (focusing on teaching practice: school-based with outside help) to CPD (focusing on teacher professionalism and context: collaborative practice). The CPD provision; thus, has changed from external expertise to empowerment. By empowering teachers, professional developers are encouraging them to take the initiative in identifying and acting on their own individual needs (cited in Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009).

Broadly speaking, researchers over time have proposed a variety of models of CPD. For example, Kennedy (2005) examined a range of models of CPD (totally nine models) which he categorized into three main groups based on their purposes (i.e transmission, transitional and transformative) as represented in Table 3.3 below.

**Table 3.3: Spectrum of CPD models (Kennedy, 2005)**

Model of CPD	Purpose of model
The training model The award-bearing model The deficit model The cascade model	Transmission
The standards-based model The coaching/mentoring model The community of practice model	Transitional
The action research model The transformative model	Transformative



1) Transmission models include: the training model, the award-bearing model, deficit model and the cascade model. CPD models which have a transmissive purpose rely on the development of teachers through externally delivered ‘expert’ and focus on the technical aspects of the job rather than issues related to attitudes, values and beliefs (Fraser et al., 2007). This CPD type supports replication and arguably, compliance, but it does not support professional autonomy.

2) Transitional models include: standards-based models, coaching/mentoring models and a community of practice model. Within the transitional models, CPD supports either a transmissive or a transformative agenda, depending on its form and philosophy (Fraser et al., 2007; Kennedy, 2005).

3) Transformative models include the action research model and transformative model. Transformative professional learning links theory and practice through

“internalisation of concepts; reflection; construction of new knowledge and its application in different situations; and an awareness of the professional and political context” (Fraser et al., 2007:11). Thus, transformative CPD models have the capacity of supporting considerable professional autonomy at both the individual and the profession wide levels. Out of the nine models suggested by Kennedy (2005) only four are applied in the Omani CPD system: the training, the cascade, the coaching/mentoring and the action research models. In the next part, I will discuss all nine transmission, transitional and transformative CPD models with a specific focus on the four models used in Oman.

### ***3.5.1 The training model***

In recent years, the training model has arguably been a dominant form of CPD for teachers in various contexts. This model “supports a skills-based, technocratic view of teaching whereby CPD provides teachers with the opportunity to update their skills in order to be able to demonstrate their competence” (Kennedy, 2005:237). The training model includes other forms of CPD commonly termed as ‘traditional’ such as workshops, seminars, institutes and conferences. They are all regarded as an effective way of introducing new knowledge and skills (Hoban, 2002). The training model is used extensively in the in-service context in Oman and internationally through INSET courses (Richards & Farrell, 2005).

Regarding INSET, the key aim behind it is raising the quality of educational provision (Hayes, 1997). These courses can be on-site or off-site, short or long, and are generally ‘delivered’ to teachers by an ‘expert’, with the agenda determined by the deliverer, and the participants are placed in a passive role like the other forms of the training model (Kennedy, 2005). From my own experience of working as an in-service language teacher trainer for eight years, I disagree with the adoption of this model. This is because, both novice and experienced teachers join INSET courses; some of those teachers have many years of teaching experience, so in my case those kinds of teachers were a good addition to the INSET course and I never felt myself as an ‘expert’ when I was training them. Instead, we shared our experiences and to be honest in many instances I learned from them as well.

More broadly, evidence from research shows conflicting findings in relation to the effectiveness of the training model generally and INSET courses in particular in affecting change in teaching (see Appendix 1, Table, 3.4 for a summary of the international and local studies I reviewed in this regard). Some of these studies revealed that training models of INSET can be effective (Lai, 2004; Hayes, 1997). For example, Lai (2004) examined the impact of a training course on four teachers of English in Japan by determining how communicative those teachers became following the period of an overseas in-service training. The results demonstrated that in the four cases change towards the goals of the innovation had taken place. It has emphasised six main impact areas and change: practical constraints, personal attributes, external influences, training, awareness, and feedback.

Other studies have critiqued this model of CPD; the rate of success for the training model and INSET in effecting change in participants' classroom behaviour has been far from satisfactory (Enever, 2014; Pacek 1996). For example, through a longitudinal study of primary FL learning in state schools across seven European country contexts (Croatia, England, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, and Sweden), Enever (2014) examined the quality of language teacher education and training courses and considered their weaknesses regarding the needs of primary teachers working in European contexts where children increasingly learn English as a second or foreign language/FL from the very start of compulsory schooling. This study concluded that urgent attention needs to be given to more relevant guidance in the area of primary teacher training, together with a substantial increase in the provision of CPD in this field.

In my context, a number of studies also investigated the training model of CPD and INSET (e.g. AL-Balushi, 2009; AL-Rasbiah, 2007; Al-Ghatrifi, 2006; AL-Yafae, 2004). For instance, Al-Ghatrifi (2006), surveyed 33 EFL teachers to see their views about an INSET course run in one of the Omani governorates. He found that it is very important to take teachers' beliefs and needs into consideration when designing any INSET course. In general, all these studies revealed that English teachers in Oman have some needs that should be met through training. However, the training forms applied in Oman generally and INSET courses in particular are following a top-down strategy (Al-Lamki, 2009). Such strategy can rarely be effective on its own, typically because all participants

are not involved in it, and it does not recognise that effective innovations require changes in participants' beliefs, which could not be altered by decree (Atay, 2007; Wolter, 2000).

Overall, the potential long-term change from the training model generally and INSET courses in particular usually depends on different factors, such as teachers themselves, their views towards change and the types of change they need to adopt (Hayes, 2000), their pre-existing beliefs (Lamb 1995), prior experiences as students (Hayes 1995), previous teaching experiences (Hayes 1995; Wolter 2000), as well as their involvement in these forms of training. In the case of my study, since INSET is the most dominant formal and structural form of teachers' learning in my country; thus I am investigating it to see the effectiveness of INSET in affecting change in teaching and learning.

### ***3.5.2 The award-bearing model***

The award-bearing model of CPD results in some form of reward or accreditation from an external body and is often seen as similar to a training model as it typically adopts a training metaphor for CPD. It emphasizes the completion of an award-bearing programme of study which is usually, but not exclusively, validated by universities/higher education institutions (Kennedy, 2005). Such external validation is seen as a mark of quality assurance, but is equally seen as control exercise by the funding or/and validating bodies. However, Kennedy (2005) noted that current education discourse focuses on professional action that is not always supportive of what is perceived to be 'academic' as opposed to 'practical' (p. 238). Therefore, there is a pressure that award-bearing courses should focus on classroom practices, often at the expense of issues of teachers' beliefs and values. This brings the worrying discourse on the irrelevance of academia to the fore and the temptation for managers is to rely too heavily on such models because they provide easily auditable evidence of training and development.

### ***3.5.3 The deficit model***

A deficit model assumes that teachers need to be provided with something (skills, knowledge) which they did not already have (Day & Sachs, 2004). This model starts with the notion of a 'deficit' in the teacher which needs to be met in order

to rectify a weakness or meet standards (Kennedy, 2005). It has been widely used for delivering prescriptive training packages associated with educational reforms (Dadds, 2001). Nonetheless, there is an increasing dissatisfaction with this model which arose from a concern that when teachers' CPD is delivered through prescriptive training packages and driven by national initiatives, it might not meet individual teachers' and schools' needs. According to Day and Sachs (2004) through such prescribed perspective, national standards deal with all teachers as if their conditions are the same or as if there is a simple and direct cause and effect relationship between teachers' learning and pupils' progress. Dadds (2001:56), commenting on this model, refers to teachers being treated like empty vessels without giving any consideration to their prior knowledge or experiences. Even the models' attempt to remedy perceived weaknesses in individual teachers was questioned. For instance, Rhodes & Beneicke (2003) suggest that the root causes of poor teacher performance are not only related to individual teachers, but also to management and organisational practices (cited in Kennedy, 2005).

#### ***3.5.4 The cascade model***

The cascade model involves "individual teachers attending 'training events' and then cascading or disseminating the information to colleagues" (Kennedy, 2005:240). This model represents a strategy widely used to try to provide training for a maximum number of teachers in cost effective manner, especially where the number of teachers that need training are very large, and/or the funding to provide training is limited (Bax, 2002; Hayes, 2000). This model operates on the principle of providing direct training, in the skills and knowledge thought as necessary for enabling the desired change in classroom understandings and behaviours, to a relatively small number of trainers or specialists. Recipients of such 'first level' training are then expected to cascade this training to other groups (usually consisting of classroom teachers), who may then in turn be expected to more or less formally pass their training to their colleagues (Wedell, 2005).

Cascade models have been the focus of criticism in recent years. For instance, Wedell (2005) collected data from 511 teachers of English on a cascade training programme in China which aims at introducing procedures for teaching English to young learners. The study concluded that the factors determining whether



cascade training aims actually reach the classroom are complex. Likewise, Dichaba and Mokhele's (2012) study suggested that although the cascade model of training has come to be accepted as a way of disseminating information in most programmes, it seems to have failed to improve the performance of educators.

Nevertheless, evidence from research showed that cascade models can sometimes be effective. For example, in a longitudinal study in Sri Lanka, Hayes (2000) examined the experience of an in-service nationwide teacher development project through using cascade models of teacher development. The cascade consists of the project manager training two project coordinators who then work with him to train 120 staff of 30 Regional English Support Centres. Large numbers of English language teachers were aimed to be cascaded (e.g. over 1,000 one day primary courses were conducted in 1997, involving some 6,000 teachers; secondary courses are also run). The study showed how project training and development strategies which are reflexive, collaborative and context sensitive seek to involve teachers in managing their own professional growth, while at the same time take consideration of frameworks agreed at national levels. In such a way, cascading training can possibly promote genuine development rather than surface adherence to official mandates.

In Oman, in-service TESOL teacher trainers train SETS (Senior English teachers) on updated methodological issues related to teaching the national curriculum. Then, the SETS, go back to their schools and cascade that training to their teachers. Yet, evidence from school visits by teacher trainers (my personal experience) and informal discussions with English supervisors suggest that the majority of those SETS either simply ignore doing the cascade to their teachers or they do it wrongly. Although I did not find a single study conducted in my context which specifically focused on an investigation of the cascade model, findings from some researches which looked at the experiences of SETs in general (e.g. AL-Lamki, 2002; AL-Badwawi, 2002) have revealed that SETs need a great deal of training to overcome the challenges they face in their job. While this includes effective cascading, the examination of the implementation of the

cascade model which is one of the areas I am examining, is intended to shed more light on the reality of adopting this as a CPD strategy in Oman.

### ***3.5.5 The standard-based model***

The standards-based model of CPD belittles the notion of teaching as a complex, context specific moral and political endeavor; it rather represents a desire to create a system of teaching and teacher development which ‘can generate and empirically validate connections between teacher effectiveness and student learning’ (Beyer, 2002, in Kennedy, 2005:241). Essentially, this model focuses on training and development having the key purpose of meeting standards which assume that there is a system of effective teaching and this system is not flexible. However, standards-based teacher education and development, as Delandshere and Petrosky (2004:7) notice, “imposes on teachers and their learning a fixed political will that shapes their capacities, who they become as teachers, and positions them primarily as implementers of content and pedagogy as defined by the standards”. Such a ‘scientific’ basis on which the standards movement relies limits the opportunities for considering alternative forms of CPD. It also heavily relies on a behaviourist learning perspective which focuses on individual teachers’ competence and resultant rewards at the expense of collegiate and collaborative learning (Kennedy, 2005). Moreover, there is little evidence about the usefulness of these standards in improving teaching and learning (Delandshere & Petrosky, 2004).

### ***3.5.6 The coaching/mentoring model***

Coaching and mentoring mechanisms “which have had prevalence outside education, are being seen as important within education as a means of assisting the raising of standards and attainment” (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002:297). Coaching is defined by Downey (2001) as the art of facilitating the performance, learning and development of another person. Moreover, Clutterbuck (1991) emphasised that a mentor is a more experienced person who has the willingness to share his/her knowledge with someone less experienced than him/her in a relationship of mutual trust. He added that by adopting the role of both parent and peer, the mentor’s key function is to be a transitional figure in a person’s development. In his view, mentoring includes facilitating, coaching and counselling.

Coaching and mentoring as examples of teacher collaboration and mutual support has received much attention in educational research in various educational contexts (Korhonen et al., 2017; Richter et al., 2013; Vacilotto & Cummings, 2007; Arnold, 2006; Veenman et al., 1998; Joyce & Showers, 1988). For example, in a recent study in Finland, Korhonen et al., (2017) reported that peer group mentoring between pre-service and in-service teachers can lead to peer support, identity construction and is a way of participating in a professional community. In Germany, Richter et al., (2013) found that mentoring that follows constructivist rather than transmissive principles of learning fosters the growth of teacher efficacy, teaching enthusiasm, and job satisfaction and reduces emotional exhaustion. In the United Kingdom, Joyce and Showers (1988) showed that coaching helps the translation of training into increased impact on job performance. In Holland, Veenman et al., (1998) revealed that coaching was generally perceived as positive by teachers, with the potential to improve professional practice. In the EFL context in Brazil, Vacilotto and Cummings (2007) indicated that peer coaching has facilitated exchange of materials and teaching methods, it further fostered development of teaching skills, and helped participants to rethink of their own teaching styles and methods.

However, coaching and mentoring practices being applied in some contexts have been questioned regarding their contribution to teacher education and development. As an example, in the Middle East, Arnold (2006) examined a mentoring programme conducted in a military EFL school by assessing the quality of mentoring provided. This study showed the great variability of the quality of mentors within one school, the need for 'quality time' for mentor-mentee pairs, and the lack of real challenges provided by mentors to mentees. In fact, few studies examine differences in the quality of coaching and mentoring provided (Nolan & Molla, 2017; Kessels et al., 2008; Rots et al., 2007). Consequently, little is known about which mentoring approaches best support teachers' development (Richter et al., 2013).

In my context, Senior English teachers (SETs) are coaches/mentors at schools; they are experienced teachers and heads of the English department at their schools. Thus, they are responsible for guiding the novice and less experienced English teachers and supporting their learning. They do a number of activities as

part of this role, for instance, arranging peer observations, team teaching events, post-observation discussions and giving feedback to teachers. However, these activities are done in a top-down way although their general aim is contributing to teachers' PD. Moreover, while coaching and mentoring as a model has not been investigated in my context, a number of studies explored how SETs (who work as mentors at schools) can support English teachers' learning (see Appendix 1, Table 3.5 for a detailed account of these studies).

In general, these studies focussed on two issues in this respect: the first one is the role of SETs in supporting novice teachers' learning at schools (Al-Balooshi, 2009; Al-Bahri, 2009), and the second is investigating the effectiveness of post-observation discussion and SETs role during this task (e.g. Al-Suleimi, 2009; Al-Abrawi, 2009; AL-Sinani, 2009; AL-Kharbushi, 2005; AL-Shizawi, 2005; AL-Zedjali, 2004; AL-Badwawy, 2002). Despite the fact that these studies investigated only these two issues without focusing specifically on coaching and mentoring as a model and how this model can contribute to Omani English teachers' CPD, they provided a useful insight for the present study regarding the possible ways of investigating the role of SETs as coaches/mentors in Omani schools.

In sum, given the growing interest in coaching and mentoring as means of enhancing PD at schools, the challenges related to successfully managing these mechanisms warrant further attention. This is particularly so in view of the potential benefits suggested in relation to raising teachers and organisational performance within a climate of respect, collaboration and mutual trust (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002). In my country, SETs are trained through a whole year INSET course to do their job as a coach/mentor successfully. Yet, the effectiveness of such coaching/mentoring on teachers' CPD has not been investigated, so one of the aims of my current study is to consider the value of this model.

### ***3.5.7 The community of practice model***

Teacher communities play a vital role in teachers' CPD (Nolan & Molla, 2017; Vangrieken et al., 2017). Thus, in the TESOL field, the communities of practice model has gained popularity in teacher development programmes (Canagarajah, 2016). This model is based on the work of Wenger (1998:95) who advocates that

there are three crucial processes in any community of practice: 1-evolving forms of mutual engagement; 2-understanding and tuning their enterprise; and 3-developing repertoires, discourses and styles. The most beneficial aspect of a successful community of practice is that new learning and development can result from interactions between the different members rather than from pre-planned objectives or outcomes prescribed prior to the group activity.

Kennedy (2005), however, notes that learning within such a community could be either a positive and proactive or a passive experience depending on the role played by the individual as a member of the wider team, because the collective wisdom of dominant group members can shape others' understanding of the community and its roles. He further states "It is argued that while communities of practice can potentially serve to perpetuate dominant discourses in an uncritical manner, under certain conditions they can also act as powerful sites of transformation, where the sum total of individual experience and knowledge is enhanced significantly through collective endeavour" (p.245).

In Oman, the CPD system is top-down and lacks teachers' active participation as mentioned earlier. Thus, this study is advocating the use of collaborative and participatory forms of CPD in Oman. Consequently, a community of practice has been formed among the research participants during the action research phase of the study where they can be mutually engaged in a common enterprise. In this way, opportunities for collaborating with colleagues can exist where meaning making and interpreting information may result in mediating new knowledge within the community. Moreover, working within such communities can reinforce shared beliefs and can contribute to the reconstruction of personal and professional identities (Solomon & Tresman, 1999; Bell & Gilbert, 1996 in Fraser et al., 2007).

### ***3.5.8 The action research model***

Action research as a model of CPD is acknowledged as being successful in allowing teachers to ask critical questions about their practices (Taylor, 2017; Kennedy, 2005). Kemmis and McTaggart (1988:5) defined action research as 'collective, self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own social...practices'.

Evidence from research has shown that participatory action research can lead to teacher development. For example, following a six year case study, Eilks and Markic (2011) studied the effects of a long term participatory action research project on teachers' CPD where teacher educators observed a group of about 10 teachers from Germany. Substantial change in participants' beliefs and their professional habits have been reported. In the EFL context in China, Yuan and Lee (2014) reported similar results when they investigated the benefits to two Chinese EFL teachers from their participation in collaborative action research course. In Oman, AL-Farsi (2006) explored EFL teachers' attitudes towards classroom-research. This study found that English teachers in Oman strongly value classroom-research and believe that it can have positive impact on developing teachers, students and schools. It revealed the strong desire Omani teachers have for implementing the results of classroom-research in their schools.

The main obstacles distracting teachers from doing research are overload of work, lack of courage and lack of time. So many teachers rarely engage in research unless they are encouraged to do so by teacher educators (Borg, 2009 in Wyatt, 2011). This is because, becoming a researcher can be challenging for teachers, because the two roles (researcher and teacher) require potentially conflicting perspectives. In acting as a teacher researcher, then, an individual is disrupting established boundaries between teacher and researcher (Taylor, 2017). To help teachers become research active, Borg (2009) suggested that teacher education and teacher development programmes can include some awareness-raising activities and opportunities for in-service teachers to put their ideas into practice, set their own goals, and evaluate their progress. Opportunities to meet recycled input as well as supportive mentoring and feedback may also help. Furthermore, with appropriate time and space, in-service teachers might possibly develop their own ideas. Wyatt (2011) reporting on a small scale study (focussing only on four EFL teachers in Oman) recommended that introducing an action research element to in-service teacher development courses can be highly beneficial, at least for some teachers, if it has been planned and supported carefully.

In my country, a formal and structured classroom action research course called (RPD) as mentioned in Chapter Two section (2.6.2) has been added to the INSET training courses for EFL teachers to contribute to their professional learning and

growth (Al-Balushi, 2012; Etherton & Al-Jardani, 2009). This action research course is short term (3-4 months) where the teacher trainer delivers the course input (the theoretical part of doing action research) and each participant in this course is expected to carry out an action research by investigating any problem he/she is facing in his/her classroom. Yet, the effect of such a model in my context is questionable since the RPD course is top-down and participants are never followed up after the course.

### **3.5.9 The transformative model**

My review of the literature shows that the transformative model is informed by the transformational learning theory mentioned earlier and the principles underlying it such as discussion of individual's assumptions about the world, reflection and emancipation. According to Kennedy (2005), the transformative model is not a clearly definable model in itself; rather it recognizes the range of different conditions required for transformative practices. Thus, it involves a combination of a number of conditions and processes that are drawn from other models. Hoban (2002) states that such a perspective of professional development is regarded as a means of supporting educational change. He suggested that the effective integration of the positive aspects of CPD models together with awareness of power/tension exerted by requirements of each model can contribute to successful outcomes.

Nonetheless, Kennedy (2005) claimed that an explicit awareness of power issues means that this model is not without tensions. In fact, it can be argued that it actually relies on tensions as "only through the realisation and consideration of conflicting agendas and philosophies, can real debate be engaged in among the various stakeholders in education, which might lead to transformative practices" (p. 247). This study with its adopted participatory model of CPD is influenced by the transformative model since it is aiming at transformative practices regarding teachers' CPD in Oman through empowering teachers' voices, for example.

### **3.5.10 CPD models and teachers' needs**

Any effective CPD model or initiative should aim at matching the provision of appropriate professional development to particular professional needs (Goodall et al., 2005). This means that any CPD initiative should be able to cater for and address teachers' needs. This 'fit' between the selected activity and the teacher's developmental needs is critically important to ensure that there is a positive impact at the classroom and school level (Hopkins & Harris, 2001 in Goodall et al., 2005). James (2000) argued that there is no single model or form of CPD that is better than others. He suggested that educators and schools should evaluate their practices and needs so they can decide which CPD model would be most beneficial to their particular situation. However, quite frequently, teachers' CPD needs are neglected and rarely given the attention they deserve (Guskey, 2000). This is mainly because teachers are not given the opportunity to articulate their needs for meaningful and relevant CPD programmes/activities. In many contexts around the world, particularly in developing countries, teachers voice their frustrations at not getting CPD activities that fulfil their interests and needs (Kabilan & Veratharaju, 2013).

Accordingly, needs analysis should be the first step in the provision of appropriate CPD. In the needs analysis of CPD, teachers should be involved in identifying what they need to learn and, when possible, in developing the learning opportunities and the processes to be used (Newmann et al., 2000 in Wai Yan, 2011). Kabilan and Veratharaju (2013) advised that identifying needs, planning, and assessing effectiveness of teachers' CPD should be done consistently, frequently and constantly over time. This is because, studies consistently have suggested that teachers' professional growth is viable through effective CPD models/programmes/events that address participating teachers' interests and needs (for example, Garet et al., 2001). Therefore, the current study investigates whether the offered CPD opportunities for in-service TESOL teachers in Oman meet those teachers' needs. Needs analysis and assessment of effectiveness of CPD models can be done through evaluation; something that will be discussed in detail in the following section.



### **3.6 Evaluating CPD models/programmes**

Caffarella (2002: 225) defined programme evaluation as, “a process used to determine whether the design and delivery of a programme were effective and whether the proposed outcomes were met”. Goodall et al., (2005) argued that evaluating any CPD initiative or programme has two key purposes: formative evaluation aiming at improving the quality of the initiative/programme, and summative evaluation aiming at determining its overall effectiveness. The purpose of formative evaluation is to establish any adjustments that need to be made to a CPD initiative/programme that has already been embarked on. It can help ensuring that each CPD initiative is meeting the participants’ expectations and needs, can be translated into the classroom, and is a meaningful experience. The participants can be asked for comments and feedback to enable the staff developers to improve the quality of the programme. In contrast, the use of summative evaluation is to determine the overall effectiveness of a CPD initiative/programme once it has been completed. For example, students’ test scores which seek to establish the impact of a CPD intervention, are one way to evaluate the effectiveness of a CPD activity or programme (Goodall et al., 2005).

There has been a growing body of research studies and literature on CPD evaluation (e.g. Muijs & Lindsay, 2008; Goodall et al., 2005; Gray, 2005; Hustler et al., 2003; Powell et al., 2003; Edmonds & Lee, 2002; Guskey, 2000). The studies done in this area have provided useful insights into how CPD evaluation can be approached, I have identified a number of studies which share some of the aspects related to the current study (see Appendix 1, Table 3.6). In particular, I have summarised studies which evaluated CPD programmes in relation to teachers’ needs and the impact of CPD since these are key issues in my context.

However, there are a number of challenges in conducting evaluations of CPD and the quality of many of the studies undertaken is questionable. In one survey of evaluation studies of after school programmes in the USA, Scott-Little et al., (2002) concluded that most suffered from severe reliability and validity problems. In addition, implementation was only fully studied in a minority of studies, and where this occurred, only a very small number of evaluations used direct observation methods (in Muijs & Lindsay, 2008:197). Correspondingly, studying CPD activity in England, Edmonds and Lee (2002) found that in most cases

evaluation took the form of a feedback form that was completed by teachers, including questions on content, delivery, and whether they felt the course had met its objectives. In my context, the majority of INSET courses and other CPD activities are evaluated through a similar feedback form; and in many cases such forms are not even analysed.

The issue of what constitutes an effective CPD evaluation has attracted considerable attention in recent years and has generated a number of conceptual frameworks to inform the design of effective evaluations. Most fully developed is the one put forward by Guskey (2000) for the evaluation of CPD at schools which distinguished a hierarchy of levels of impact. The levels described by Guskey represent an adaptation from Kirkpatrick (1959), who developed a model for evaluating training programmes in business and industry.

The five-level evaluation model presented by Guskey is summarised as follows:  
Level 1: participants' reactions to the CPD experiences; whether or not participants liked the experience.

Level 2: participants' learning from CPD; measuring knowledge and skills that participants gained.

Level 3: organisational support and change; the focus here shifts to the organisation and the support provided for implementing the change.

Level 4: participants' use of new knowledge and skills; if the new knowledge and skills that participants learned make a difference in their practice.

Level 5: student outcomes; the impact of CPD on students' learning.

Table 3.7 (in Appendix 1) provides these five key levels of CPD evaluation with the kinds of questions that should be asked and some suggestions for gathering information. I believe that Guskey's (2000) framework provides a comprehensive approach to evaluation of CPD and in light of this, I have used this framework to evaluate the effectiveness of the participatory model of CPD in education adopted in this study. Thus, the adopted model has been evaluated from different levels (teachers, organisation/school and students). CPD evaluation is significant to investigate the quality and effectiveness of CPD; this is the focus of the following section.

### **3.7 Effective CPD**

Garet et al., (2001) linked the concept of effective CPD to the positive effects on students' outcomes through three main stages: teachers' learning, teachers' practice and students' outcomes. Many educators have endeavoured to identify some principles and characteristics of effective CPD (e.g. Guskey, 2003; 1994; Garet et al., 2001; Loucks-Horsley et al., 1998). For example, effective CPD should improve the quality of teachers' work and should result in change in both individuals and organisations (schools) (Guskey, 1994).

On the other hand, in reviewing the literature on quality in teachers' CPD, Caena (2011:4) states that the literature considers some CPD forms as more effective than others; the most favourable conditions for teachers' professional learning is through cooperation in school contexts such as professional communities. Such a perspective takes stock of past failures of CPD programmes informed by a deficit mastery model, consisting of 'one-shot' CPD approaches, advocating instead for a 'change as professional learning' perspective, inspired by adult learning and situated cognition theories, according to the paradigm of the teacher as reflective practitioner, and teachers taking responsibility for their own learning to improve the quality of professional performance. Therefore, with regard to the construct of quality CPD, a shift can be detected from a technical rational top-down CPD approach (which is still a feature of the CPD system in my country), towards a more cultural-individual interactive approach of teachers' CPD (Caena, 2011).

Generally speaking, effectiveness of PD is context specific and over time there is need for an optimal mix of CPD experiences (Guskey, 1994) which takes into consideration the paradigm shift in teacher learning and development. Moreover, CPD should consider teachers' life stages and career development, their needs and interests as well as school identified needs (Day, 1991). For some researchers, discussions of quality and effective CPD are approached through a documentation of facilitating and inhibiting factors to effective CPD (e.g. Hustler et al., 2003; Lee, 2002); this will be discussed in the next part of this chapter.

### **3.7.1 Facilitating and inhibiting factors affecting CPD**

Both Hustler et al., (2003) and Lee (2002) examined effectiveness of CPD. For instance, in Taiwan Lee (2002) examined the characteristics of effective CPD whereas Hustler et al., (2003) in the same study mentioned in section 3.6 above on CPD evaluation in England, asked teachers to comment on what factors, in their experience, have contributed to effective or successful INSET and what factors have contributed to ineffective or unsuccessful INSET (for details of the study see Appendix 1, Table 3.6). In general, both studies found different factors that can facilitate or inhibit effectiveness of CPD. Lee's (2002) study indicates that matching the needs of teachers and collaborative opportunities of sharing as well as learning needs to be taken into account when planning CPD initiatives are important factors that facilitate effective CPD.

Conversely, Hustler et al., (2003) found that practical application was a key factor facilitating or inhibiting teachers benefit from CPD. Analysis of the data revealed that most teachers (26%) felt that practical application was the most significant factor contributed to successful INSET, and most teachers (16%) felt that a lack of practical application was the most important factor which contributed to unsuccessful INSET. Taking into consideration that both studies are conducted in different contexts (one in Taiwan and the other in the UK), the differences in the findings from both studies could be related to Guskey's (1994) idea mentioned earlier that effectiveness of CPD is context specific.

In my context, several factors and challenges have been raised by a number of Omani researchers about effectiveness of the CPD opportunities offered by the MOE for in-service TESOL teachers. The top-down approach to CPD applied in Oman and a lack of teachers' active involvement in this approach could be one of these factors (Lamki, 2009). Another factor might be teachers' understanding and application of the CPD initiatives (AL-Hakmani, 2011). Other factors affecting the effectiveness of these programmes can be TESOL teachers' overload of work, lack of time and lack of courage (AL-Balushi, 2012; AL-Farsi, 2006). In addition, the role of teachers previously held beliefs about teaching and learning affecting them on how beneficial they find the offered CPD activities was found to be a factor (AL-Balushi 2009; AL-Lamki, 2009; AL-Ghatrifi, 2006). As well as that, studies have shown that English teachers' training needs should be fulfilled

through INSET (Al-Rasbiah, 2007; AL-Lamki, 2002; AL-Badwawi, 2002). Accordingly, the current study investigates the factors facilitating and/or inhibiting in-service TESOL teachers' benefit from the offered CPD opportunities, and suggest ways for improving the Omani CPD system so it can contribute positively to English teachers' learning and growth.

### **3.8 The participatory model of CPD: Research studies**

Research studies have demonstrated the value of CPD which actively involves practicing teachers in their learning process (e.g. Moran et al., 2017; Hung & Yeh, 2013; Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012; Butler & Schnellert, 2012; Lee, 2011; Tynan et al., 2008; Guefrachi & Troudi, 2000; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). For instance, Hung and Yeh (2013) studied the potential of teachers' study groups in the EFL context in Taiwan. The Interconnected Model of Teacher Professional Growth provided a framework for designing this teacher study group and for analysing the process of learning as experienced by the participant teachers within the collaborative inquiry. This study demonstrated the learning process of the group by characterising the major patterns of change in teachers' beliefs and practices. The findings indicated that teacher study groups play a major role in shaping various sequences of teacher change. Although the rest of studies investigated different issues and were carried out in different international contexts, they reported similar positive findings regarding participatory forms and/or models of CPD. In the USA, Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin, (1995) examined some design principles to guide school reformers and policy makers who were seeking to promote learner-centred CPD which involve teachers as active and reflective participants in the change process. Key findings from this study were: traditional notions of in-service training or dissemination should be replaced by opportunities for 'knowledge sharing' based on real situations. Teachers need opportunities to:

- share what they know
- discuss what they want to learn
- connect new concepts and strategies to their own unique contexts.

Butler and Schnellert (2012) did an in-depth case study of a complex community of inquiry in an urban, multicultural school district in western Canada. In this community, teachers worked collaboratively to build from situated assessments

of students' learning through reading to refine and monitor practices designed to enhance students' learning in their subject area classrooms. They found that engaging teachers in collaborative inquiry communities can impact classroom practices in ways that benefit students. In relation to what teachers have learnt, the findings showed that 83% of teachers articulated new understandings and insights about practice. Similarly, Tynan et al's., (2008) study done at the University of New England revealed that the methodology of participatory-action-research has proved significant for gaining deep engagement and conceptual change of teaching and learning practices. In relation to the participatory model and INSET, Wolter (2000) through using a participant-centred approach to INSET course design for English teachers in Japanese high schools, stated that participant-centred approach might allow course participants to make a better informed and more balanced assessment of innovations before accepting or rejecting them.

In the EFL context in Hong Kong, Lee (2011) explored how EFL teachers can play a more active role by participating as presenters at CPD seminars, and how such a mode of CPD promotes teachers' learning. Through using questionnaires and email interviews with 166 seminar participants and 4 teacher presenters respectively, the study showed that teachers' active involvement in their CPD enabled them to think and reflect more seriously on their practices, and one teacher even did some in-depth research in preparation for the seminar. The study concluded that a more robust form of teachers' CPD should see teachers play a more active role than what is usually allowed in CPD activities that are dominated by the traditional training paradigm built on knowledge consumption.

In the same vein, Guefrachi and Troudi (2000) developed a course for UAE EFL teachers and supervisors using a participatory approach. The supervisors were grouped and exposed to a teacher education course, after which they would, in turn, use the same course for the EFL teachers in their educational districts. The supervisors' course had 24 individual workshops; each workshop was 3 hours long. The general goals of the workshops were to raise awareness and share experiences, clarify certain issues and concepts, give assistance when needed, and boost a feeling of professionalism. The general evaluation of this course was positive where "the supervisors felt that the course was a productive forum in

which they had the opportunity for extensive discussion with the course leaders about the needs of their teachers and their teachers' students" (p. 196). The authors further suggested that involving the participants in choosing the content of the course will ensure their interest and a long-term benefit.

In my context, Borg and Al-Busaidi (2012) investigated teachers' beliefs and practices regarding learner autonomy. They developed a model for relating research and CPD to support teacher development and institutional change in ELT in Oman. The data was collected from questionnaires and interviews with 200 teachers from 25 nationalities who teach English to 3,500 Omani undergraduate students at Sultan Qaboos University. The researchers utilized the findings from the interviews and questionnaires on teachers' beliefs about learner autonomy to inform the development of an institutional learner autonomy strategy for teachers which informed the delivery of workshops for those teachers to discuss these issues. The workshops provided extensive opportunities for teachers to engage in collaborative explorations of the meaning and implementation of learner autonomy in their context. This study revealed that teachers' responses to the workshops, both during the sessions and in their written feedback, were very positive. They valued the opportunity to talk to each other about their beliefs and practices, to examine research data generated in their own context, and to recognise that the challenges they faced in promoting learner autonomy were ones they could productively address together.

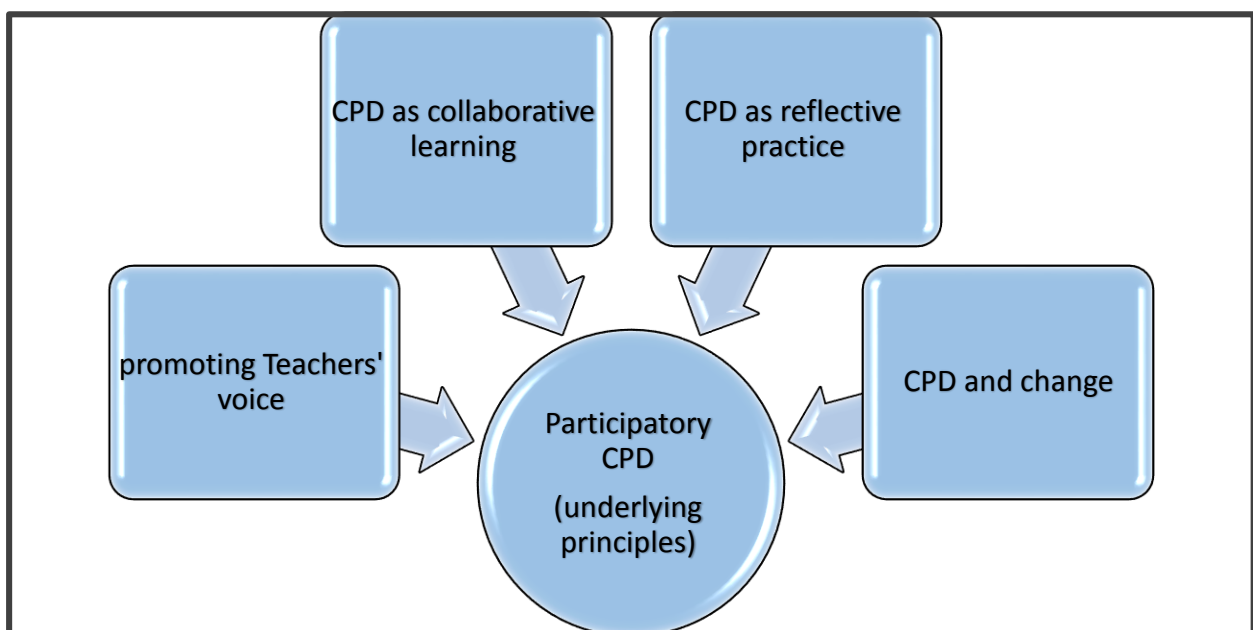
In sum, due to the growing awareness of the limits of a transmission orientated approach to education and a one-size-fits-all approach to teacher education and development; collaborative forms of learning feature as a key suggestion in most recent studies of teachers' experiences of CPD. These collaborative forms involve teachers as active and reflective participants in the change process.

### ***3.8.1 A need for a participatory model of CPD in Oman***

As was discussed in the previous section, teachers' active involvement is increasingly recognized as a vital component of their CPD. However, in many EFL contexts, CPD is still largely built on the premise of knowledge consumption and knowledge transmission (Lee, 2011). This exactly applies to my context where evidence from research has shown that English teachers' CPD is currently

following a top-down approach (Al-Lamki, 2009). In other words, CPD is currently imposed on in-service TESOL teachers through INSET days and other CPD forms as mentioned earlier in Chapter Two.

In response to such a gap in the EFL context generally and in Oman in particular, and also because Omani in-service TESOL teachers have showed an interest in having a more active role in their CPD process as Al-Lamki's (2009) and AL-Yafae's (2004) studies concluded, I have adopted a participatory approach to CPD in my study. In particular, I designed one specific participatory CPD model which takes into account my context, teachers' beliefs and how they learn. It also takes into consideration features of effective CPD (the designed model is presented in a figure in Chapter 6 with an extensive explanation, discussion and evaluation of it as this model shows the contribution of my study). Overall, this model of CPD provides a participatory learning environment that gives participants in a classroom or elsewhere the opportunity to become part of a professional community which help them to explore abstract concepts in a non-threatening social context, and then apply them in situations that hold personal relevance (Reilly & Literat, 2012). Having said that, the participatory model of CPD designed for this study has some underpinning principles as shown in Figure 3.2 below; these principles will be explained in the following part of this literature.



**Figure 3.2: The underlying principles for the participatory model of CPD**



### **3.8.1.1 Promoting teachers' voice**

Teacher participation in the education policy process helps to fulfil a core principle of deliberative democracy: "The normative legitimacy of a democratic decision depends on the degree to which those affected by it have been included in the decision-making processes and have had the opportunity to influence the outcomes" (Young, 2000 in Lefstein & Perath, 2014: 34). This is significant because teachers are among those most responsible for carrying out the policies adopted, so their voices and their sense of ownership of policy is crucial to its effective implementation (Giroux, 2017; Bangs & Frost, 2012). Relating this discourse to teachers' CPD, teachers' ownership of the CPD process is a condition for learning and change (Witte & Jansen, 2016).

Thus, there are a growing number of research studies in which teachers play an active role in developing teaching standards as part of their CPD (e.g. Oolbekkink-Marchand et al., 2017; Witte & Jansen, 2016; Lefstein & Perath, 2014). This study also focuses on promoting teachers' voices through the adoption of a participatory model of CPD. This model encourages teachers' active participation in their CPD process. For example, the design and delivery of some workshops during the action research phase of the study by themselves and the formation of a self-directed online discussion group focusing on self-selected topics. Hence, this model attempts to increase participant teachers' ownership, responsibility of their CPD and activate their voices.

### **3.8.1.2 CPD as collaborative learning**

Collaboration can facilitate teachers' professional growth and development through supporting the development of teachers' skills and helping to sustain teachers' CPD in a more comprehensive manner (Kuusisaari, 2014; Day, 1999). This is because social support can help teachers to learn from one another, develop distributed expertise and support the construction of knowledge (Moran et al., 2017). Internationally, in countries such as Korea, Singapore, and Finland, teachers' professional collaboration with each other has supported teachers as they managed the challenges/complexities of teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2010).

Accordingly, the participatory model of CPD adopted in this study focuses on professional collaboration to encourage and enhance teachers' CPD. This model

is informed by the belief that learning happens through communication, social interaction, and reflection (Moran et al., 2017; Peercy & Troyan, 2017; Vygotsky, 1978). Thus, as I will elaborate on further in Chapter 4, in my study, opportunities for collaborative learning were provided across a partnership between teachers, SETs, and me as a researcher during the three workshops and in the online discussion sessions we participated in. This approach tries to break-down the Omani traditional assumptions about the hierarchical relationships among teacher trainers, regional supervisors, and teachers/SETs candidates through INSET and structural training.

### **3.8.1.3 CPD as reflective practice**

According to Schön (1987), it is important for teachers to reflect on experiences as they occur. Reflection means the process of engaging with learning and/or professional practice that provides an opportunity for the teacher to monitor, revise, critically analyse and evaluate their own practice continuously (Pollard et al., 2008). Reflection also both influences and is influenced by the processes involved in dialogical teaching and collaboration (Vrikki et al., 2017). As such, reflection is not an end in itself, but rather a vehicle used in transforming raw experiences, which can ultimately serve the larger purpose of the moral growth of the individual and society (Finefter-Rosenbluh, 2016:2).

The participatory model of CPD encourages teachers to be reflective practitioners where participants can critically reflect on their practices related to teaching and CPD, and the presentation of topics/ideas trying out such ideas at their schools and then in the online discussions were important ways in which this was achieved in my study as will be elaborated on further in Chapter 4. Such process of reflective practice supports the development and maintenance of professional expertise; thus it feeds a constructive spiral of PD and capability (Pollard et al., 2008). Given the nature of teaching, CPD and learning should never stop.

### **3.8.1.4 CPD and change**

Bubb and Earley (2007:4) emphasise that effective CPD “is likely to consist of that which first and foremost enhances pupil outcomes, but which also helps to bring about changes in practice and improves teaching”. Huberman (1995) demonstrates the cyclical nature of the change process for teachers: change in

beliefs lead to change in practice that bring change in students' learning that bring further changes in practice that result in additional changes in belief and so on. The relationship between these processes is also reciprocal with change in one being contingent on changes in another (in Opfer et al., 2011). However, change does not just result from a linear process flowing from CPD activity but is also influenced by cultural, structural, and political aspects of a teacher's experiential context (Opfer et al., 2011).

The adopted participatory model of CPD proposes change as being driven by personal beliefs, motivations, interests and social/historical contexts and processes rather than solely through rational and logical accumulation of skills and knowledge by participating in a learning activity. The model assumes that teachers bring their own beliefs, practices to their own learning or CPD experiences, and these have been taken into consideration in the workshops and online discussions. For teacher learning to occur, change may occur in beliefs, practices, and students or through any combination of these three areas of possible change. Participants learning and change have been investigated through evaluating the participatory model of CPD.

### **3.9 Summary of Chapter Three**

This chapter started by conceptualising the key terms used in this study and presenting their role in teachers' professional learning and growth. It also reviewed international CPD models with particular focus on the models applied in Oman to identify gaps in the Omani CPD system. This was followed by showing ways of evaluating such CPD models, and considering the factors facilitating and/or inhibiting teachers' benefit from these models. The participatory model of CPD adopted in the current study, its' roots, and principles was given a further attention in the last part of this chapter.

The chapter highlights a growing tradition of research studies in relation to CPD in various national contexts, including in the Sultanate of Oman following the introduction of the educational reform presented earlier in Chapter 2. The chapter has also highlighted that despite the useful findings that emerge from a review of this research more research is still needed, particularly to investigate the relationship between teachers' beliefs about their profession, their beliefs about

CPD, and how these beliefs can affect how far and in what ways they benefit from CPD opportunities. I also stressed that more specific information should be gathered about the quality of the different applied CPD models and their role in teachers' learning and their CPD.

The chapter further presented the gap in many EFL contexts including the Omani context where CPD is still largely built on the premise of knowledge consumption and knowledge transmission. This suggests a need for more collaborative forms of learning in such contexts which can involve teachers as active and reflective participants in the process of change. In general, the issues presented throughout this chapter, the factors, the arguments and the limitations identified in some of the research studies on CPD underpin the rationale for this study and inform its methodology. The latter is the focus of the following chapter.

## **Chapter Four: Methodology**

### **4.1 Introduction**

This chapter examines the methodology used for this study. It will start by pinpointing the research aims and questions. Next, the philosophical approach adopted in the study and the research design will be outlined and justified. This will be followed by describing the research participants and the rationale for selecting them. A detailed account of the data collection methods including the design, the process of piloting and administration of each instrument will then be highlighted. After that, I will discuss the data analysis procedure and ways of presenting the findings. Quality issues and ethical considerations will be emphasised in the following part of this chapter. The chapter concludes by commenting on research methodology constraints.

### **4.2 Aims of the study and research questions**

The general purpose of the current study is to examine in-service TESOL teachers' CPD and to suggest ways for improving CPD in the in-service context in Oman. This overarching aim is brought to fulfilment by several separate objectives which are:

- ❖ To explore Omani in-service TESOL teachers' beliefs about teaching as a profession and their beliefs towards CPD.
- ❖ To critically examine the roles of the different CPD programmes offered by the Ministry of Education in Oman in in-service TESOL teachers' CPD and the impact they have on teaching and learning.
- ❖ To introduce the participatory model of CPD in Education to a group of TESOL teachers in Oman to contribute to improving the Government's current CPD strategy in the in-service context.

In order to achieve the overall aim of the study and to fulfil the above objectives, the project explored the following interconnected research questions:

1. What are the beliefs of in-service TESOL teachers in Oman about teaching as a profession?
2. What are those teachers' beliefs towards CPD?

3. Do the offered CPD opportunities by the Ministry of Education in Oman meet in-service TESOL teachers' needs?
4. What are those teachers' perceived factors that facilitate or inhibit their benefit from the offered CPD opportunities?
5. How do in-service TESOL teachers in Oman react to the participatory model of CPD?

### **4.3 Philosophical stance**

The main goals of this study are to explore teachers' beliefs about their profession and about CPD, as well as to critically examine the Omani CPD system with a view to contributing to improving and changing it. In light of this, I have adopted a study design that is informed and underpinned by a critical paradigmatic research tradition.

#### ***4.3.1 Critical paradigm***

The critical paradigm stems from the critical theory which is concerned with people in society (Johnson, 2017; Crotty, 2009). The work of the 'Frankfurt School' with scholars such as Habermas and others were influential in the twentieth century in trying to set up the main agenda for the critical theory and its research which mainly follows an approach to research that is emancipatory, seeking action and change in order to alleviate pain in society and redress forms of alienation, discrimination, injustice, exploitation and marginalization (Troudi, 2015). Critical educational researchers share an interest in research which aims to understand actions in social worlds with interpretivist researchers but differ in their focus, which is to challenge and/or change these actions (Johnson, 2017; Troudi, 2015; Carr & Kemmis, 1994).

Research in the critical paradigm is usually framed in terms of a comprehensive perspective on society, and is designed to contribute to developing that perspective; this comprehensive perspective is seen as providing a practical guide for transforming society (Hammersley, 2012). I believe my research is critical in nature because it started with understanding teachers' beliefs and the Omani CPD system, so it identified the gaps in this system and then suggested a strategy (the participatory model of CPD) to improve the governments' applied system for teachers' CPD. This is done through having an action research phase

(a research methodology closely aligned with the critical paradigm) in the study as will be explained later.

One of the criticism levied against critical research is whether it can lead to real change. For example, questions have been raised regarding the power of action research in empowering people and thus contributing to change. Cohen et al., (2007:30) argue that this can be over optimistic in a world in which power is often attained through status and that the reality is that political power seldom extends to teachers. In other words, that giving action researchers a small degree of power to research their own situations has little effect on the real locus of power and decision-making that often lies outside the control of action researchers (Walther, 2016; Cohen et al., 2007). Yet, Troudi (2015) made it clear that critical researchers in language education should not be discouraged if they see little change happening as a result of their investigations. He stressed that changes to attitudes, practices and policies are often very slow and necessitate vital stages of problematisation and awareness raising. I strongly agree with Troudi's (2015) view in this respect and I believe that even if my research does not result in changing the Omani CPD system, raising teachers' awareness (as well as the awareness of those who may read my thesis, such as other TESOL professionals and those with a responsibility for educational policy in Oman) regarding the investigated issues is a good start.

#### ***4.3.2 Ontological and epistemological assumptions***

Ontologically and epistemologically speaking, because of its very nature, there is much room for disagreement about what critical theory entails and indeed a definite perspective negates the very premise of critical theory. Yet, certain similarities between the strands of critical theory exists and points of agreement are synthesized which determine the basis for a paradigm of inquiry with a specific ontology, epistemology and appropriate methodological approaches (Howell, 2013).

Regarding ontology, this relates to the nature of reality and its characteristics (Creswell, 2013) and a critical research embraces the idea of multiple realities. In my study multiple realities are reported via multiple forms of evidence in themes

that came from different sources of data, by using the actual words of the different research participants and by presenting their different perspectives.

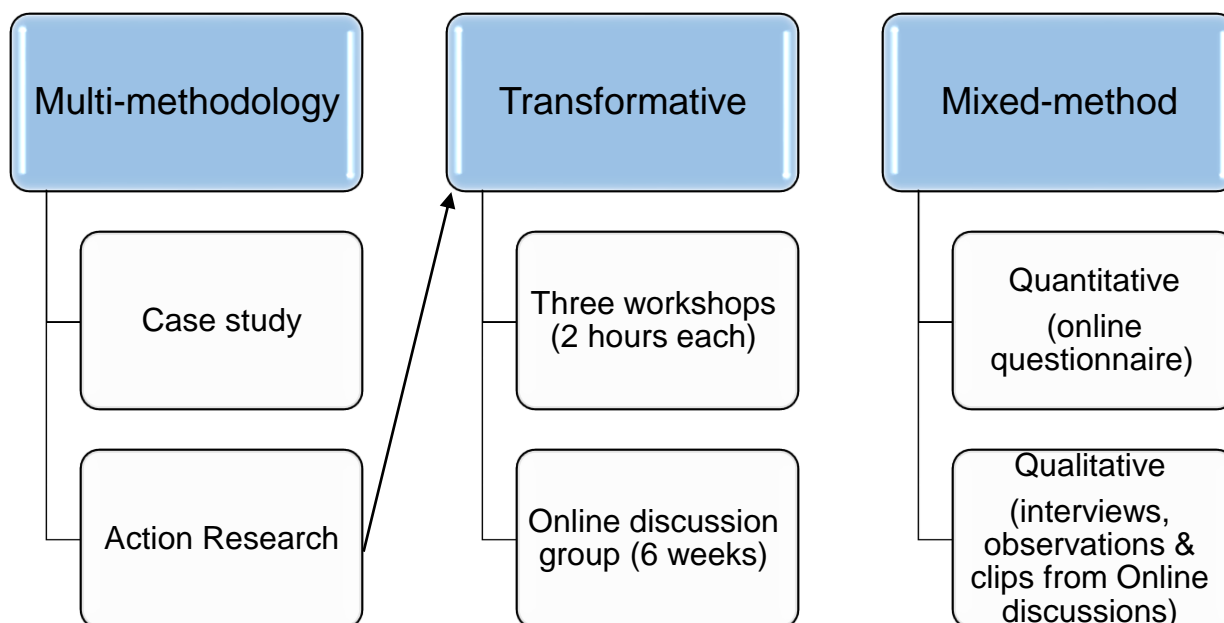
Epistemology is concerned with how knowledge is known. The basic tenet of a critical epistemology is that knowledge is not neutral and it reflects the power and social relationships within society, and thus the purpose of knowledge construction is to aid people to improve society (Creswell, 2013). Critical theorists' stress that knowledge is power. According to Howell (2013), individuals are not free from the social and historical structures that they both construct and from which they emanate. Thus, power dominates human beings in social settings through shaping consciousness (Zoffel, 2016; Howell, 2013). This means that understanding the ways one is oppressed enables one to take actions to change oppressive forces (Seiler, 2014).

Power is the disciplining of individuals as they approach their life practices every day (Zoffel, 2016; Popkewitz & Fendler, 1999). It is viewed as inscribed in the rule through which people 'reason' about the world and self as they act and participate; in this way power is productive not repressive or negative (Popkewitz & Fendler, 1999; Carr & Kemmis, 1994). This epistemological stance has informed my research design and has assumed that participants can be viewed as powerful in terms of their ability to participate in the three workshops and the online discussions during the action research phase and to reflect on these experiences. Habermas called this a 'process of enlightenment' by which participants in a situation reach authentic understandings of their situation (in the case of my participants, their previous CPD experiences), and can generate a 'practical discourse' in which decisions are taken by participants about appropriate courses of action which are agreed to be wise and prudent (Carr & Kemmis, 1994:158). In the case of my research participants, this happened through their participation in the participatory approach of CPD; their involvement in the workshops design and delivery and their contributions in the online discussion group. It further happened through their reaction to this model of CPD; their reflection on the workshops and online discussion group that they joined in. Thus the philosophical stance associated with criticality can be seen to frame the research design as I will discuss below.



## 4.4 The research design

Research designs are procedures that start by identifying the problem, then collecting, analysing, interpreting and reporting data and publishing the results in research studies (Punch, 2014; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). They represent different models for doing research studies which have different procedures associated with them. The research reported in this thesis aimed at investigating EFL teachers' beliefs about professionalism and about CPD, examining the Omani CPD system and suggesting ways for changing and improving it, and as such I took into consideration that the research design should reflect these purposes, and the philosophical and theoretical foundations of this study (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2017; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In doing this I developed a *multi-methodology transformative research design that used mixed methods*, as will be explained in details below and is summarised in Figure 4.1 below.



**Figure 4.1: Research design and data collection methods employed in the study**

### 4.4.1 Multi-Methodology

Although Munby (1984) suggested that qualitative methodologies are especially appropriate to study teachers' beliefs, the choice of qualitative or quantitative approaches depends ultimately on what the researcher wishes to know (cited in Poulson & Avramidis, 2004). This orientation to research has led to the growth of multi-methodological approaches to research which are seen as offering a

number of benefits as I discuss below and informs my own decision to adopt multi methodologies in my research to achieve the research purposes mentioned earlier. In this respect, Polit and Beck (2006. P. 224) believe that critical researchers often use multiple methodologies and emphasize multiple perspectives on the problem being investigated as a way of critiquing “taken-for-granted” assumptions during the course of their research (cited in Devadas, 2016). However, Päivi (2009) found a lack of multi methodological work and called for more practical guidance to design and develop these kinds of approaches. In fact, many authors have called for the significance of using multi methodologies and/or methods in research design (Williams & Gemperle, 2017; Mingers, 2001; Robey, 1996).

For example, Williams and Gemperle, (2017) highlight that multi-method research has attained an ever increasing recognition and application in social science research. Robey (1996) and Mingers (2001) contended that a diversity of research methods and paradigms within the discipline is a positive source of strength. This is justified by the notion that diversity can provide a wider range of knowledge upon which research and theory are based. This is especially important when investigating teachers’ beliefs and the complexities of such belief system. Mingers (2001) further added that different research methodologies and methods can focus on different aspects of reality and therefore a richer understanding of a research topic will be gained by combining several methods together in a single research design. My study adopted multi-methodology: two qualitative methodologies (case study and action research), it also followed a transformative mixed-method design as I will explain in detail in the following sections.

#### ***4.4.2 Transformative design***

A transformative design in mixed-method research is a design used by the researcher when he/she conducts a mixed-method research using a theoretical based framework, such as transformative world view. “A transformative-based theoretical framework is a framework for advancing the needs of underrepresented or marginalized populations” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011. P.96). The researcher is involved in taking a position, being sensitive to the need of the population under study and recommending specific changes as a result of

the research to improve social justice for the population being studied (Johnson, 2017; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). I adopted a transformative mixed-method framework to help empower the individual teachers in my context to take a more active role in their CPD process and to bring about change and action. This is because the current CPD system is following a top-down strategy where teachers' participation in its process is not activated.

Some scholars, however, discount the ideological perspectives as a criterion for classifying mixed-method designs by arguing that they relate more to the content purpose of the study than the method decisions of it (e.g. Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Yet, other researchers have included transformative designs among the major mixed-method designs (e.g. Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The purpose of such type of design is to conduct research that is change-oriented and seeks at advancing social justice causes through trying to identify power imbalances and in accordance to empower individuals and/or communities, and the purpose behind mixing methods in a transformative design is for ideological and value based reasons more than for the reasons related to procedures or methods (Greene, 2007 in Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

In sum, I believe that this multi-methodology transformative mixed-method design best fits the aims of my study stated earlier as I was looking for changing and improving the current CPD system for the benefit of teachers and thus it matches the philosophical assumptions underpinning this study. Participants in my study played an active, participatory role through their participation in the workshop design and delivery and in the online discussion group. This is in line with the overarching assumptions behind conducting any transformative design as the participatory and advocacy worldview, provide an umbrella approach to such projects which usually include political actions, empowerment, collaborative, and change oriented research perspectives (Johnson, 2017; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The justifications for using mixed-method in this multi-methodology transformative design will be detailed below.

#### ***4.4.3 Mixed-method research***

Although I believe that the use of multi-methodologies (case study and action research) is actually the most significant aspect of the research design and a crucial feature of this study in comparison to the use of mixed research methods,

it is also important to justify my rationalization for the use of mixed-methods in this study, specifically a questionnaire, interviews and observation. Mixed-method research has been defined as a type of inquiry where the researcher combines or mixes qualitative and quantitative research approaches, methods, techniques, language or concepts into a single study (Shannon-Baker, 2015; Brown, 2014; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The aim behind conducting a mixed-method research is to provide a more complex understanding of a phenomenon that would otherwise have been accessible through using a single method alone (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Morse & Niehaus, 2009). Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004:18) comment that mixed-method research is a creative and expansive form of research, not a limited form of research. They added that it is pluralistic, inclusive, and complementary, and it proposes that the researcher takes an eclectic approach to selecting the methods in line with what is needed to effectively conduct the research. In their view, what is most fundamental is the research question(s) - research methods usually follow the research questions in a way that offers the best chance for obtaining useful answers.

In the TESOL field where the current study is located, Brown (2014) stresses the importance of using mixed-method research, he states: “any researcher who can do both quantitative and qualitative research in TESOL will have considerable advantages over those researchers who can do only one or the other” (p. 5). He added that this can result in research that uses qualitative and quantitative methods to reinforce and cross-validate each other in ways that will make the whole much greater than the sum of the parts. My aim behind mixing both quantitative and qualitative methods in answering the research questions is to enrich my understanding of the phenomenon under investigation rather than constraining or restricting my choices as a researcher.

It is important to acknowledge that the use of mixed-method research has been criticized by methodological purists who argue that researchers should always work within either a qualitative or a quantitative paradigm. They advocate an incompatibility thesis (Howe, 1988), one which posits that quantitative and qualitative research paradigms, including their associated methods, cannot and should not be mixed. I disagree with this perspective as I believe that the

concrete aim of research or the problem should determine the design of the study, whereby, depending on the nature and the complexity of the problem, the design can either be qualitative, quantitative or a combination of both (Howell, 2013; Niglas, 2010). The use of mixed-method is also because this is seen to fit with research such as mine which is undertaken within the critical tradition. Shannon-Baker (2015) advises that in transformative-emancipatory studies, it is vital to frame all decisions, data collection, analysis, and reporting within the social and historical contexts of the community. This suggests that the researcher needs to pay particular attention to issues of voice, privilege and power and such a perspective guide the entire research process.

## **4.5 Research participants**

Since the main aim of this study is investigating in-service TESOL teachers CPD in Oman, the main participants in this study are in-service English teachers and Senior English teachers (hereafter SETS) teaching in Omani schools.

### ***4.5.1 Quantitative phase participants***

The study started with a quantitative phase involving the distribution of an online questionnaire to the study participants. The selection of the study sample for completing the online questionnaire was dependent on the general population of English teachers in Omani schools. This sample was deemed to be a representative reflection of the wider general TESOL teacher population (Punch, 2014; Bryman, 2012). As regards the general TESOL teacher population, the Annual Educational Statistics Book published at the end of 2013 showed that there are over 6,900 English teachers teaching in the 11 different governorates in all Omani public schools, and more than 470 Senior English teachers coaching and mentoring those English teachers (MOE, 2013). This was the latest publication I had access to when I was designing my research and its instruments; thus, I have used the statistics from this publication (MOE, 2013) to inform my sampling strategy.

Nonetheless, as a novice researcher, the challenge for me at the beginning was how large my sample should be for the research (Punch, 2014; Bryman, 2012; Robson, 2002) to ensure that it was considered representative and thereby to help me generalize my research findings (Punch, 2014; Bryman, 2012; Bell, 2010;

Robson, 2002). In this regard, some authors have suggested that the larger the sample the more representative it is likely to be (Bryman, 2012; Wallen & Fraenkel, 2001). Thus, I decided to use a probability sample using stratified selection; stratified sampling is a probability sampling technique wherein the researcher divides the entire population into different subgroups or strata, then selects the final subjects proportionally from the different strata/subgroup (Bryman, 2012).

To recruit my research participants following such a stratified sampling strategy, I recorded the general population of TESOL teachers in Oman as detailed in the Annual Educational Statistics Book (2013) and then I recorded the number of TESOL teachers in each educational governorate. Then, I used a sample fraction of 1 in every 20 to choose a stratified sample from each governorate list. In this way, the general population of TESOL teachers in Oman (6966 in total) was divided into smaller groups according to the 11 educational governorates, so the smaller samples were taken from each educational governorate, or group (see table 4.1 below). I used such a sampling strategy because I wanted my sample to be a proportional representation of the different 11 governorates in Oman to which in-service English teachers are attached. This means that the subjects from the general population of each governorate list were chosen in a stratified sampling fashion to ensure that all English teachers in Oman are accurately represented in terms of their governorates.

For example, out of the total 1,045 English teachers in Muscat governorate, using a sampling fraction of 1 in each 20, I had 52 English teachers in my sample from this governorate (see Table 4.1 for information of the sample selection from each governorate list). For SETS, I used 10% of the general population from each governorate list to be the representative sample for this group in their governorate (see Table 4.2). The key advantage of the stratified sampling in this case is to ensure that the resulting sample is distributed in the same way as the population in terms of the stratifying criterion. In sum, the numbers of participants in the quantitative phase were 349 English teachers and 48 SETs making a total of 397 participants in this phase. All of them have sufficient experience in both TESOL and in CPD (more details on how the sample was reached and chosen are discussed later in section 4.7.3.1).

**Table 4.1: Sample of English teachers for the quantitative phase**

Educational governorate	Population	Stratified sample(participants)
Muscat	1,045	52
North of Al-Batinah	1,231	62
South of Al-Batinah	864	43
Al-Dakhlya	1,000	50
South of Al-Sharkiya	591	30
North of Al-Sharkiya	574	29
Al-Buraimi	174	9
Al-Dhahira	464	23
Dhofar	770	39
Al-Wusta	148	7
Musandam	105	5
Total	6966	349 (1 in every 20 of the population)

**Table 4.2: Sample of SETs for the quantitative phase**

Educational governorate	Population	Stratified sample(participants)
Muscat	74	7
North of Al-Batinah	118	12
South of Al-Batinah	39	4
Al-Dakhlya	77	8
South of Al-Sharkiya	44	4
North of Al-Sharkiya	42	4
Al-Buraimi	8	1
Al-Dhahira	42	4
Dhofar	27	3
Al-Wusta	0	0
Musandam	7	1
Total	478	48 (10% of the general population)

## 4.5.2 Qualitative phase participants

My sampling strategy for the qualitative phase of the study comprising a case study and doing action research, entailed purposive sampling approach. Purposive sampling is a sampling technique in which the researcher relies on his/her own judgment when choosing members of population to take part in the study (Bryman, 2012). In this study, the case study purposive sample comprised three specific cycle one (primary) schools in one governorate with all English teachers and SETs in these schools (3 SETs + 15 English teachers; 4 teachers in school one, 6 in school 2 and 5 in school 3), and all CPD activities offered to those teachers/SETs (see Table 4.3 below for a detailed account of the case study participants). The follow up action research phase of the study was done with the same case study participants. Thus, choosing three schools was also important for the action research phase and applying the idea of the participatory model of CPD by showing how this model can encourage teachers from different schools to share ideas and learn from each other.

**Table 4.3: qualitative phase participants**

School	Participants and Experience	CPD activities in (2015-16)
School (1)	SET: Badriya (5-10 years of experience) Teacher 1: Maryam (11-15 years of experience) Teacher 2: Lulwa (1-5 years of experience) Teacher 3: Ameera (6-10 years of experience) Teacher 4: Amna (11-15 years of experience)	Jolly phonics and shared reading workshops from the Ministry + a number of CPD activities from school (see Appendix 22)
School (2)	SET: Karima (20+ years of experience) Teacher 1: Salima (6-10 years of experience) Teacher 2: Alya (6-10 years of experience) Teacher 3: Shamsa (6-10 years of experience) Teacher 4: Zilal (11-15 years of Experience) Teacher 5: Farida (1-5 years of experience) Teacher 6: Muna (1-5 years of experience)	Jolly phonics and shared reading workshops from the Ministry + a number of CPD activities from school (see Appendix 22)
School (3)	SET: Laila (11-15 years of experience) Teacher 1: Halima (6-10 years of experience) Teacher 2: Amal (11-15 years of experience) Teacher 3: Noora (1-5 years of experience) Teacher 4: Anisa (6-10 years of experience) Teacher 5: Huda (6-10 years of experience)	Jolly phonics and shared reading workshops from the Ministry + a number of CPD activities from school (see Appendix 22)

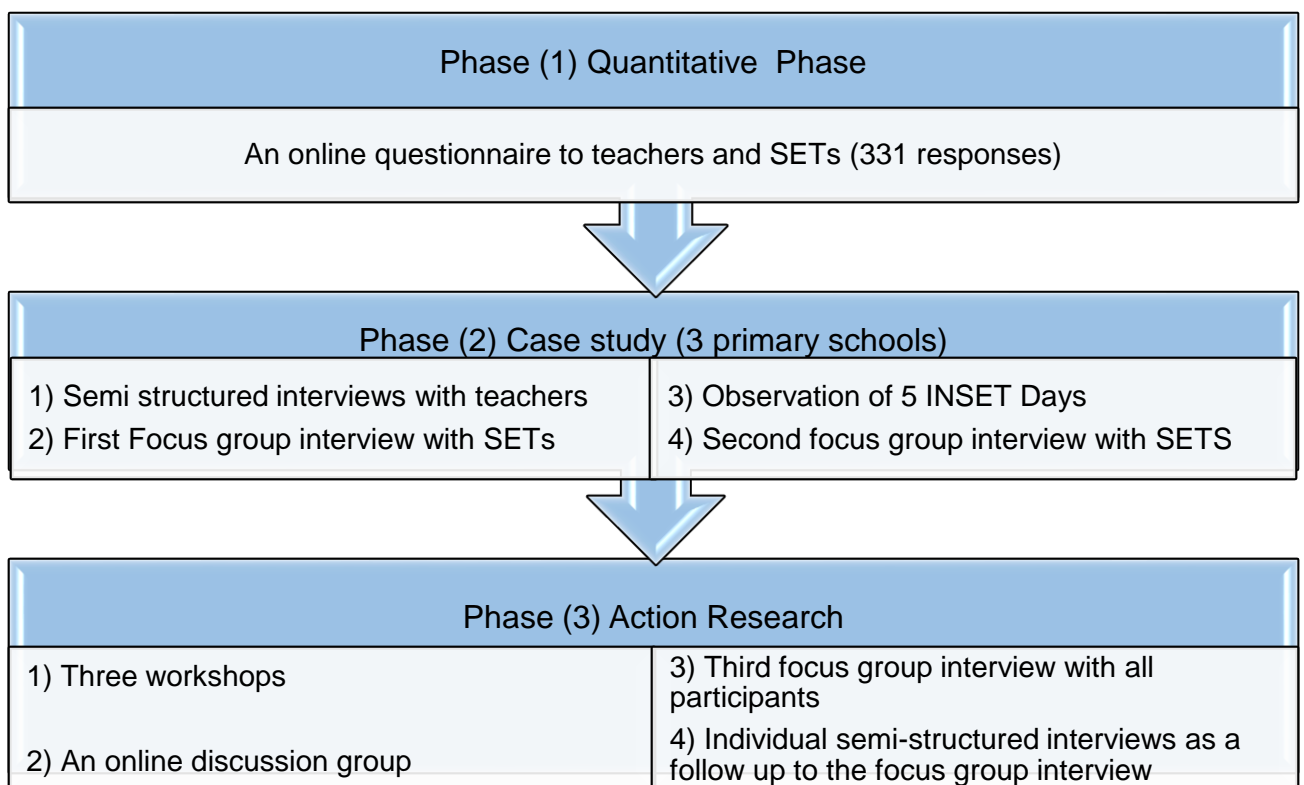
In general, the teachers in the three schools ranged between different age groups and with different experiences of English teaching. This provides an opportunity to study the three school participants and the CPD activities available to them in



some depth (Yin, 2014; 2009). This purposive sampling strategy allowed me to select the case study and its' participants purposively in terms of criteria that were central to the main topic of research and the philosophical stance underpinning it (Bryman, 2012; Flick, 2011) (details of how I chose the case study participants will be explained later on in section 4.6.2 ). Having said that, two TESOL teacher trainers also participated to a limited degree in this study during the case study. I observed the two teacher trainers and did a post-observation discussion with them where they reflected on the observed sessions.

#### 4.6 The study phases and data collection methods

The current study followed three phases for data collection. It started with a quantitative phase through the use of an online questionnaire to explore participants' beliefs about the investigated issues. This was followed by a case study as an in-depth investigation of the CPD system in Oman. The third phase of the study entailed conducting an action research to contribute to improving the Omani CPD system by introducing the participatory model of CPD in education (see Figure 4.2). The decision about the order of these phases was based on the research aims and objectives, research questions and to fit the philosophical stance underpinning the study.



**Figure 4.2: The study phases and data collection methods**

### **4.6.1 Quantitative phase**

The research started with the quantitative phase through using an online questionnaire.

#### **4.6.1.1 The online questionnaire**

Questionnaires generally are an efficient way for collecting data from large number of respondents in geographically spread areas within a shorter period of time without necessarily the presence of the researcher (Bryman, 2004; Campbell et al, 2004). The questionnaire findings can be generalised into the whole population from which the representative sample came (Punch, 2014; Flick, 2011). In addition, questionnaires are used to generate empirical data by giving measurements of preferences, attitudes, opinions, behaviours, and values of a target population (Punch, 2014; Campbell et al, 2004). Evidence from the research literature has shown that questionnaires are appropriate tools to investigate the beliefs of teachers in general (Borg, 2015) and in relation to CPD in particular (Hustler, et al., 2003) or to evaluate CPD programmes (Craft, 2000). The use of the questionnaire in this study helps get an overview of teachers' beliefs regarding teaching as a profession and their beliefs and experiences of CPD. The questionnaire I have used in this study addresses the following research questions:

1. What are the beliefs of in-service TESOL teachers in Oman about teaching as a profession?
2. What are those teachers' beliefs towards CPD?
3. Do the offered CPD opportunities by the Ministry of Education in Oman meet in-service TESOL teachers' needs?
4. What are those teachers' perceived factors that facilitate or inhibit their benefit from the offered CPD opportunities?

It is widely acknowledged that questionnaires have their own limitations. For instance, the way a question is worded in a questionnaire can change the way participants answer that question. In fact, the items of a questionnaire can lead to ambiguous data because the same words can be interpreted differently by each respondent (Flick, 2011). This problem could also occur because some questionnaires do not offer opportunities for clarifying or probing answers (Bryman, 2012). In this case, the researcher, may not necessarily be available to

explain or clarify. To avoid this, questions should be closely attended and formulation should incorporate simplicity and straightforward unambiguous language (Howell, 2013). This can ensure that all questions and statements are clear and understandable by the respondents. I tried to take such considerations into account when I designed my own online questionnaire as I will discuss in section 4.7.1.1.

In this study, I used online questionnaires. Studying in Exeter but with the participants in the study being based in Oman meant I faced difficulties in reaching them to administer a questionnaire, particularly as this targeted teachers from across Oman and was a further factor in my decision to use an online questionnaire. According to Buchanan and Hvizdak (2009:37) online questionnaires which include such products as Zoom-rang, Survey Monkey, and Question-pro, have emerged over the last few years as highly convenient research instruments. In their view, these instruments enable researchers to create and deliver questionnaires to respondents in a convenient, expeditious manner, and they produce results in synchronous time, so researchers and respondents can watch data results being compiled instantaneously. Besides, online questionnaires offer ways of reaching a group that normally may be difficult to identify or access (Al-Balushi, 2015; Punch, 2014; Umbach, 2004).

In general, I believe that the use of online questionnaires in this study helped me to employ larger samples, so allowing the identification of patterns of orientation towards theoretical assumptions and associated practices that could not be obtained using qualitative ways (Poulson & Avramidis, 2004). Once participants' beliefs from the questionnaire were collected, I sought to investigate these beliefs in more depth in an attempt to understand them and this was one of the goals of the interviews undertaken in the case study phase.

#### **4.6.2 The case study phase**

The nature of some of my research questions suggested that I need to carry out an in-depth investigation through looking at the Omani CPD system in detail. Thus, I have constructed a case study as one way to examine the influence of the offered CPD programmes on my research participants. Through the richness of singular experiences, case studies offer opportunities for considering the

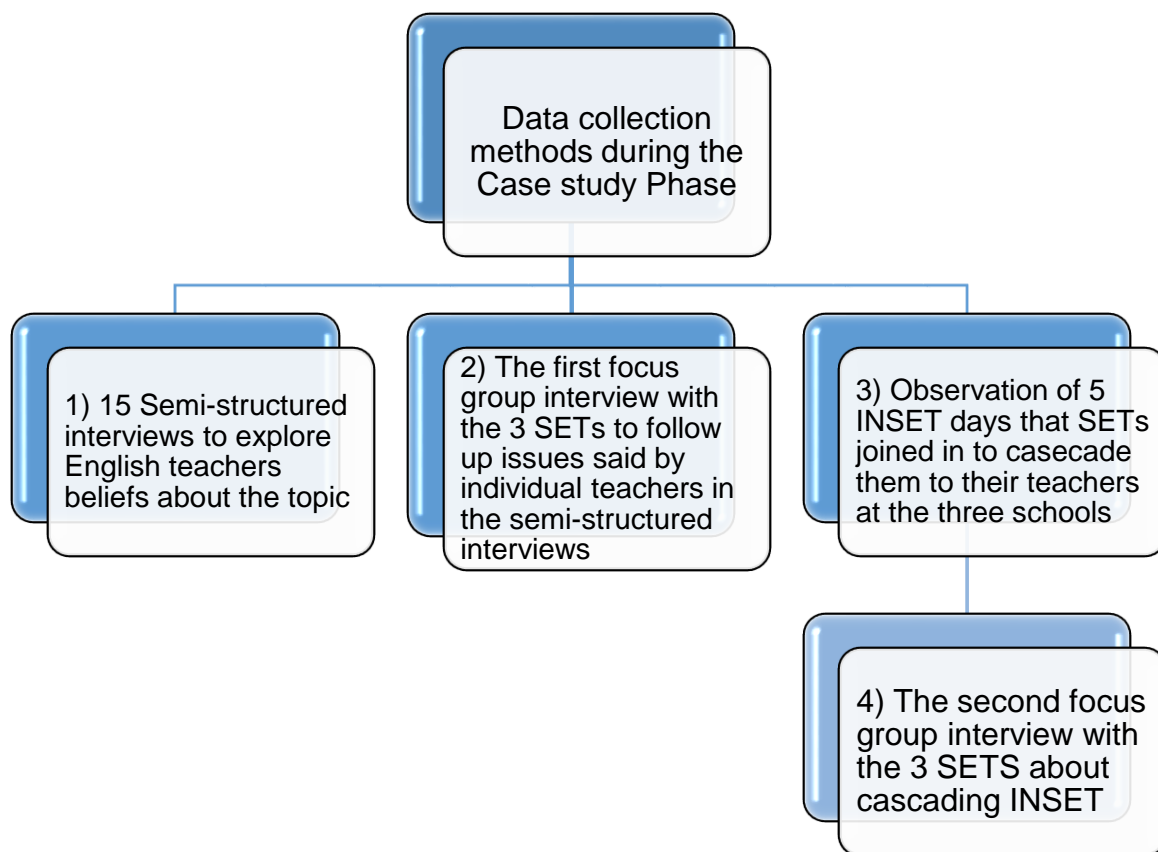
complexities of teaching and learning by embedding them with the details of everyday life at schools (Yin, 2014). Thus, they are well suited to address questions such as: What are the perceived factors that facilitate or inhibit in-service TESOL teachers benefit from the offered CPD programmes?

I have chosen three primary schools with their English staff and all CPD activities offered to them to be my case. Bell (2010) advised that case studies may be carried out to follow up and to put flesh on the bones of a questionnaire. Therefore, the selection of the case was informed by the online questionnaire data which investigated teachers' CPD beliefs and experiences. One of the key findings from questionnaire data was that age and teaching experience showed contradictions in participants' beliefs about teaching as a job and their beliefs about CPD, so I decided to dig deeply in this through the case study. The three selected schools have teachers and SETs that are from various age groups and have different teaching and CPD experiences.

The reason behind choosing primary schools is that the first CPD activities offered by the MOE at the beginning of the school year (Sep-2015) were targeting C1/primary schools due to the updates in their syllabus. This time was convenient for me as a researcher to collect data for my case study as I was in Oman at that time and had finished collecting and analysing the first/quantitative phase data. Moreover, I planned to observe some INSET/other CPD activities to investigate TESOL teachers' benefit from these opportunities. The first programme offered by the MOE at that time was two Jolly Phonics workshops and two shared reading workshops to support C1 teachers in literacy teaching and update them with the changes in the English curriculum. My choice of the governorate for the location of the case study schools was informed by my own ability to access this. I excluded the governorate where I live and work to avoid researcher bias as I will explain later, and decided to choose the closest neighbouring governorate so I could easily reach the participants to do the interviews and observations.

While I found several procedures available in the literature for conducting case studies, in my study I have relied primarily on Stake's (1995) and Yin's (2009) approaches to conducting case studies. Specifically I have adopted an intrinsic case study (Stake, 1995) that has an exploratory nature (Yin, 2009). An intrinsic case study is the study of a case (e.g. person, specific group, occupation, department, organization) where the case itself is of primary interest in the

exploration (Stake, 1995) and when the intent is to better understand the case and learn more about it. This case (the three schools) illustrates a unique case, a case that I have had unusual interest in and of itself needs to be described and detailed (Punch, 2014; Creswell, 2013). My case also has an exploratory nature related to the "what" question I have asked to explore the unclear issues about the offered CPD activities/programmes as Yin (2009) recommended. For instance, I have explored the effectiveness of these CPD activities and the factors that influence teachers' benefit from them. As can be seen from the overview of the data collection procedures in the case study stage of the study in Figure 4.3 below, I used several data collection methods: interviews (semi-structured and focus groups), and observations.



**Figure 4.3: Data collection methods used during the second phase of the study**

#### **4.6.2.1 Interviews**

Two types of interviews were conducted with teachers: semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews. Craft (2000) stated that like questionnaires, interviews could be used to evaluate CPD. In this study, the purpose of using interviews was to follow up individual participants' ideas, and dig deeply into them by investigating feelings and motives (Punch, 2014; Bell, 2010; Kvale, 2009).

During the case study, I interviewed participants twice: first to follow up the online questionnaire data, second to ask SETs about the cascade they did with their teachers and their coaching/mentoring roles. I used semi-structured interviews at the beginning with teachers.

### **Semi Structured Interviews**

The semi-structured interviews were conducted with the teachers during the case study to elicit teachers' beliefs towards CPD. On the one hand, the use of semi structured interviews during this phase has the advantage of combining structure with flexibility. In other words, the structure of the interview is 'sufficiently flexible to permit topics to be covered in the order most suited to the interviewee, to allow responses to be fully probed and explored and to allow the researcher to be responsive to relevant issues raised spontaneously by the interviewee' (Legard et al., 2003:141).

The semi-structured interviews with my participants were interactive in nature. This means that in each interview the material was generated through an interaction between me as a researcher and the interviewee (Flick, 2011; Myers & Newman, 2007; Legard et al., 2003). For instance, I asked an initial question in a way that encouraged the interviewee to talk freely when answering that question. The next intervention by me (the follow up question, prompt or probe) was determined by the interviewee's answer to that specific question.

On the other hand, administering a successful semi-structured interview is not an easy task especially for novice researchers like me. Good semi-structured interviews require a clear and logical mind. The researcher should be able to think quickly to distill the essential points from the participants' responses and accordingly formulate the appropriate follow up questions (Flick, 2011; Myers & Newman, 2007; Legard et al., 2003). This requires that the researcher undertakes careful preparation to overcome interviewing difficulties (Punch, 2014; Robson, 2002). For instance, the researcher should be fully conversant with the research aims and with the topic guide (Flick, 2011; Legard et al., 2003). To achieve that, I piloted the interviews to familiarize myself with the interview schedule as I will discuss later in the pilot stage. Once the semi-structured individual interviews had

been completed with English teachers in all three schools, I conducted a focus group interview with their SETs.

### **Focus Group Interviews**

To follow up issues further regarding the case study participants' beliefs and experiences of CPD, I used two focus group interviews during the case study phase with the three SETs in the case study schools. The first sought to obtain follow up information on individual teachers' comments in the semi-structured interviews and second to find out about the SETs experiences of cascading workshops to teachers. I also used a third focus group interview with all qualitative phase participants during the action research phase of the study (detail of the third focus group interview will be explained later when presenting the action research phase of the study).

The focus group method is a form of group interview in which there are several participants and a facilitator/ moderator (in the case of my study, I was the facilitator); there is an emphasis in the questioning of a particular defined topic and the accent is upon interaction within the group and the joint construction of meaning (Punch, 2014; Bryman, 2012; Flick, 2011). The participants in the focus group interview should have had a certain experience and are interviewed in a relatively unstructured way about that experience. It is different from individual interviews in a way that individuals in focus groups either support each other's views about the discussed topic or will often argue with each other and challenge each other's views and this will surely result in enriching the discussed ideas and topic generally (Howell, 2013). While the size of a focus group interview is often between six to eight or ten members (e.g. Barbour, 2007; Morgan, 1998 in Bryman, 2012), as explained earlier, I only had 3 participants in my first and second focus groups.

Some authors advised using smaller numbers in focus groups, as an example, Morgan (1998) himself recommends smaller groups when participants are likely to have a lot to say on a research topic and they are very involved in the topic being discussed. Since this was exactly the case of my three case study SETs who are totally involved and preoccupied with the topics being discussed, I took this to be a useful way to rationale my use of the first and second focus group

interviews I conducted. Peek and Fothergill (2009:37) also provided confirmation of the likelihood that, in many contexts, smaller groups are preferable; in their study they reported that those focus groups which have between three to five participants 'ran more smoothly than the larger group interviews that we conducted' (cited in Bryman, 2012).

#### **4.6.2.2 Observations**

Observation has a central role to play in studying language teacher education and the CPD of language teachers. This is because it provides a concrete descriptive basis in relation to how what teachers know, think and believe can be examined (Borg, 2015; 2006). The distinctive feature of observation as a research tool is that it gives the researcher an opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations (Punch, 2014; Robson, 2002). In this way, as a researcher I could look directly at what was taking place instead of relying on second-hand accounts like questionnaires/interviews. Robson (2002) emphasised that what people do might be different from what they say they do, and observation can provide a reality check. In my study, observation is particularly suited to addressing the following research question: What are the perceived factors that facilitate or inhibit in-service TESOL teachers' benefit from the offered CPD opportunities?

Thus, I decided to observe the CPD events that the MOE planned to deliver to the target participants in my study. These events were ones targeted at SETs who were then expected to cascade that training to their teachers at schools. I observed five INSET days in one educational governorate; two Omani TESOL teacher trainers were responsible for carrying out that INSET training to all SETs. An observation schedule was designed for this purpose (see appendix 7) which had predetermined categories to record what was observed (Punch, 2014; Bryman, 2012; Robson, 2002). A post-observation discussion was done with the observed trainers; I asked them after each observation to reflect on the session and whether they thought that the session aims were achieved (the five observations carried out and their length will be detailed later in section 4.7.3.2).

Structured approaches to observation are often criticised as being subjective and biased as they pre-determine the focus; rather than allowing the focus to emerge (Bell, 2010). However, in my case, I had already identified the objectives of my



study and the importance of observing some INSET/CPD activities to investigate their effectiveness and participants' benefit from them. Thus, I saw the purpose of the observation in my study design as focused on particular aspects in relation to my research objectives (Wajnryb, 1993). I saw my role as an observer as being to observe and record my observations in as objective a way as possible (Punch, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Bell, 2010) in full recognition that these data would be complemented by data from post-observation discussions with participants which would ensure that the observee's voice is visible.

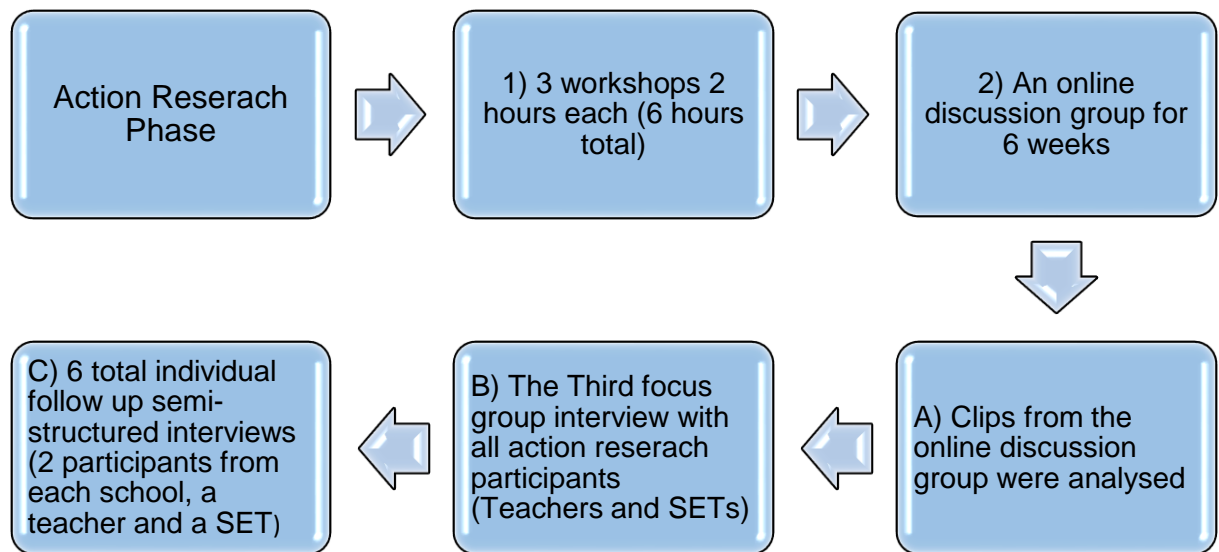
#### **4.6.3 Action research phase**

As explained earlier in this thesis, as a teacher trainer in the context I am investigating, I believe that my role is not only to evaluate the current CPD system applied in Oman but also to contribute to improving/changing it. Therefore, the third phase of my study took the form of an action research because as a practitioner I have identified a need for change and improvement (Townsend, 2014; Bell, 2010; Kemmis, 1988) in relation to the PD of EFL teachers in my country. My aim was to arrive at recommendations for good practice that will tackle the problems related to the CPD of teachers and enhance the performance of my organization (Ministry of Education) through changes to the rules and procedures within which they operate (Townsend, 2014; Denscombe, 2010). Action research is well suited to the critical nature of this study (Stringer, 2007; Carr & Kemmis, 1994), so it suits addressing the research question: How do in-service TESOL teachers in Oman react to the participatory model of CPD? This specific research question seeks at improving the CPD system used in my context by introducing the participatory model of CPD.

Action research is linked to critical research because it has a clear emphasis on action (Walther, 2016; Troudi, 2015; Kincheloe, 1991). There is an abundance of theoretical and practical literature on action research. For example, in critical action research in teacher education, Kincheloe (1991) recommended that the "critical teacher" exposes the assumptions of existing research orientations, critiques the knowledge base, and through these critiques reveals ideological effects on teachers, schools and the cultural view of education. In the fields of TESL and TEFL where the current study is located, Burns (1999, 2010) and

Wallace (1998) offer a version of action research that is strongly aligned with the movement of teacher research and professional development (in Troudi, 2015).

In spite of that, by referring to the work of Carr and Kemmis (1986) and Kemmis and McTaggart (1992) on action research, Troudi (2015) proposed that it is the emancipatory version of action research that is appropriate to serve critical agendas and not a version that is imposed on teachers as part of professional development plan or a teacher evaluation scheme. I think that the action research I adopted in this study has such a critical agenda as it challenges teachers' beliefs about CPD and explores the ideological effects of the participatory model of CPD on teachers. Based on these effects, the study is aiming at a change and improvement in the CPD system in Oman through recommending this model to the Omani MOE. In order to achieve this aim, my research participants and I designed and conducted three workshops and established an online discussion group; data were collected and analysed during this phase using different methods as could be seen in Figure 4.4.



**Figure 4.4: The action research phase of the study**

Generally speaking, the participants in this phase were the same individuals who participated in the case study as mentioned earlier (15 teachers and 3 SETs in the three schools). The action research phase of the study included three workshops 2 hours each making a total of 6 hours, the online discussion group which was active for 6 weeks and doing the third focus group interview with all research participants followed by 6 individual interviews to see participants'

reaction to the participatory model of CPD. Details of how the workshops, online discussion group and the focus group as well as the semi-structured interviews were designed, piloted and administered will be explained in the following sections.

## **4.7 Data collection process**

The data collection process started with the design of the study instruments (e.g. the online questionnaire, interview and observation schedules) and designing the workshops. This was followed by a pilot of all phases of the study and making changes and improvements before carrying out the actual study and administering the instruments.

### ***4.7.1 Design of the study instruments***

#### ***4.7.1.1 The online questionnaire design***

The online questionnaire was designed to investigate teachers' beliefs about teaching as a job and their beliefs and experiences of CPD. Some questions and statements of the questionnaire were designed with reference to the training and other CPD activities offered by the MOE for English teachers and SETs as discussed in Chapter Two, and on the basis of my personal experience of working as a teacher trainer in Oman. Other statements and questions were developed from the literature review and previous questionnaires about teaching as a profession and CPD (e.g. Wai Yan, 2011; Al-Lamki, 2009; Tantranont, 2009; Karavas, 2010; Day, Flores & Viana, 2007; Goodall et al., 2005; Albelushi, 2003; Hustler et al., 2003). The online questionnaire which has 5 parts and 55 items in total was aiming to collect both quantitative and qualitative data; thus, the design of the questionnaire followed mostly a mixed format of five-item-Likert-rating scale, multiple choices and open-ended questions (see Appendix 2 the questionnaire). The mixed format questions were designed to help achieve the goals of this research (Robson, 2002).

Howell (2013) warns that there are a number of issues that should be guarded against when designing a questionnaire. He advises that questionnaires should only ask questions that are relevant and these should be kept to a minimum. This

is because people are busy and if presented with a long questionnaire it is highly likely to end up in the bin. Howell (2013) further proposes that the researcher should ensure questions are clear and understandable and include a covering letter that gives clear instructions and an explanation of the research project. In his view, the questions should be funnelled, which means moving from the general to the specific. He explains that it is necessary for personal information to be collected and this should be requested either at the beginning or end of the individual questionnaire. I took all these advice into account when I designed the online questionnaire for my study as I explain below.

The questionnaire starts with an introductory section including information for participants about the study and instructions for completing the questionnaire. It contains five main parts according to the investigated issues and to help answer the sub research questions. For instance, part (A) of the questionnaire investigated teachers' beliefs about teaching as a profession. Part (B) elicited teachers' beliefs about CPD, part (C) elicited teachers CPD experiences, part (D) asked participants about factors affecting their CPD, and part (E) asked them about participating in their CPD process. The following part of the questionnaire sought demographic information about teachers' gender, job title, age, years of experience in teaching English, school type, highest educational level and the educational governorate they are working in. In the last section of the questionnaire participants were asked if they would like to participate in the qualitative phases of the study (see Appendix 2 the questionnaire).

#### ***4.7.1.2 The interviews design***

Semi structured interviews were done with the case study participants twice. The first aimed at seeking clarifications about some issues that raised from the questionnaires and giving teachers a chance to talk more freely about their CPD beliefs and experiences. The second semi-structured interviews aimed to know participants' reaction to the participatory model of CPD. In general, through the process of designing both semi-structured interviews, I have taken into consideration the points discussed in designing semi-structured interviews by Robson (2002). He recommended that the interview schedule can include the

following: an introductory comment about the topic of the interview, a list of key questions, a set of associated prompts and probes, and closing comments.

Therefore, I developed my interview schedules with introductory comments followed by a number of questions which could help me to answer my sub research questions; each question has its follow up prompts and probes. All the questions, follow-up prompts and probes were designed to achieve the purposes of this study. For example, the first semi-structured interview schedule contains four sets of questions with 4 follow-up questions, prompts and probes; so there were 16 questions in total. The first set of questions in this interview sought teachers' beliefs regarding teaching as a job. The second set of questions focused on teachers' beliefs about CPD. The third set of questions sought participants' beliefs about the CPD events or activities they experienced. The last set of questions sought participants' beliefs about who should be responsible for teachers' CPD and what teachers themselves can do to develop professionally (see Appendix 3 semi-structured interview 1).

In terms of the three focus group interviews, the first focus group interview discussed SETs beliefs about teachers' CPD and the offered programmes/activities by the MOE (see Appendix 4 for the transcript for this interview) while the second one was about cascading the training of the 5 INSET days to teachers (see Appendix 5 for the transcript for this interview). Both of these focus group interviews were unstructured and participants shared their views according to the discussed topics. The third focus group interview was with all case study participants (all English staff teachers and SETs in the three schools; 18 in total). It aimed at seeking participants' reaction to the participatory model of CPD; their beliefs about the workshops and the online discussions they participated in.

This third focus group interview was different from the previous two focus group interviews in that it was semi-structured and has a schedule that included three sets of questions with 12 questions in total. The first set of questions asked teachers' about their participation in the workshop. The second set of questions sought teachers' views and experience of participating in the online discussion group. The last set of questions explored teachers' views about the participatory model of CPD, whether they think this model should be added to the CPD system

in Oman, how can teachers themselves build similar learning communities and how can they become more active participants in their CPD process. This interview was then done again with 6 individual participants to dig deeply on some issues discussed in the third focus group interview as stated above (see Appendix 6 third focus group interview schedule).

#### **4.7.1.3 The observations schedule design**

The observations I carried out focused on the aims of the training sessions and the input in relation to the session aims. It focuses on what knowledge and skills participants are expected to gain from the training session (Guskey, 2000). I developed an observation schedule for this purpose. When designing this observation schedule for data collection, I considered a number of issues as suggested by Bryman (2012). He recommends having a clear focus where the researcher knows who and what he/she is observing, and the research problem needs to be clearly stated so that the observer knows which things are going to be recorded out of the many things happening during the observation.

Hence, the observation schedule I developed focused on the aims of the training sessions and the input (skills and knowledge participants are expected to gain from the sessions). Such input included all activities participants did and both the trainer and trainees (teachers) role in carrying out these activities, as well as the social arrangements in which the task was carried out. Moreover, the observation schedule had a space to write the trainers reflection on the session during the post-observation discussion (see Appendix 7 observation schedule).

#### **4.7.1.4 Action research design**

My research participants and I designed three workshops (2 hours each) to introduce participants to the “participatory model” of CPD. The aim behind these workshops was to introduce participants to the idea of involving them as teachers in participatory forms of learning activities, and building a learning community for teachers’ CPD (Hung & Yeh, 2013). The workshops also focused on how participants can follow up learning after an INSET course, workshop or any other CPD activity they participate in through such a participatory model of CPD. In designing these workshops I referred to my previous experience of designing

workshops and to Malderez and Wedell (2007) on how to prepare a detailed session plan.

For example, I designed the first workshop by identifying the aims; what I was planning to achieve by the end of that workshop. These aims are based, of course, on considerations of desired 'target needs' (Malderez & Wedell, 2007) which were in this case, raising participants' awareness of the participatory model of CPD and how they can use this model to develop professionally. Then I wrote the different types of tasks/activities of the first workshop that helped me to achieve the workshop aims. I also indicated the type of classroom organisation needed for each task/activity (e.g. group work, pair work, and whole class). This was important to help me check I had variety and reminds me to think about whether I need a random pairing/grouping activity beforehand or I will assign pairs/groups. I also listed the materials needed for each task, and planned and wrote the estimated time needed to complete each task. This is because I used the finished workshop plan as a guide during the workshop.

However, I was concerned regarding the achievement of the aims of the workshop; I thought that such way of doing the workshops might not be enough to help teachers understand the participatory model of CPD and use it to take responsibility for their own CPD. Therefore, I decided to train teachers on this participatory model and to apply it practically in this group. To achieve this purpose, we agreed to establish an online discussion group to share ideas, reflect on the first workshop and suggest the next workshop content. The online discussion group was created using an online application called 'Whats App'. Moreover, I decided to engage participants in the process of designing and delivering the following two workshops.

Accordingly, workshop (1) was 2 hours long and it was totally led by me so I designed it, prepared the materials and delivered it. In this workshop, I also asked participants to organise themselves into five different groups according to the five topics I gave them for reading. Teachers were given the freedom to choose the group they want to work with according to the topic they preferred/were interested in (see Appendix 8.a first workshop design and materials). In workshop (2) (also 2 hours long) both of us have contributed (me and the participants); it was designed and delivered by the participants based on the materials I gave them in

workshop (1), and the advice and support I offered in the online discussion group through answering their questions and queries.

Thus, participants used the five reading articles from workshop (1) to plan workshop (2). Each group planned together their topic and agreed on how they were going to present it to the whole group. By the end of the second workshop, I asked participants' to use the online discussion group to reflect on the second workshop and suggest the content for the third workshop through a whole week. Thus, workshop (3) which also lasted for 2 hours was totally led by the participants, they thought of its content, prepared the materials, planned the session and delivered it. They planned this workshop based on their comments and reflections on workshop (2) (see Appendix 9, examples of workshops 2 & 3 designed by participants). The five groups agreed to discuss in this workshop how they can apply the ideas from the five reading articles and how can they overcome the challenges they might face with the application of these ideas. They also discussed how they can continue their PD using other participatory ways than the ones suggested in the five articles (e.g. writing co-proposals for international conferences and co-presenting...etc). Once I finished designing all the above data collection instruments and the action research, they were piloted before administering them in the main study.

#### ***4.7.2 Piloting the study instruments***

It is necessary to pilot your study instruments before actually administering them to provide evidence regarding levels of participants' comprehension and to ensure that the research instruments as a whole function well (Howell, 2013; Bryman, 2012).

##### ***4.7.2.1 Piloting the online questionnaire***

The aim of piloting the online questionnaire was clarifying and improving the questions, identifying gaps and areas that need to be addressed, and increasing the reliability, validity and practicality of the questionnaire (Oppenheim, 2000). The online questionnaire was piloted in April 2015 with the English staff of three schools in Oman: a cycle one (primary school), a cycle two (preparatory school) and a post basic (secondary school). Each of these schools has 9 English



teachers and 1 SET, so there was a total of 30 English teachers and SETs who participated in the pilot study.

The pilot participants were self-selected and assumed to be a representative sample of the actual study sample as they were teachers and SETs from the three different educational phases (primary, preparatory and secondary). I contacted the three SETs by telephone to explain the purpose of the study and the online questionnaire, and they all showed willingness to take part in the study. I sent the online questionnaire as a smartphone link; participants answered the questionnaire items within three days of sending the link. The data from the pilot online questionnaires were analysed using SPSS, and open-ended questions were analysed qualitatively for themes.

In general, piloting the questionnaire helped in identifying the following areas that needed to be improved in the questionnaire:

- Some participants felt that the instructions for the multiple choice questions were not clear (especially when a question asked teachers to choose more than one option). Therefore, the instructions for these types of questions were changed to “choose all that apply” to increase respondents’ comprehension of the instructions.
- Some participants felt that some questions were too long (e.g. Q 8 and 34), so I tried to improve these questions by making them less wordy and more comprehensive.
- Item 15 asked teachers about their experience of doing action research without providing an example or a definition for the term, so some participants did not answer this question. To improve the question, a definition was provided for the term.
- Some participants noticed that some current INSET and other CPD activities are missing in Q34 (e.g. language courses, TKT course, NET course), so these items were added to the question.

#### ***4.7.2.2 Piloting the case study***

Yin (2014) stressed that piloting case studies can help researchers to refine their data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the

procedures to be followed. In his view, geographic proximity, access and convenience can be the main criteria for selecting a pilot case. In fact, I chose my pilot case to study according to these three issues. First of all, I chose a one day curriculum workshop to be my case to study in the pilot stage. Secondly, I chose a group of (teachers + a SET) totally four who joined together this workshop and who experienced mainly the same CPD activities offered by the Ministry of Education in the past. I also chose this case because it was easy to access them as they live in the same geographical area where I live. The pilot case study was conducted in July 2015.

The pilot case study participants were interviewed at the beginning. Four interviews were done at the pilot stage of the case study. The purpose of that was to improve the interview questions and to practice transcribing. The transcripts helped in taking decisions about which language to be used in conducting the actual interviews. For example, I noticed that participants answered the majority of the questions briefly and the answers did not reflect a good level of understanding these questions. To get richer responses to these questions from the participants, I asked participants if it was better to use L1 (Arabic) to do the interviews and they all agreed on that. I considered this in the actual interviews and asked participants at the beginning if they prefer to do the interviews in L1 or in English.

#### ***4.7.2.3 Piloting the action research***

The same four participants chosen for the pilot case study were chosen to do the pilot action research with. The first workshop I designed to introduce the participatory model of CPD was piloted with those four teachers. The pilot action research was done in July 2015. I carried out the workshop with the four teachers at their school. The piloting of the workshop provided some useful information on how to improve the workshop for the actual study. For example, I noticed that some activities were boring for the participants (e.g. reading an article on the participatory model of CPD) and it took a very long time. Thus, I decided to change this activity by summarising the article points in power point slides and presenting these points in a discussion based manner.

### **4.7.3 Administering the study instruments**

#### **4.7.3.1 Phase one**

During this phase, a stratified sample was selected for distributing the online questionnaires. Letters had been sent to colleague teacher trainers in the middle of April 2015 asking for assistance to distribute the questionnaire link to English teachers and SETs according to the sample selected in each educational governorate in Oman as shown in Table 4.1 and 4.2 earlier in the chapter. For example, the letter sent to the trainer in Muscat governorate explained the purposes of the online questionnaire and that the sample from this governorate is 52 English teachers and 7 SETs. The trainer sent the questionnaire to double number of teachers and SETs in their governorate (e.g. 100 English teachers and 14 SETs). I was happy with the first 52 who answered from the total of all the teachers who received the questionnaire and accordingly closed access to the questionnaire link which was administered online. The same was done for the remaining 10 educational governorates in Oman.

The online questionnaire was sent to participants as a link. Participants could open the link which contained the questionnaire from any device (e.g. their laptops, i-pads or smart phones). Once any questionnaire was completed, as a researcher I received a notification, and started the analysis of the data immediately (AL-Balushi, 2015; Buchanan & Hvizdak, 2009; Umbach, 2004). A total of 138 questionnaire responses were received by the middle of May 2015. Follow up reminders were sent to those participants who did not respond to remind them to complete the online questionnaire. A total of 331 questionnaire responses were received from participants by the end of May 2015.

#### **4.7.3.2 Phase two**

During this phase I conducted both the individual semi-structured and 2 focus-group interviews, and did the observations. Regarding the interviews, a convenient location and time for conducting the interview was arranged with each participant. All participants (15 teachers and 3 SETs in total) were interviewed about their beliefs about CPD and the 3 SETs were also asked about their experience of cascading training to teachers. The interviews were conducted in

August and September 2015. All interviews lasted approximately 20-40 minutes (each) and all were conducted in L1 (Arabic language) since this is participants' mother tongue and when I asked them at the beginning of the interviews if they prefer it in Arabic, all agreed on that.

In terms of conducting the observations, the teacher trainer and the course participants were informed about the training room observations after requesting their consent. The programme was a 5 day INSET course targeting all SETs in that governorate; each day consisted of 4 and half hours training and half an hour break. Sessions were observed and notes taken using the observation schedule specified for that for each observed training day. In total I observed 22 and a half hours; four and half hours per day. The first two days focused on teaching Jolly Phonics, days 3 and 4 focused on teaching shared reading and day 5 focused on how SETs can cascade the training of these sessions to English teachers at schools. All observations were conducted in September 2015.

#### **4.7.3.3 Phase three**

This phase consisted of doing the workshops, online discussion groups and interviewing participants to see their reaction to the participatory model. The workshops were carried out with the same case study participants in October 2015. A convenient location and time for conducting the workshops that suits all the 18 participants was arranged. The workshops were carried out in the three different schools. There were three workshops in total (2 hours each); each workshop was done at a school and all participants from the three schools (18 participants in total) attended the three workshops. The workshops focused on introducing participants to the participatory model of CPD. Participants actively participated in the workshops and completed all the activities.

As stated earlier, I designed and delivered workshop (1) according to the workshop plan (see Appendix 8/a, first workshop design and materials). In workshop (2), participants divided themselves into the 5 different groups according to the 5 reading articles they had and agreed on the different times to present about their reading article to the whole group; explaining what is this idea and its' importance for English teachers' CPD (see Appendix 8/b, the reading

articles). Group (1) presented about activating 'Practitioner-based activities' such as doing action research, reflection on teaching using journals, peer observation, team teaching. Group (2) discussed about activating 'Communities of practice' in Oman between English teachers for their CPD such as online discussion groups, What's app groups (see Appendix 9 for examples of participants design of workshops 2 & 3).

In addition, group (3) deliberated about 'Creating an intellectual atmosphere for intellectual debate' in which the idea of Omani English teachers as intellectuals was discussed and an example was given from choosing the Shura council 'political representatives for different states in Oman (an event that was taking place during the time of the workshops, in october,2015). This group showed participants how participating in intellectual debates like choosing the Shura council representatives or any other debates can be activated as a way of teachers' CPD. Group (4) discussed about 'the centrality of reading as a culture (encouraging teachers to read) through which this group discussed the idea of motivating teachers to read and making reading a daily habit for them to develop professionally' and how teachers also transfer such motivation for reading to their students. Group (5) looked at 'the centrality of reading as a culture (which focused on motivating students to read), and creating reading cultures in Omani schools.

Each group presented their topic in 20 minutes (20x5=100 minutes) and the last 20 minutes were used to reflect on the presented ideas. I watched their ideas and discussions in the group and sometimes contributed to these discussions. Participants agreed to use the following workshop, workshop (3) to discuss the application of these ideas in reality and the challenges they might face. Accordingly, in workshop (3) each group discussed how their presented topic can be applied by English teachers in Oman, the challenges associated with it and how to overcome these challenges. Again, each group in this workshop used 20 minutes to present their topic and the last 20 minutes we used to reflect on all the presented ideas in the three workshops and how these ideas could be discussed further in the online discussion group.

The online discussion group was established by the end of October 2015 and continued till the middle of December, 2015. A teacher initiated establishing a

'WhatsApp' group and wrote a monthly timetable showing who will be responsible for leading the discussion every day during the month which was agreed to be rotated. The majority of the participants participated actively in the online discussions and reflected on issues discussed in the action research workshops, what have they learnt from these workshops, the ideas they applied in reality and any questions they have. I noticed that their contributions in the online group were really beneficial, so I used some clips from their discussion as a data and analysed them qualitatively within the other sources of qualitative data at the action research phase (e.g. focus group interview 3 and individual semi-structured interviews) to answer the last research question "How do in-service TESOL teachers in Oman react to the participatory model of CPD? (see Appendix 10 clips from the online discussions).

Guskey's (2000) model of CPD evaluation was used to evaluate the participatory model of CPD introduced in this third action research phase of the study by evaluating both the workshops and the online discussion posts. Therefore, after 6 weeks online discussions between the group members, we agreed on a time to do the focus group interview. Out of the 18 participants, 12 were interviewed together to see their views about the participatory model of CPD and if they found the online discussions useful to them. The other 6 participants were not able to join the focus group interview. This group interview was conducted in December 2015 and lasted approximately 45 minutes (see Appendix 11 transcript of the third focus group interview). This was followed by 6 individual follow up interviews to follow some issues raised in this focus group interview and dig more deeply into some individual responses. Therefore, from each of the three schools 2 participants (one teacher + the SET) were selected to do follow up individual interviews with.

#### **4.8 Data analysis and research findings**

Two types of data were collected in this study: quantitative and qualitative. For each type, some steps have been followed to organise the data, analyse it and present the research findings.

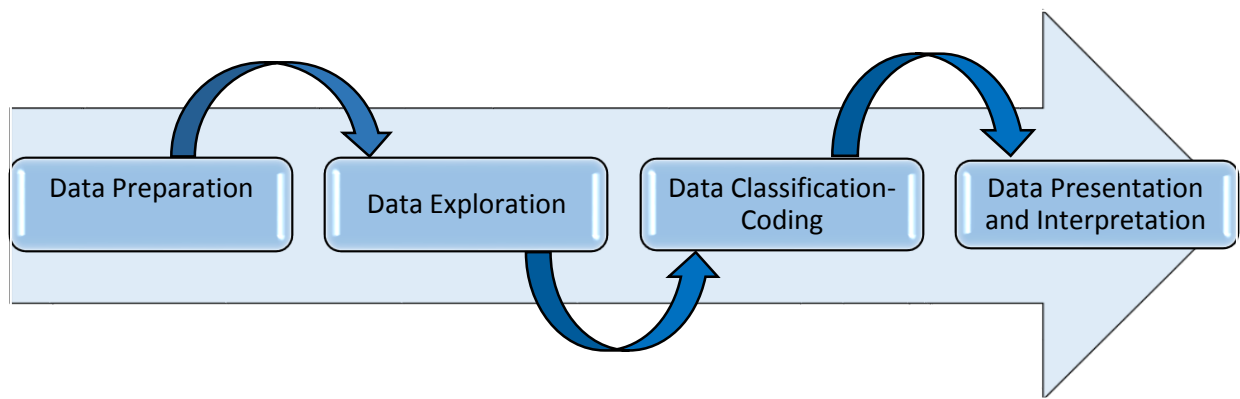
### **4.8.1 Quantitative data analysis**

Quantitative data are analysed using statistics requiring an understanding of the logic behind the statistical tools I decided to use and an appreciation of how and when to use them in actual research situations (Punch, 2014). The quantitative data gathered from the questionnaires (e.g. the 5-item-likert-scale and multiple choice questions) were analysed numerically using SPSS (the statistical package for the social sciences). Each statement was given a number that matches the statement number in the online questionnaire. For instance, the first statement in the questionnaire was coded as Q1, the second as Q2 and so on. Within each 5-item-likert-scale statement, each of the five choices/answers to the statements was given a score of 1-5 where 1 corresponds to "strongly agree" and 5 to "strongly disagree".

In the multiple choice questions, each of the answers to the statement was given a number according to the number of answer statements provided. For instance, if there are 8 answers to a specific question, the first answer was coded as 1 and the last as 8. Analysis of the data was conducted using descriptive statistics (mode, frequency and percentage) which were calculated and presented in tables and bar charts to help develop an understanding of the patterns of the data. Descriptive statistics were also used to describe the CPD activities teachers took part in by reporting on what has been found (Pallant, 2007). This was important as the initial analysis of the questionnaire data informed the selection of the case study.

### **4.8.2 Qualitative data analysis**

Qualitative data analysis involves preparing and organising the data for analysis, exploring the data then reducing it into themes through a coding process, and finally representing the data in figures, tables or a discussion (Jamieson, 2016; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Creswell, 2007). These steps, ones I followed in analysing qualitative data in my research, are presented in Figure 4.5 and will be discussed below in details.



**Figure 4.5: The process of qualitative data analysis**

#### **4.8.2.1 Preparing the data**

I started my data preparation by transcribing all interviews (the semi-structured and the focus group ones). Kvale (2009) advised that although there is no universal code or form for transcribing research interviews, there are some standard choices to be made. Should the interview be transcribed word-by-word, or should the interview be transformed into a more formal, written style? In his viewpoint, there is no correct, standard answer to such a question; the answer depends on the intended use of the transcripts, for instance, whether it is for a detailed linguistic or conversational analysis or for reporting the subject's account in a readable public story.

In order to be familiar with the interview data and take the right decisions for transcription, I listened to the interviews repeatedly and scrupulously. Then, the recorded data were transcribed and translated from Arabic to English through focusing on the meaning of participants words and reporting the participants' accounts in a readable public story (Jamieson, 2016; Kvale, 2009). Thus, the irrelevant and meaningless parts of the data were discarded (Spencer et al., 2003). In fact, my research questions and aims guided me on what to keep and what to omit (Kvale, 2009). However, care was taken not to miss any important, interesting or relevant information (see Appendix 12 for an example of a transcript).

In terms of the data gathered from the observation, the notes taken during the 5 days observation sessions using the observation schedules as well as the notes taken during the trainers' reflection on the observed sessions were scanned and



saved in PDF files in the computer (see Appendix 13 for example of observational data and post-observation discussion data). Moreover, data from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire were transferred into the computer through word processor. Then, the data were transformed into a tabular format and displayed according to participants' responses to each open-ended question (see Appendix 14 for example of data from open-ended questions).

Regarding data from the online discussion posts, I emailed some clips from these discussions to my personal email, then downloaded these clips and transferred them into a word document (see Appendix 10 for examples of clips from the online discussion posts). All these qualitative data were entered into a qualitative data analysis software programme called Nvivo to prepare them for data exploration and analysis. Due to the nature of my study and the large amounts of data involved in it, NVivo proved an excellent piece of software for storing, coding, cross-coding, performing various analytical tasks and providing a central place for holding all comments, notes and memos (Paulus, et al., 2017; Jamieson, 2016; Bryman, 2012).

#### ***4.8.2.2 Exploring the data***

Exploring the data in qualitative data analysis involves reading through all of the data to develop a general understanding of the data base (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). It means recoding initial thoughts through writing comments and/or short memos in the margins of field notes or transcripts (Jamieson, 2016; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). I started this process by reviewing all the qualitative data (interview transcripts, field notes from observations, responses to open-ended questions and clips from online discussion posts). I read these thoroughly and made memos with short phrases or ideas in the margins of these documents (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2017; Jamieson, 2016; Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). I also used annotations which acted as comments fields or footnotes in Word; these annotations were useful for making notes about a particular segment of text (Bazeley, 2007) (see Appendix 15 for an example of this).

Making these memos and annotations was a crucial step in forming broader categories of information such as codes or themes and by this time as well, a qualitative codebook was developed (Bradbury-Jones et al., 2017; Jamieson,

2016; Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). The codebook is a statement of the codes from the database which is generated during the project; it can rely on codes that emerged from the data during the analysis as well as codes from past literature (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This systematic process helped me a lot in managing and organizing the large amount of qualitative data that I had to prepare them for analysis, classifying and coding.

#### **4.8.2.3 Classifying and coding the data**

Qualitative data analysis mainly involves coding the data, dividing the text into small units (phrases, sentences or paragraphs), assigning a label to each unit, and then grouping the codes into themes (Jamieson, 2016; Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). However, such an approach to thematic analysis only provides one way of thinking about managing data and themes, it does not necessarily tell the user ways of identifying themes or codes (Bryman, 2012; Braun & Clarke, 2006). Hence, in order to identify codes and themes from my data, I have reduced the data from open-ended responses, interview transcripts, observation and post-observation discussion notes and clips from the online discussions into meaningful segments and assigned names to the segments, and combined the codes into broader themes or categories (Jamieson, 2016; Creswell, 2013; 2007). The coding labels came from the exact words of the participants (e.g. extracts from the interviews transcripts, see Appendix 15, an example of a coded interview).

The NVivo software that I used was indeed a great assistance in this process as it enabled me to block and label text segments with codes so they could be easily retrieved; it organised the codes into a visual making it possible to diagram and see the relationship among them; and search for segments of text that contain multiple codes (Paulus, et al., 2017; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Then, I looked for similarities and differences between the different sources of data and then organised these into main themes/categories and sub-themes/categories. In this process, the themes, interrelated themes, or larger perspectives are the results or findings which provide answers to the research questions (Paulus, et al., 2017; Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

#### **4.8.2.4 Presenting and interpreting the findings**

Representing the results in qualitative study may involve a discussion of the evidence for the categories or themes; presentation of figures that depict the physical setting of the study, or diagrams presenting frameworks, theories or models (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Grbich, 2010). In the case of my study, representation of data and results from the different sources of qualitative data also involved “juxtapositioning of data”, visuals and the context to compare and contrast one set of information against another (Grbich, 2010:163). That is, layering of stories to compare and contrast different viewpoints or experiences of participants.

After presenting the results, the researcher next makes an interpretation of the meaning of the results which often comes in the discussion section of the report (Paulus, et al., 2017; Jamieson, 2016; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). An alternative approach, one I followed is to interpret the meaning of some results directly after presenting them in my data analysis chapter regarding the discussed category/theme and based on my experience and the literature. This was followed by a further interpretation in the discussion chapter through advancing the larger meaning of these results and weaving my views as a researcher with those of a number of theorists (Grbich, 2010) in the view of my research problem and the whole educational context in Oman.

The research findings are thus presented in Chapter 5 and mainly guided the main issues investigated in this study: teachers’ beliefs about teaching as a profession, their beliefs about CPD, their CPD experiences, factors affecting teachers’ CPD and the participatory model of CPD. In general, the chapter is organised according to the 5 research questions and the findings from both the quantitative data (online questionnaires) and qualitative data (case study and action research) were used to address these. The presentation of the findings was supported by the use of statistics, graphs and tables as appropriate to help showing the patterns existing in the findings. After presenting the research findings, the following discussion chapter pulled the main threads together and offers big picture explanations of the findings.

## **4.9 Research quality**

Consistent with the recommendations from mixed methods literature (Shannon-Baker; 2015; Ivankova, 2014; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010; Morse & Niehaus, 2009; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) to secure data quality in mixed methods studies like this one, separate procedures were used to assess the reliability, validity and ensure generalizability of the quantitative data and results, and the credibility and trustworthiness of the qualitative data and findings as well as the reflexivity of the researcher in ensuring research quality.

### ***4.9.1 Reliability, validity and generalizability of quantitative data and results***

Reliability and validity of the questionnaire data was assessed using regular psychometric procedures. In quantitative studies, reliability refers to the purity and consistency of the measures, to the repeatability and the probability of obtaining the same results again if the measure were to be duplicated (Punch, 2014; Oppenheim, 2000). In this study, after the online questionnaire administration, the internal consistency reliability of the questionnaire scales and items were checked through the application of Cronbach's alpha tests of inter-reliability correlations. The analysis offered an indication of the degree of correlation between all the items for the 4 scales "beliefs about teaching", "beliefs about CPD", "CPD experiences", and "impact of CPD". In all 4 scales the Cronbach's alpha coefficient value was .70 or greater which indicates that this questionnaire met the internal consistency reliability (see Appendix 16 reliability statistics).

Validity in questionnaire research tells us whether the scale measured what it is supposed to measure (Punch, 2014; Pallant, 2007; Oppenheim, 2000). Tests of content validity were undertaken in this study. Content validity "refers to the adequacy with which a measure or scale has sampled from the intended universe or domain of content" (Pallant, 2007:7). Several steps were undertaken to assess the content validity of the self-developed online questionnaire instrument. First, books and articles addressing the issue were consulted to locate previous research and identify major themes as discussed earlier in section (4.7.1.1 online questionnaire design).

In view of the above and in order to better determine whether the items measured what they sought to measure, I used an expert panel consisting of my two supervisors who teach research methods at the University of Exeter and four colleagues who have a long experience of working as TESOL teachers, SETs and teacher educators. They all (the 2 supervisors and 4 colleagues) revised and critiqued the questionnaire and suggested some changes related to the questionnaire layout, reordering the wording in some items, avoiding challenging terms, adding some more items, providing examples for some statements and making some questions shorter. After the feedback I received from this expert panel, the whole questionnaire was revised and changes were done accordingly. For example, one of the four TESOL teachers noticed that the terms CPD and continuous professional development were used interchangeably in the questionnaire and suggested using one of them to show consistency. Hence, to avoid any misinterpretation by the participants, the term continuous professional development was used throughout the questionnaire. Furthermore, the questionnaire instrument was pilot tested as stated earlier and changes were made accordingly.

Generalizability refers to drawing some conclusions about a whole group based on data collected from a representative sample of that group (Denscombe, 2002). When using questionnaires, the “researcher is usually concerned to be able to say that his/her findings can be generalized beyond the confines of the particular context in which the research was conducted” (Bryman, 2012:176). In this case, the researcher will need to consider the extent to which the sample represents the whole population in question (Punch, 2014; Flick, 2011). I believe that this sample is a representative sample of the whole population for a number of reasons. First of all, this sample is representing English teachers and SETs from the 11 different governorates in Oman. Moreover, the sample is representing both gender teachers and teachers with different experiences of teaching (novice and experienced).

In addition, the sample represents Omanis and non-Omanis since as explained in Chapter Two there are many expatriate male teachers teaching English in Omani schools. Moreover, the sample constitutes teachers who have had different kinds of CPD experiences and got involved in various kinds of CPD

activities such as, workshops, INSET courses, conferences and symposiums, attending university degree courses, and other forms of CPD. The sample thus is representative in relation to the investigated issues in this study (ELT and English teachers' CPD) in Oman. Consequently, the research findings and results of this study can be relevant and applied to the whole population (all English teachers and SETs) in Oman generally.

#### ***4.9.2 Credibility and trustworthiness of qualitative data and findings***

Creswell (2009) advised that throughout the process of data collection and analysis, the researcher needs to validate his/her findings. This means that the researcher should determine the accuracy or credibility of the findings or make sure that his/her findings and interpretations are accurate. There are varied terms that qualitative researchers use to describe the validity and reliability of the data. For example, Lincoln and Guba (1985) used the term trustworthiness which is made up of four criteria (credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability) as well as authenticity while Creswell (2007, 2009) used the terms accuracy or credibility to describe the same things. Per Creswell's (2009) recommendations, I used three primary strategies to ensure credibility and trustworthiness of the qualitative data and findings in my study: triangulation, member checking, and auditing. Triangulation is the process of corroborating evidence from different individuals (teachers and SETs in my study), or methods of data collection (e.g. observation field-notes, semi-structured and focus-group interviews) in descriptions and themes in qualitative research (Punch, 2014; Flick, 2011; Creswell, 2009). Triangulation of data was used to secure corroborating evidence in the data; thus to enhance the accuracy of my study.

Moreover, in order to ensure accuracy of the recorded data and presentation of participants' views, member checking was conducted (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Through the process of member checking, the researcher can ask one or more of the study participants to check the accuracy of the accounts (Jamieson, 2016; Creswell, 2009). Thus, I chose three participants and sent each one an extended summary of the interview done with each requesting them to verify its accuracy. I passed participants summary transcripts in English to check the quality of my

translation of the interviews from Arabic to English. Although two of them confirmed the accuracy of the recording, one participant used these summaries to further clarify her views and the meaning of some comments made during the interview.

Furthermore, I conducted an external audit where I asked a colleague (a person outside the project) to conduct a thorough review of the interview, observation and post-observation discussion data to ensure consistency in coding and thematic categorisation (Paulus, et al., 2017; Creswell, 2009). I first coded the interview transcripts, the observational data and post-observation discussion data and categorised the themes for all qualitative data. Then, I asked a colleague to look at the data, my codes and themes. She looked at it first, and then we sat together and discussed the codes and themes. Inter-coder agreement was assessed at 95% on themes and 91% on codes (Ivankova, 2014).

### **4.9.3 Reflexivity**

My role in this research was as a reflexive insider. Shacklock and Smyth (1998:6) propose that “Reflexivity in research is built on an acknowledgment of the ideological and historical power dominant forms of inquiry exert over the researcher and the researched”. Woods et al., (2016:387) described the reflexive researcher as “the researcher’s self-awareness and understanding of what they bring to the research act: their capabilities, knowledge, experience, values, hopes, fears, as well as their epistemological and ontological assumptions”. My role was more self-reflexive; such a role helped me to seek similarities between me (as a researcher) and my participants which made me closer to my participants (Pillow, 2003). Having a self-reflexive role helped me in using my own work experiences (my experience of training TESOL teachers) to find similarities with the case study I was investigating, and to gather the data from the case that helped me reflect on that experience. However, such a role can be challenging for the researcher.

For example, carrying out reflexive analysis can always be problematic; it might be difficult to unfold my experiences especially when they are invariably complex, ambiguous, and ambivalent (Woods et al., 2016; Grbich, 2010; Finlay, 2002). Being preoccupied by my own emotions and experiences, however; can skew my

research findings in undesirable directions. In this way, my position as a researcher can become unduly privileged, blocking out the participant's voice (Finlay, 2002). In order to avoid this, I sought to create a balance by making my participants' voices clearly visible in my data analysis section and avoiding allowing my personal inferences to affect the data as far as possible; instead my interpretations were based on what my data showed and reflected on my experience. Within such data analysis approaches and reflexivity, when considering participants' thoughts and behaviours as well as how accounts were represented, important ethical considerations were borne in mind.

#### **4.10 Ethical considerations**

Ethical considerations are an important part of any research and several ethical issues can confront researchers (Lancaster, 2017; Lie & Witteveen, 2017; Punch, 2014). While doing this research, I followed the Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research set by the Council of the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011), as well as the University of Exeter, GSE Ethics policy at every stage of conducting this research as I discuss below.

##### ***4.10.1 Access and acceptance***

At the beginning of this study, ethical approval was obtained from the University of Exeter, Graduate School of Education Research Ethics Committee prior to data collection (see Appendix 17). This was followed by obtaining access to teachers and SETs and avoiding any act of unethical behaviour. To do so, I got the permission of the organization to which those teachers belong which is the MOE in Oman. I wrote a letter in Arabic (the official language of the country) to the technical office at the Ministry (the office which is responsible for granting permission for researchers) in March 2015. This letter explained the purpose of my study, the different research phases, data collection methods and all participants who were expected to take part in the study (see Appendix 17). Supporting documents were attached to the letter such as consent forms and a copy of the questionnaire. The technical office thankfully issued letters to the different 11 educational governorates to allow me as a researcher to collect data for the study and to ensure maximum support from the research participants.



#### **4.10.2 Informed consent**

Consent usually involves the procedures through which individual participants might choose either to participate in the study or not. The task of the researcher is to make sure that those who agreed to take part in the study have a full understanding of the study in terms of the purpose, the methods to be used, any risks involved and what is required from them as participants, and their right to withdraw from the study at any time (Lie & Witteveen, 2017; BERA, 2011). Nevertheless, the challenge within consent forms might be what information about the research should be included for the participants (Punch, 2014; Khanlou & Peter, 2005). I believe that researchers should avoid 'contaminating' their study 'by informing subjects too specifically about the research questions to be studied' (Silverman, 2000:200). Thus, I only included in the consent form a description of the research project and its purpose, the methods to be used and details regarding the protection of confidentiality (Lie & Witteveen, 2017; Khanlou & Peter, 2005) (see Appendix 18).

#### **4.10.3 Issues of anonymity and confidentiality**

The essence of anonymity is that the information provided by the study participants should not reveal their identity (Lancaster, 2017). Confidentiality refers to a participant's right to privacy which mean that although the researcher knows who has provided the information, the connection should not be known publicly (Lancaster, 2017; Punch, 2014; Flick, 2011). In this study, assurances of confidentiality and anonymity were outlined within the framework of voluntary informed consent, in the instructions accompanied with the online questionnaire, and in interviews. In terms of the online questionnaires, they did not include any names or any codes, so participants cannot be identified. Moreover, participants' permission was granted to audio record the interviews before these went ahead. I also used pseudonyms when presented the research findings in the thesis.

#### **4.10.4 Issues of bias**

In this study, I was an insider who participated in the research through interviewing participants, observing them, doing workshops with them and participating in an online discussion group with them. The insider researcher is 'someone whose biography (gender, race, class, sexual orientation and so on)

gives her/him a lived familiarity with the group being researched' (Mercer, 2007:3 citing Griffith, 1998). Yet, conducting insider research is like wielding a double edged sword which has the advantage of the familiarity of the researcher and the risk of bias from the researcher and/or the participants (Lancaster, 2017; Mercer, 2007). In other words, insiders will undoubtedly have a better initial understanding of the social setting as they know the context; they understand the subtle and diffuse links between situations and events (Unluer, 2012 citing Tolhurst, 2002).

Participants, however, might be more willing to bare their souls to a detached outsider than to someone so closely bound up within the institution's life and so involved in its power relations (Dimmock, personal communication, 2005 cited in Mercer, 2007). In order to avoid this, I did the case study and action research in another educational governorate not the one I worked in, where the participants do not know me and have no idea about my job and this probably encouraged them to share their concerns and accounts with me which also helped in avoiding any bias from the researcher or the participants.

#### **4.11 Research methodology constraints**

Despite the early preparations, there were some unexpected limitations faced throughout the different phases of this research particularly in the data collection phase which had to be addressed. For example, the major difficulty I faced in the questionnaire phase of data collection was the response rate which was only 39%. In fact, this is a fundamental problem facing many online questionnaire researchers (Couper, 2013; Van Gelder et al., 2010; Andrews et al., 2003; Couper, 2000). This meant that not all participants involved in the sample were able or willing to complete the questionnaire. To improve the response rate, some studies suggested that in order to generate new waves of responses, the researcher can send follow-up reminders after an initial questionnaire request (Zhang, 2000). I tried this strategy and it worked very well in my context as I sent a follow up reminder to my colleagues who sent it to teachers. This resulted in increasing the response rate from 39% gradually to 61%; a third follow up reminder was sent to teachers and this resulted in a response rate of 84%.

In the qualitative phase of the study, I faced the difficulty of choosing an appropriate case to study from the large amount of data I analysed from questionnaires that could help me answer my research questions and achieve its

aims. In fact, it is well documented in the literature that one of the common pitfalls associated with case studies is that there is a tendency for researchers to try to answer a question which is too broad or a topic that has too many objectives for one study (Baxter & Jack, 2008). To prevent this from occurring, several authors have suggested that the researcher can place boundaries on a case (Punch, 2014; Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009; Stake, 1995). Suggestions on how to bind a case include: (a) by time and place (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995); (b) time and activity (Stake, 1995) or by defining the case (Creswell, 2013). Binding the case can ensure that the study remains reasonable in scope.

Therefore, I bound the case by observing the 5 INSET days provided to SETs by the Ministry, investigating the cascade SETs did to the teachers in the three schools, and exploring the PD activities done at schools to see if teachers benefited from them. It would have been impractical and unreasonable for me to have endeavoured to have looked at all CPD opportunities (e.g. INSET courses, workshops, conferences...etc) in Oman or all schools in the selected governorate.

#### **4.12 Summary of Chapter Four**

Aiming to change the Government's current CPD system applied to in-service TESOL teachers in Oman and challenging those teachers' thinking about their CPD, the present research adopts a critical paradigm. Thus it uses a multi-methodology transformative design that adopts mixed-methods to collect data. I have argued that this provides a wide data set upon which to base research and theory. To dig deeply into the CPD system, the study adopts a case study as one way to investigate teachers' benefit and/or disadvantage from the offered CPD activities and to address need for change and improvement, the study also has had an action research phase. This chapter detailed the philosophical assumptions underpinning this study, the research design, data collection, and data analysis methods and procedures, as well as issues of research quality and ethical considerations. Having done this, the following chapter presents the findings of the current study.

# Chapter Five: Findings

## 5.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on analysing both the quantitative and the qualitative data collected from the online questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, observations, post-observation discussions and some clips from the online discussions. It shows not only how my different data sources converged to support each other, but also how they diverged (Brown, 2014). The chapter presents the research findings in relation to five major themes which are: teachers' beliefs about teaching as a profession, teachers' beliefs about CPD, teachers' CPD experiences, successful vs unsuccessful CPD and teachers' participation in their CPD.

The chapter starts by presenting demographic information from the online questionnaire. Such information appears to be of high importance in presenting the findings as it shows some important differences among participants' beliefs according to some background factors like gender, age and teaching experience. Then, the chapter highlights the findings according to the emerging themes, categories and sub-categories from the data. These will be presented and supported by evidence extracts from the different sources of data as well as from visual models, figures and/or tables. The results will also be interpreted by reflecting on the personal meaning of the findings along with comparing them to the literature to show how they validate and/or contradict findings of other studies.

## 5.2 Demographic information from the questionnaires

The online questionnaire investigated teachers' beliefs about teaching as a job and their beliefs and experiences of CPD. The last part of the questionnaire gained some background information about the respondents (e.g. gender, job title, age, teaching experience, educational phase they are teaching in and the educational governorate they are working in). A total of 331 English teachers and Senior English teachers (SETs) responded to the questionnaire from all 11 educational governorates in Oman as shown in Table 5.1 below.

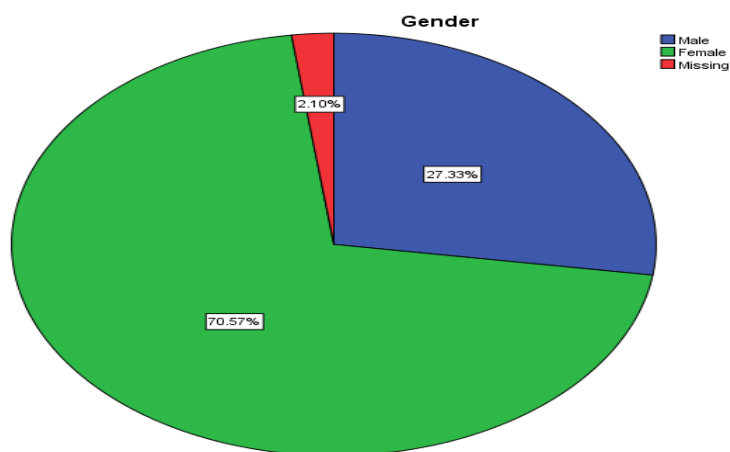
Educational Governorate	Sample of Teachers/SETs	No of received questionnaires	Response rate
Muscat	59	54	91.5%
North of Al-Batinah	74	53	71.6%
South of Al-Batinah	47	43	91.4%
Al-Dakhliya	58	45	77.5%
South of Al-Sharkiya	34	25	73.5%
North of Al-Sharkiya	33	29	87.8%
Al-Buraimi	10	10	100%
Al-Dhahira	27	25	92.5%
Dhofar	42	34	80.9%
Al-Wusta	7	7	100%
Musandam	6	6	100%
Total	393	331	84%

**Table 5.1: Distribution of participants by educational governorate**

Taking into account that the questionnaire was administered online, this over all response rate 84% is considered as a high response rate since online questionnaire researchers often suffer from a low response rate (Al-Balushi, 2015). In fact, the response rate was generally very good from both types of participants who took part in the study (English teachers and SETs). For example, the survey was completed by the whole sample of 48 SETs (100%) and by 283 teachers (81% of the target sample).

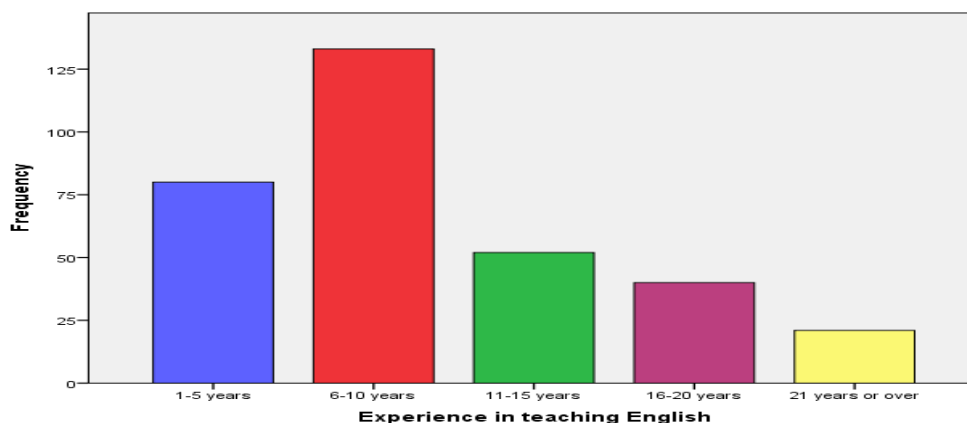
### **5.2.1 Participants' profile**

Out of the total 331 participants who responded to the questionnaire, 91 (27.3%) were male while 235 (70.5%) were female (Figure 5.1 below). This overall high number of female participants in comparison to male participants could be due to the fact that all teachers who teach in primary schools in Oman are female teachers. Thus, these numbers of female teachers are representing the three educational phases in Oman (primary, preparatory and secondary) schools whereas the 91 male teachers are only from preparatory and secondary schools.



**Figure 5.1: Distribution of participants according to gender**

In terms of participants' age, the vast majority of the participants 159 (47.7%) were aged between 27-31 years whilst the minority of them 22 (6%) were 42 years or over. Similarly, the highest number of participants 133 (39.9%) have 6-10 years of teaching experience. However, the lowest number of participants, 21 (6%) have 21 years or over of teaching experience (see Figure 5.2). This is because English teaching in the past was mainly done by expatriate teachers who left the country when Omanis started taking their place after graduation and this is connected to the development of the educational system which started after 1970 as stated in the background chapter.



**Figure 5.2: Distribution of participants-teaching experience**

### 5.3 Qualitative data analysis

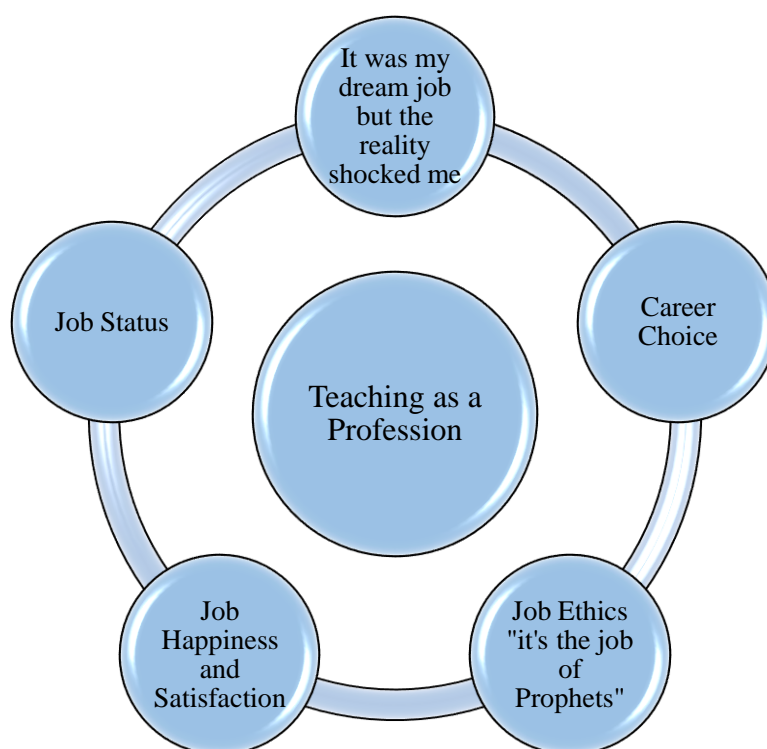
Qualitative data were analysed as mentioned in the previous chapter (section 4.8.2) using 4 different steps. In the following table (Table 5.2) I provide an example of that by using example extracts from the different qualitative data sources and showing how these have been coded and how the codes are clustered into categories, sub themes and/or themes.

**Table 5.2: Example of qualitative data analysis, using different sources of data**

Step (1)	Step (2)	Step (3)	Step (4)	Step (5)
Quotations/extracts/data sources	Codes	categories	Sub-themes	Themes
1. <i>“The Ministry offers many training courses and workshops for English teachers each year, I joined three different courses in the training centre during the last few years for example, the Cycle 1 course, the Jolly Phonics course and TKT course....”</i> Amna (data from semi-structured interview)	*Training teachers in the training centre	INSET courses	Formal structured activities	Teachers CPD Experiences
2. Observation data (I observed 5 training sessions in the training centre and day (1) focussed on training teachers in methodology <i>“Grade 1 Jolly Phonics teaching”</i> ).	*Training teachers in the training centre			
3. <i>“From our school visits to some schools, we’ve noticed that teachers were not doing the steps of teaching Jolly Phonics properly... therefore, it was decided to include grade 1 training of Jolly Phonics again this year”</i> TT Rasmia (Post-observation discussion data)	*Training teachers in the training centre			
1. <i>“I also attended a number of training sessions done in my school by my SET on teaching Vocabulary, reading, writing, classroom management..etc.”</i> Muna (data from semi-structured interview)	*Training teachers at schools	Cascading INSET		
2. Observation data (day 5 that I observed focussed on <i>“how to support SETs to cascade the training of the 5 training sessions to their teachers at schools”</i> and a cascade package was given to the SETs who attended this session.	*Training teachers at schools			
3. <i>“Look Khadija, in this governorate there are over 1,000 English teachers, and we cannot train all of them in the training centre, so for some courses and workshops like the ones you observed, we train all the SETs in our governorate here in the training centre, then we give them a cascade package on how to carry out this training at their schools. Then, SETs go back to their schools and do the cascading of training to their teachers”</i> TT Rasmia (Post-observation discussion data)	*Training teachers at schools			
4. <i>“...I have done it for my teachers, of course the trainers gave us the materials (I mean the cascading package) in a flash disk, once I went back to my school I printed out the materials...at the beginning I released grade 1 teachers the first three lessons of the school day...and I started doing the cascading step by step according to the instructions in the cascade package and how we did it with our trainers in the training room...”</i> Badriya (data from focus group interview)	*Training teachers at schools			

## 5.4 Teaching as a profession

This section addresses the first research question, which concerns the beliefs of in-service TESOL teachers in Oman about teaching as a profession. Semi-structured interviews with teachers, a focus group interview with SETs and questionnaires were all used to investigate this question. The data generally shows that participants hold different beliefs about teaching as a profession and have different reasons for becoming teachers. The majority of these beliefs seem to be affected by participants' real experience of working as EFL teachers in Omani schools. In fact, numerous studies in mainstream educational research have found that teachers' beliefs and classroom practice exist in 'symbiotic relationships' (Foss & Kleinsasser 1996 in Borg, 2003:91). In general, the wide range of beliefs my research participants hold about teaching have been divided into five categories as illustrated in Figure 5.3 below. The results related to each of these categories will be presented below.



**Figure 5.3: Themes related to participants beliefs about the teaching profession**

### ***5.4.1 It was my dream job but the reality shocked me***

The qualitative data from interviews shows that the majority of the participants decided to become teachers because this was their dream job and some of them looked at their teachers as models. However, when those participants joined the



job and started teaching at schools they found that teachers are overloaded with lots of work to do. The data shows that such a reality appeared to change teachers' views towards teaching and their eagerness to do the job. Zilal for example emphasized that:

*"I like this profession and it was my dream to be a teacher especially an English language teacher, I loved my English teachers since I was a student, I loved this job but when I faced the reality and started the job my views changed..."*

Other participants also seemed to be shocked by the reality of this job included Lulwa who argued that the demand from extra curricula as well as teaching duties was shocking *"I was shocked with my job... I mean entering the field, teachers are overloaded with lots of things that they have to do, they are also overloaded with lots of lessons"*. Correspondingly, the quantitative data analysis showed that on the one hand, the vast majority of participants agreed that working closely with students is the most fascinating aspect of their job. On the other hand, a high number of them either strongly agreed (52.7%) or agreed (30%) that their workload is heavy, both their teaching duties as well as their administrative work which were unrelated to teaching.

Such findings are in line with the findings of a study conducted in Hong Kong by Choi and Tang (2009); they found that teachers often needed to work long hours because of the increased administrative workload. They showed that such unfavourable work conditions affected all generations of teachers in the sample, and led to their disillusionment with the system. Choi and Tang (2009) further described this situation as a "crisis of teacher commitment..." (p. 775). A similar situation was noted by King (2011) in the wider Gulf context where the current study is located. Based on data obtained from members of the most prominent professional association for TESOL teachers in the region, TESOL Arabia, the researcher concluded that the duties of teachers were one of the things having an impact on TESOL teaching and learning and thus influence the profession in the region.

#### **5.4.2 Career choice**

While the previous findings from the qualitative data showed that teaching was a dream job for many interview respondents, the quantitative data seems to contradict this by showing other things affecting teachers' career choice. Item no.

8 in the questionnaire sought to uncover this by asking participants about the reasons behind their consideration of a career in teaching.

**Table 5.3: Teachers reasons for entering the teaching profession (by frequency and percentage)**

	Responses		% of Cases
	N	%	
- Salary	110	9.9%	35.4%
- To serve my country	155	14.0%	49.8%
- Good working conditions	123	11.1%	39.5%
- Long holidays	56	5.0%	18.0%
- The desire to work with students	108	9.7%	34.7%
- It is a stimulating job	58	5.2%	18.6%
- Job security	101	9.1%	32.5%
- To learn new skills and knowledge	128	11.5%	41.2%
- Teaching fits in with my lifestyle and family situation	205	18.5%	65.9%
- The only option I have according to my marks in high school	37	3.3%	11.9%
- Others Please specify	30	2.7%	9.6%
Total		100.0%	

The statistical data analysis Table 5.2 indicates that a number of reasons were put forward with the highest percentage of participants (65.9%) indicating that they made teaching their career choice because it fits in with their lifestyle and family situation. This finding was also supported by interviewees' accounts. This result suggests that flexible working hours was an attraction for teachers to join this profession, as was the possibility of finding a job close to their accommodation. This is exactly what one of the participants, Farida, confirmed in her interview: As she said: *“because my dad was an educationalist, so he told me that teaching is the best job for you as a female and you will find a job easily*

*here inside your region compared to the other jobs...*” Yet, in recent years many graduate teachers in Oman are appointed in other regions (sometimes very far away from their home towns) because the number of graduates each year exceed that of vacancies available in each region.

The questionnaire data also showed some differences among participants’ reasons for entering the teaching profession according to some background factors such as gender. For example, only 13.3% of the male participants choose good working conditions as one of the reasons for choosing teaching as a career in comparison to 47.3% of the female teachers. This result has concurrent validity with the results reported by Albelushi (2003) in a previous study conducted in Oman. This study revealed that gender has emerged as an underlying determining factor in teachers’ choice of a career; with teaching being particularly attractive to Omani women. These gender differences are found elsewhere, such as in the UK where there remains a high gender imbalance within the profession with a high percentage of females joining primary teaching in comparison to males as reported in a recent study conducted there by Pollitt and Oldfield (2017).

Unsurprisingly, the data shows that age and teaching experience also reflect some differences in participants’ reasons for becoming teachers. For instance, only 19% of the younger teachers aged 22-26 have the desire to work with students in comparison to 66.7% of the older teachers aged 42+. By contrast, only 14.3% of the older teachers choose teaching because it has long holidays while double the number of the younger people 28.6% choose the job for the same reason. Similar differences were noted between the most experienced teachers in comparison to the novice or least experienced ones (see Appendix 19 for examples of tables containing some questionnaire results in this regard).

In my view, the above findings might possibly reflect that older and more experienced people were more motivated to enter the teaching profession in comparison to younger people. Cooman et.al, (2007) stressed that new graduates who could enter or are actually entering the teaching profession do not necessarily view teaching as a career priority. Therefore, each year more individuals are leaving the profession than there are individuals being recruited (Cooman et.al, 2007 citing Bastick, 2000; De Grip, 2004). In fact, a number of

participants in this study told me frankly that they are thinking seriously about leaving their job because of all the challenges they face in it. I believe that this is a serious issue that governments and policy makers should think about by making strides (albeit small ones at first) to improve the public image of teaching (Coldwell, 2017; Hargreaves, 2000). Some of these strides can include improving teachers' work environment and conditions, as well as lightening their workload (Pollitt & Oldfield, 2017; Weiki, 2007).

### **5.4.3 Job ethics “it’s the job of prophets”**

The ethical and moral nature of teaching has been discussed intensively in the literature. According to Norberg and Johansson (2007) ethics draw on the attitudes and behaviours of human like valuing, selecting and acting, and is usually concerned with desirable actions associated with relationships among humans and a responsibility for other people. Teaching as a job involves ethical and moral actions because teachers are moral agents so classroom interaction in specific is fundamentally moral in nature (Ngang & Chan, 2015; Buzzelli & Johnston, 2001). The importance of ethics in teaching was something that was mentioned by the vast majority of the interview participants. On the one hand, many teachers in the semi-structured interviews talked about job ethics and how teachers work with students to help them learn new things. They also stressed that teaching is an important job because it is the base for all other professions in society. Some participants even emphasized that teaching is the job of prophets; thus, it is associated with lots of challenges because not any normal person can do this job. For instance, Alya remarks that:

*“it needs lots of effort and patience, the teacher is dealing with minds so not anyone can be a teacher . While other jobs are dealing with, like, computers, papers and so on, the teacher is dealing with different minds...**prophets** were teachers so this job has lots of ethics and values.”*

On the other hand, it was seen in the focus group interview data collected from SETs that some teachers seem to be missing the teaching values and ethics because they have no commitment to the job. The three SETs agreed that old teachers are more enthusiastic, work harder and are attached to the teaching job because they are more aware of the teaching ethics in comparison to novice teachers. One of the SETs, Laila observed: *“sometimes I walk around to see how my teachers are working ... I see some teachers till the end of lesson and when*

*the lesson is over are still teaching while others are not, they are sitting on their chairs and playing with their smart phones....”*

The issue of some novice teachers seemingly lacking some basic teaching ethics and values has been raised as a general phenomenon in the literature. Thus, for example, Mohany (2009:985) argues that “teachers’ ethical understanding is (in) adequate in our times”. In my view, this is a serious issue that needs to be taken into consideration when planning teacher education programmes in Oman. Mohany (2009:984) supposes that “increasing levels of ethical understanding might yield a number of benefits (in education)”. Teachers need some ethical knowledge where they should be introduced to values and morality. Taylor (1994 in Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2011) asserts that ethical knowledge can encourage the exploration of choices and commitment to responsibilities and help develop value preferences and an orientation to guide attitudes and behaviours. A study by Shapira-Lishchinsky (2011) also indicates that a more transparent sense of ethical knowledge might provide teachers with a more comprehensive sense of professionalism and a basis for renewed school cultures in which the moral dimensions of all aspects related to teachers’ work are discussed.

#### ***5.4.4 Job happiness and satisfaction***

Many participants talked about job happiness in the interviews and the data showed some conflict between participants’ responses in this regard. For example, while a number of participants expressed their happiness with the job, others frankly stated that they are not happy with it. The happy participants justified that feeling by seeing the outcomes of their work when graduating generations of pupils. Noora explained this in the following way:

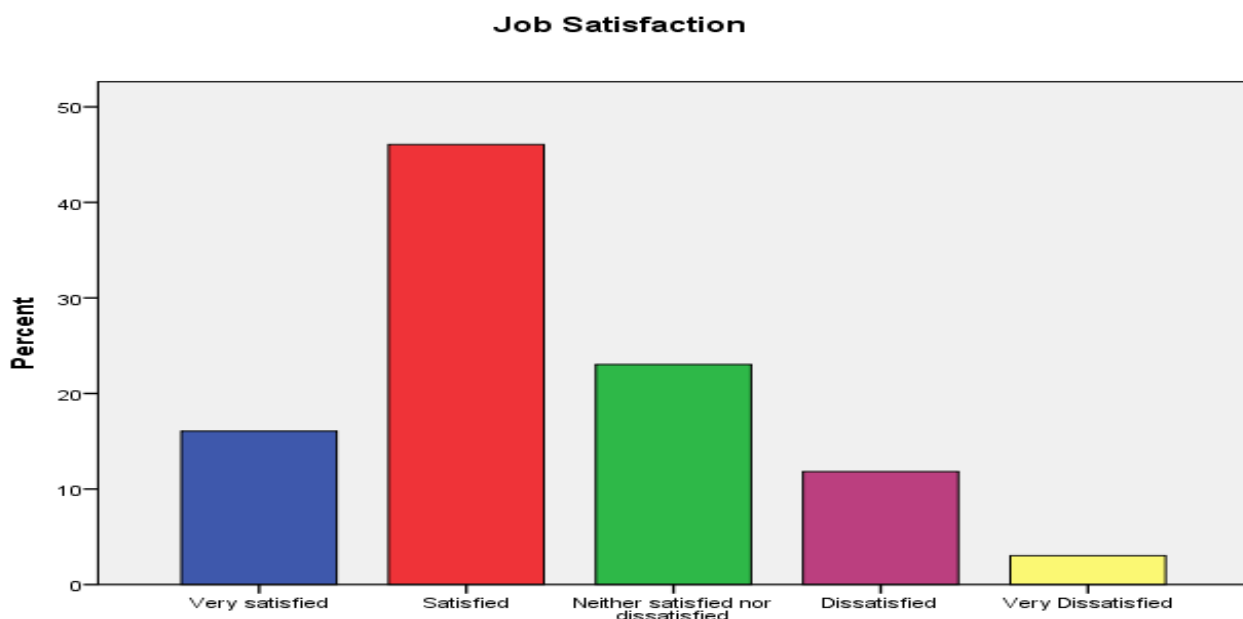
*“...because I achieved many things and now I can see many students I mean my students most of them go to study in Canada and in America so I am very happy because they were my students one day, so this is very good for me and this makes me very happy because I graduate many students, that’s it.”*

However, some other participants seem to be unhappy either because teaching was not their dream job or because of the job duties and the challenges associated with it. The data indicates that this also resulted in a level of dissatisfaction with the job. As an example, Ameera makes it clear that *“there are many challenges within this job that might affect people’s happiness and satisfaction towards this profession.”* This result matches Weiki’s (2007) findings

of a study conducted in China; he found that teachers are dissatisfied with their jobs as a whole and indicated that work conditions is one of the dimensions creating such level of dissatisfaction. In the focus group interview, SETs elucidated that such differences between participants' feelings are related to teachers' beliefs towards the job. As Laila emphasizes: *"in every school there are the two types, the type who are very positive and love their job and the type who are very negative and hate the job..."* This might be true because some participants talked positively about the job and how they try to overcome the challenges they face. Huda is a good example of that when she highlights:

*"As I told you I love teaching, I love the teachers' job I feel it is a valuable job...I try to control myself and manage all the factors that try to make me dissatisfied, I try to keep telling myself that this is my job and I have to accept it and to work hard to overcome any challenges associated with it."*

This result validates Har Lam's (2012) and Manuel and Hughes's (2006) findings. These studies showed that teachers who have positive beliefs towards teaching are more motivated to do the job. In my study, job satisfaction was also investigated in the questionnaires and the data showed differences in participants' responses when they were asked how satisfied they were with their teaching experience after working as a teacher for some time. The results as shown in Figure 5.4 indicate that 45.6% of the participants are satisfied with their job whilst only 3% are very dissatisfied.



**Figure 5.4: job satisfaction**

The data showed some significant differences among participants' job satisfaction according to their background information especially regarding their age and teaching experiences. For instance, 50% of the participants who are 42 years or over endorsed the statement that they are very satisfied with their job compared to only 11.1% of those aged from 22-26. However, the data shows that 33.3% of the younger teachers are dissatisfied with the job in comparison to only 9.1% of the older teachers. Similar results were noted regarding differences between participants according to their teaching experiences (see Appendix 20 for examples of produced data tables).

Generally speaking, I think that the differences between participants' beliefs regarding their job happiness and satisfaction could be linked to the reasons given for entering the teaching profession and/or their perspectives on the ethics of teaching as discussed earlier or may simply be put down to the characteristics of each age group (or generation). Older and more experienced teachers seem to be more attached to their jobs, have positive beliefs about it and thus have a level of happiness and satisfaction with it. The younger generations on the other hand seem to be less attached to their jobs and have a less positive view towards things which result in a level of unhappiness and dissatisfaction.

#### **5.4.5 Job status**

In line with job happiness and satisfaction discussed above, and highly connected to it, the status of the teaching job in Oman was highlighted in the findings. Job status is related to Hargreaves' (2000) idea of *professionalization* mentioned earlier in the literature review of this study (see Chapter 3, 3.3) which normally has to do with how teachers feel they are seen through other people's eyes in terms of their status. In fact, the quantitative data from questionnaires revealed that only just under half (48.2%) of respondents feel that their status as EFL teachers in their schools is satisfactory to them

A significant number of teachers (10 in total) complained in the interviews about the low status of their job in society and that teachers are not respected well and helped shed light on why many participants felt negatively about job status. They pointed to a number of things that showed the low status of the job. One reason given was that some parents do not seem to respect teachers. The data further

showed that teachers' status in society was better in the past compared to now. Shamsa clarified this by saying:

*“Because generations has changed, old generations were respecting their teachers more but not the new, also because the people in society like parents are not respecting teachers therefore the status of teachers became less than before, in the past teachers were really respected.”*

The data also revealed that job satisfaction is closely related to job status demonstrating that if teachers' status is changed in society, it can increase their job satisfaction. Halima made reference to this point asserting: *“We want our rights, our status in society and I think this will increase teachers' level of satisfaction with the job.”* This finding lends support to the conclusion of Weiki's (2007) study which reported that job status is one of the factors which cause a level of dissatisfaction with the job.

Accordingly, the data indicates that a number of reasons have resulted in a lowering of the status of teaching in comparison to other professions in society. This echoes the situation in many other countries. For example, a nationwide study of the status of teachers and the teaching profession in England conducted by Hargreaves et al., (2007) also highlights that with respect to the relative ranking of the teaching profession, compared to a list of 16 professions, teaching has failed to reach the higher quartile, where all pupils rated the medical and emergency services most highly, as they felt that professions related to life-risking and life-saving were worthy of distinction.

In sum, the above analysis has revealed that EFL teachers in Oman hold different beliefs about teaching as a profession. The majority of these beliefs are probably directly connected to their classroom practices and affected by the reality of the job at schools. The analysis shed light on some issues that need to be taken into consideration by policy makers and teacher educators, so teaching as a career can be made attractive to new and old graduates. These areas will be elaborated on further in the forthcoming chapter. In fact, the data analysis has shown that participants do not only hold different beliefs about teaching as a job but even they have different beliefs about CPD as will be discussed in the next part.



## 5.5 Teachers' beliefs about CPD

This section presents findings related to research question 2 which concerns participants' views on CPD in the Omani basic education context. Semi-structured and focus group interviews, as well as online questionnaires were used to investigate this question. The data shows that participants hold a wide range of beliefs about continuing their own PD. Participants' responses seem to be affected mainly by their experience of participating in CPD events and/or the beliefs they hold about teaching and learning (Vries et al., 2013). The generated ideas were divided predominantly into five categories including participants' definitions of CPD, the importance of CPD, CPD feeds teaching, CPD responsibility and teachers' roles in their CPD as indicated in Figure 5.5. In what follows, I will consider the findings for each of these categories in turn.

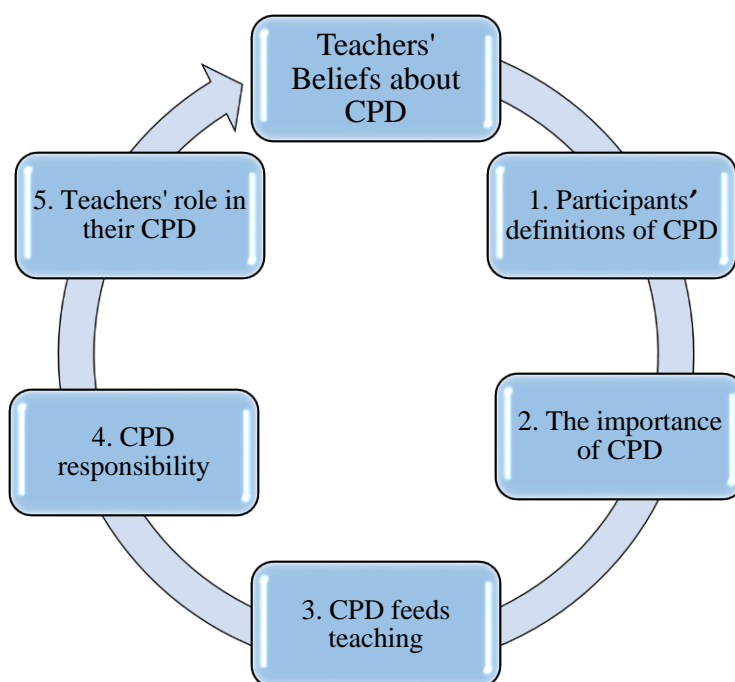


Figure 5.5: Themes related to participants beliefs about CPD

### 5.5.1 Participants' definitions of CPD

The qualitative data indicated that respondents conceptualised the term CPD in different ways both in an open-ended question in the online questionnaire as well as in interviews. While the majority of them looked at the term from a more positive perspective, there were some negative views associated with the term CPD. For example, many participants (83 in total) associated the term CPD with a way of improving teaching and learning. They explained this view by stating

that CPD adds new knowledge, skills and ideas to teachers and thus it helps in improving their teaching abilities. In their view, this can result in improving teaching and learning in schools. This is in line with Vangrieken's et al., (2017); Bolam's (2000) and Hargreaves' (1994) idea mentioned earlier in the literature review that professional development is an essential part of improving the performance of schools.

Another view held by 30% of participants answering the open-ended question regarding CPD is that this refers to being updated and continuing learning. Respondents who shared this view think that teachers need to update themselves and continue their development through different ways such as searching the net for new information, attending courses, conferences and workshops, and being guided by more experienced people. Here CPD is described in a similar way to the literature; it is a process embracing all activities that enhance professional career growth (Coldwell, 2017; Rogan & Grayson, 2003; Day, 1999). Some respondents who hold this view stressed that CPD is ongoing and there is no end for it; it is lifelong oriented in the 'ongoing' change process (Earley & Bubb, 2004; Curtis & Cheng, 2001). This means that teachers should keep learning and updating themselves with all new things in the field.

In a similar vein, other respondents (12 in total from those who responded to the open-ended question) think that CPD is a process of evaluating personal performance to find strengths and weaknesses, then to work on improving their weaknesses. From my viewpoint, this idea is related to reflective teaching which means that teachers look at what they do in their classrooms, think about why they do it, and think about if it works; it is a process of self-observation and self-evaluation. Through collecting information about what goes on in their classrooms, and through analysing and evaluating this information, reflective teachers explore and identify their own underlying beliefs and practices. This might possibly then lead to improvements and changes in their teaching. This view contends that reflective teaching is therefore a means of PD because when teachers engage in such practices, they may develop deeper understandings of their teaching, assess their professional growth, develop informed skills such as decision making, and they become confident and proactive in their teaching (Pollard et al., 2008; Farrell, 2007).

By contrast, other respondents (9%) seem to have more negative beliefs about CPD. Responses to the online questionnaire open-ended section reflected such negative beliefs; one teacher wrote that as much as the teacher spends in teaching, he/she gains the knowledge needed, so he/she does not need to participate in any CPD activity/task. In my view, such negative associations with the concept could be the result of a misunderstanding of the term CPD or that those specific participants who hold these beliefs have negative experiences of some CPD activities that they participated in and thus resulted in such negative conceptualisation of the term. The interview data seems to confirm such interpretation; when asked about PD Ameera complained:

*“I feel it is not well activated, it is all about the plan you have, for example, you have a workshop to either plan and carryout according to the school plan or attend one by a colleague....”*

Overall, the data revealed that participants seem to vary in their beliefs regarding the term CPD. Yet, the data shows that the majority seem to positively think of the term and share some similar beliefs about the general aims of CPD which relate reflective teaching, being updated, being responsible for self-improvement, and being motivated. In fact, in the wealth of literature on PD I could not find a concise definition for the term PD or CPD as mentioned earlier in the literature review chapter. Consequently and in agreement with the literature, PD/CPD seems to be an ambiguous and contested concept (Friedman & Philips, 2004).

### **5.5.2 The importance of CPD**

Both the qualitative and the quantitative data show that most participants see CPD as important for teachers. The majority of the interview respondents justified their views by highlighting the role of CPD in gaining new knowledge, being updated with the latest teaching methods and techniques, and helping teachers to overcome the challenges they face in teaching. CPD was also seen as helping with teachers' English language proficiency. As Shamsa puts in: *“...the more professional development programmes the teacher participates in, the better his or her language will be.”*

Other participants stressed that in-service training and CPD played an important role in compensating for the inadequacies of their pre-service programmes and/or differences between different programmes. Farida, for example, said:

*“the Ministry shouldn’t rely on teacher preparation programmes because each institution does this in a different way for example we have been trained in the college to teach handwriting for kids using the 4 lines but other institution graduates like Ajman and SQU no, so the Ministry shouldn’t rely on that, they need to train teachers.”*

Research confirms that teachers with strong preparation programmes behind them are much better able to do their job (Ngang & Chan, 2015; Darling-Hammond, 1999) and this comment and others like it highlight that teacher preparation programmes in Oman need to be re-planned to increase their effectiveness; an issue that will be further discussed in the next chapter.

The statistical findings also corroborated the importance of CPD for teachers. Part B of the questionnaire asked teachers to rate some CPD activities according to their level of significance in teachers’ professional development from very important to not important at all. Broadly speaking, the low mean scores and standard deviations for all items indicate that there is a level of agreement among participants but to varying degrees (see Appendix 21/a for full data tables). The responses to each item are given in more details in Table 5.3 below.

**Table 5.4: Participant views on the importance of different CPD activities to teachers’ professional development**

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
-Participating in Conferences and Symposia	330	1	4	1.73	.781
-Reading professional materials (e.g. Books)	330	1	5	1.55	.722
-Attending training courses, workshops (e.g. in methodology)	330	1	4	1.49	.728
-Peer observation	330	1	5	1.72	.770
-Coaching/Mentoring by a Senior English teachers	330	1	5	1.95	.952
-Doing action research (e.g. researching a problem you are facing in classroom)	330	1	5	2.19	.959
-Participating in communities of practice (e.g. online discussion group)	330	1	5	2.19	.979
-Higher academic study (e.g. MA/ Doctorate)	330	1	5	2.12	1.047
Valid N (listwise)	330				

As can be seen from Table 5.3, the data indicates that the majority of the participants think that all listed activities are either very important or important in helping teachers to develop professionally. Only a few participants were unsure about some activities, especially doing action research and participating in communities of practice which I think may reflect the fact that they were unfamiliar with these as they had not experienced them. Rogers and Horrocks (2010) emphasized that adult learning (including among teachers) is more effective when it encompasses experiential learning in which adults actively participate in their learning process.

Participants were also asked to state any other activities unlisted in the survey that are significant to teachers' professional development. They identified many activities; however, out of these activities, a good number of respondents (N=102) chose team work such as staff meetings, team teaching and social networking among teachers as an important source of teachers' CPD. In my view, this means that they value working with others and believe that others' ideas and contributions add a lot to teachers' professional learning and development. This finding supports Appleby and Pilkington's (2014) idea about the role of dialogue in facilitating the exploration of practice and theorising around practical knowledge generating discrete, shared or professional knowledge.

To conclude, the data reveals that respondents believe in the importance of CPD and that participating in different activities and events can crucially contribute to teachers' CPD. The justifications participants provided for their answers focused on various aspects of CPD. However, the majority of them, regardless of their gender, job title, age and teaching experience generally agreed, unsurprisingly, that CPD results in improving teaching and learning. This finding matches some empirical studies that identify a link between teachers' professional development and improvements in teaching skills and students' achievements (e.g. Garet et. al, 2001; Darling-Hammond, 2000). By the same token, many participants think that CPD feeds teaching as will be discussed below.

### ***5.5.3 CPD feeds teaching***

The qualitative data from interviews revealed that there is a strong relationship between teaching and professional development. Respondents who hold this view think that professional development updates teachers with new ways and

techniques in teaching. They think that this leads to improving their teaching skills and developing them as teachers. . Alya for example maintained that:

*“...they complete each other... Professional development helps me as a teacher to develop my teaching, I might not be aware of some teaching techniques, so I gain these from the professional development programmes that I participate in like courses and workshops. For example, now they are offering us the Jolly Phonics workshop, if teachers are not trained how to teach Jolly Phonics through these workshops then they will find difficulties in teaching them properly....”*

Conversely, the data shows that not all CPD activities/events affect teaching positively or lead to improving teachers. Anisa mentioned that:

*“...there are some professional development activities that you join in and they add something to you at the moment of attending them but not later to your teaching or classroom, then you feel this professional development is a waste.”*

Generally, the data illustrates that there is a relationship between teaching and professional development. It confirms that some CPD activities/events that teachers join in can enrich them by supporting their teaching skills and thus they feed teaching and develop it. This finding can add to the literature on the relationship between teaching and professional development. This is because while professional development is widely considered significant to enhance the quality of teaching; only a few studies have demonstrated clear relationships between the professional learning of teachers and improvements in teaching (Gore et al., 2015).

#### **5.5.4 CPD responsibility**

One of the most interesting and yet controversial finding from the interviews (both the semi-structured and focus groups) pertains to where the responsibility for CPD resides. The majority of respondents (14 out of the 18) believe that all parties involved in the ELT system in Oman are responsible for English teachers' professional development. As Ameera accentuated, for example:

*“In my view, all are responsible for teachers' professional development including the Ministry of Education, the English supervisors, trainers, SETs and teachers, each one has a role in that. For example, my SET knows my training needs, so she contacts the English supervisor to nominate me for a special PD activity or task, and the supervisor contact the educational governorate or the Ministry to give me a chance...and so on.”*

This finding supports Appleby and Pilkington's (2014) model for supporting critical professional development mentioned earlier in the literature review chapter. In this model, while the individual is central, the model represents ways that individual learning can be practitioner-led or organisationally-led. It shows

elements where organisations or policy-makers play a significant role in shaping learning activities for the teacher. Moreover, shaping is largely instigated by teachers and is led by their interests and priorities (Appleby & Pilkington, 2014; Kabilan & Veratharaju, 2013).

In spite of that, the data shows that there was a level of disagreement between participants regarding who has the main responsibility for English teachers CPD. On the one hand, almost all participants stated frankly that the Ministry of Education in Oman has a key role and responsibility towards teachers' PD. For example, Alya remarks that *"The Ministry of Education is responsible for that and it should try to provide opportunities for teachers to develop them."* On the other hand, when I asked some follow-up questions about teachers' role in this regard, some participants replied that teachers' PD is the responsibility of the teacher him/herself. The latter part of results supports Gray's (2005) idea that teachers should take responsibility of continuing their own PD.

Correspondingly, item no 30 in the questionnaire sought to know the CPD providers for English teachers in Oman. It asked respondents to select from four different items which had encouraged them to take a CPD initiative, and the chance to identify any other CPD providers unlisted in the survey. The results shown in Table 5.4 below indicate that 29.9% of the participants choose the CPD activity themselves and they paid for it. The second most chosen CPD provider 27% is the Ministry of Education in Oman followed by participants' schools 25.4%.

**Table 5.5: CPD providers (by frequency and percentage)**

	Responses		% of Cases
	N	%	
- My School/other schools (e.g. Senior English teachers)	147	25.4%	48.5%
- The Ministry of Education	156	27.0%	51.5%
- Other Agencies (e.g. British Council)	80	13.8%	26.4%
- Myself I chose the activity and paid for it	173	29.9%	57.1%
- Others Please specify	22	3.8%	7.3%
Total		100.0%	

In fact, CPD activities done inside schools are usually organised and funded by the MOE. This is because the MOE specifies a budget for each school each year to use for the CPD activities inside schools. Thus, the (52.4% = total of 27% MOE + 25.4% school) of CPD activities teachers participate in are all organised and funded by the MOE. In my viewpoint, this reflects the Ministry's work on teachers' CPD through the many CPD activities organised by the MOE for English teachers inside and outside schools.

To sum up, the findings reveal that English teachers' CPD is the responsibility of a number of parties involved in ELT in Oman although the MOE is currently the main CPD provider for English teachers in Omani schools. Indeed, participants' responses represent some conflict in relation to who has the key responsibility in this regard. Having said that, teacher's own role and responsibility in this respect should not be repudiated as will further discuss below.

### **5.5.5 Teachers' role in their CPD**

Connected with the previous category, the semi-structured interview data demonstrated that a good number of participants emphasised the significant roles of teachers in their professional development. They seem to believe that teachers have to become responsible to identify and address their own PD needs. For instance, in the following extract Zilal suggested that teachers can follow a number of strategies and techniques to contribute to their own PD:

*“Reading, being updated, trying to join private courses not only the ones offered by the ministry of education, even by private institutions...courses not done during the work days, they can arrange their responsibilities management at home and join courses at weekends or other times of the day like evenings outside the work times....”*

Moreover, a number of participants proposed that teachers can utilize the new technology to develop professionally. As an example, Halima says *“...at least go to the internet it is open and free and you can find everything available....”* In fact, the findings suggest that a key reason for teachers to take such a role in their professional development is their belief that the chances provided by the Ministry of Education in Oman are not enough, so teachers should work for their own PD. Shamsa confirms that teachers *“...should work towards their professional development because if they wait for the Ministry the chances are very few and they will wait for years and years.”*

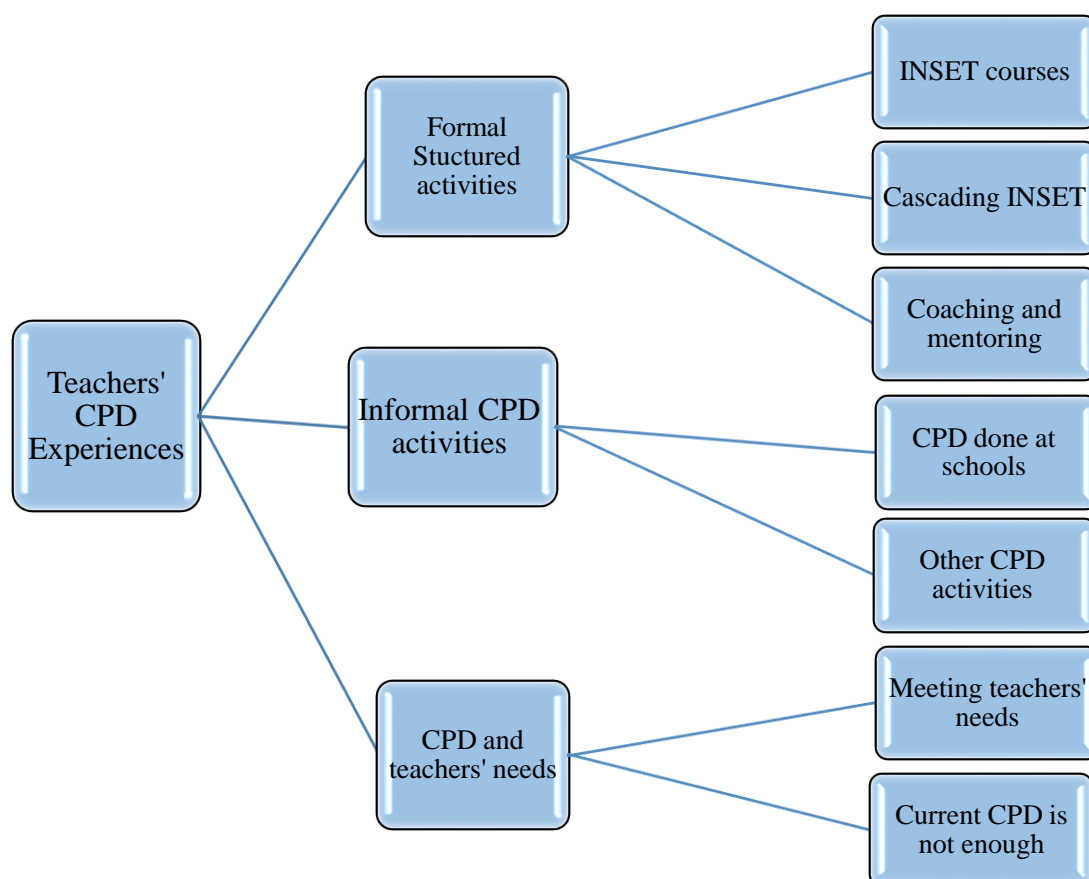


The view that teachers should be responsible for their own PD is one that resonates with the literature on PD being something that teacher should take charge of and continue to work on throughout their career (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Wermke, 2012; Day & Sachs, 2004). Having presented the findings regarding teachers' beliefs about teaching as a profession and their beliefs about CPD, the following section will shed light on the results related to research question 3 which investigates teachers' actual experiences of participating in CPD activities/events and the extent to which they are perceived to meet teachers CPD needs.

## **5.6 Teachers CPD Experiences**

The questionnaire, semi-structured interviews, focus group interviews, and observations were all used to investigate teacher experiences of CPD. It is important to stress that given that CPD in educational documents in Oman is associated with the term INSET, when I asked teachers about their CPD experiences the majority of them talked about their experience of participating in INSET courses. Thus, although as mentioned in the previous section, some teachers believe that they should take some responsibility to identify and address their own CPD needs, it seems to me that the top-down centralised educational system in Oman has moulded teachers' way of understanding PD to mean INSET courses and workshops which should be offered to them by the Ministry of Education and should be delivered by experts or people who have more experience than them.

Given the above, my analysis of the data identified that a major category of findings regarding teacher experiences of CPD concerned their attendance of formal structured activities. However, I also identified two other categories of experience; informal CPD activities and CPD and teachers' needs. Analysis suggested a number of sub-categories within these three categories as shown in Figure 5.6 below. The results are presented according to this categorisation in what follows, with the overall picture of the data suggesting conflicting views among teachers as to the extent to which the different types of CPD activity/events available to teachers are seen to meet their needs.



**Figure 5.6: Themes related to participants CPD experiences**

### **5.6.1 Formal structured activities**

The data revealed that respondents participated in three different types of formal structured activities which are: INSET courses including courses and workshops, cascading INSET to teachers, coaching and mentoring teachers. The data indicates that all these programmes/activities/events are organised and/or funded by the Ministry of Education in Oman for English teachers. However, out of all these initiatives, INSET courses seem to be the most dominant in the CPD system in Oman as it is in a number of other educational contexts (Goodall et al., 2005; Friedman & Philips, 2004; Craft, 2000).

#### **5.6.1.1 INSET courses**

The qualitative data from interviews shows that the vast majority of the participants experienced a number of INSET courses including courses and workshops. Some participants (7 in total) stated that the majority of these INSET days were focussing on methodology and a few were language development courses. For example, in the following quote Maryam highlights the INSET courses and workshops she joined:

*“I remember the first year I started teaching I joined the cycle 1 course, I also did a language development course the second year of my teaching, I attended many and many workshops, I also did the Jolly Phonics workshop, I did the integrated curriculum course....”*

Similarly, the training room observations seem to support the above finding. As mentioned in the previous chapter, I observed 5 INSET days; all focused on supporting teachers in methodology. For instance, days (1 & 2) concentrated on supporting English literacy teaching in primary schools in Oman; day (1) focussed on grade 1 Jolly Phonics teaching and day (2) on grade 2 Jolly Phonics teaching. Days (3 & 4) concentrated on teaching shared reading and helping teachers become more confident in delivering effective shared reading lessons. The last INSET day I observed focused on how to use appropriate procedures to do the reading time. Findings from the survey also corroborated the ideas generated from the qualitative data as 92.9% of respondents claimed to attend INSET courses/workshops with a high to medium degree of frequency during their career (see Appendix 21/b).

All in all, the findings indicate that INSET courses/days especially the ones focussing on methodology are dominant in the Omani CPD system. This might be normal as I believe INSET is ordinarily for training teachers and not necessarily pure professional development for them. Moreover, such way of doing INSET programmes/days is following a top-down strategy as Al-Lamki (2009) found out. Yet, an emerging paradigm is one that moves PD away from the practice of attending training days and courses to the concept of continuing or lifelong learning (Earley, 2011; Day, 1999).

#### **5.6.1.2 Cascading INSET**

INSET training of teachers in Oman is sometimes connected to cascading this training to other teachers as explained earlier in the thesis (see Chapter 2, 2.6.4) and was the case with the training sessions I observed. The post-observation discussion data shows that the 5 days INSET training mentioned above were compulsory for all SETs in each educational governorate as the teacher trainer said in the post-observation discussion. The data shows that those SETs were then expected to cascade this training to all English teachers in their educational governorates. This confirms my above interpretation that these INSET days are

actually not professional development for teachers though they might be necessary for updating them within the changes in the English curriculum.

The training room observations supported this evidence as it was noticeable that the second part of my last training room observation (INSET day-5) focussed on how to support SETs to cascade the training of these 5 INSET days to teachers at schools. The teacher trainers provided SETs with a cascade package to help them do the cascade properly. In the second focus-group interview, SETs commented that although this cascade package was helpful in doing the cascading, the experience of SETs and teachers enriched the process of carrying out the cascade as Badriya stresses:

*“I also felt that I added my experience to the cascade package, also my teachers’ experience for example, I had two teachers who taught grade 1 before so they shared their experience with us in this regard, and when we discussed the challenges that they faced last year, experienced teachers and myself were able to provide some suggestions and solutions to these challenges....”*

Out of the three SETs, one SET did the cascade herself to her staff at school while the other two SETs co-cascaded the training to their teachers. The data reveals that this co-cascading was a fruitful experience for the SETs. For example, Karima (one of the SETs) insists that the co-cascade:

*“...made me feel more confident, the confident in that we are doing training to a large number of teachers, we always do workshops for our teachers at school but doing it with other SETs and in another school and facing a large number of teachers, in the presence of our supervisors, I feel more confident now in doing such things more publicly....”*

Accordingly, the findings demonstrate that attending training with experienced trainers and being given a cascade package seems to ease the delivery of the cascade. Moreover, working in collaboration with others can possibly lead to the success of cascading. The literature illustrates that this approach to cascading is effective as it ensures this is a reflexive, collaborative and context sensitive experience involving cascade teachers in managing their own professional growth, while at the same time taking account of frameworks agreed at the national level (Hayes, 2000).

### **5.6.1.3 Coaching and mentoring**

The qualitative data confirmed the points made in Chapter 2 that English teachers in Oman are coached and mentored by more than one party. Namely, English supervisors, English teacher trainers, and SETs as well as being peer mentored by their colleagues especially the more experienced English teachers. Yet, the findings confirm that the key persons who act as coaches and/or mentors at schools are SETs as mentioned earlier in the literature review chapter. The statistical findings also correspond with this as the analysis suggested that 90.6% of respondents were coached and/or mentored by their SETs always, often or sometimes (see Appendix 21/b).

Interview data shed more light on teachers experience of coaching and mentoring as favourable as the following extract from Farida illustrates: *“...for example, when the SET attended a lesson with me she noticed that I am teaching the children like cycle two pupils and that I need to go down to their level and this really helped me ....”* This result is in line with a recent study done in the Arab context in Egypt by Mishriki and Demian (2015) which also shows favourable attitudes towards mentoring and the effective role mentors played in orienting their teaching fellows and new teachers.

The data shows that SETs are prepared for their coaching and mentoring roles at schools through a whole year INSET course which aims at preparing the new SETs for their job. Badriya explains that:

*“I attended the SET course and it was so beneficial for me, it was so practical and I did a research, action research, it was a whole year course and we learnt many skills about coaching and mentoring teachers, conducting post lesson discussions, writing reports, even I carried out an action research, in general it was a very useful course”*

However, the data illustrates that SETs are overloaded with lots of duties; they have their own teaching and other administrative duties. They also have their cascading duties and their coaching and mentoring roles. Thus, the three SETs (participants in this study) asked to be released from a number of duties to better contribute to their teachers' professional development. For instance, Karima emphasizes: *“SETs should be released only for their coaching and mentoring roles, how to support their teachers”*

In general, the results reveal that SETs are responsible for supporting English teachers at schools as part of their roles as coaches and mentors. They seem to be prepared well for these roles; yet, they are overloaded with lots of duties that might possibly affect doing such roles properly as the qualitative data from focus group interview (1) shows. Such workload might negatively affect the work of SETs who act as coaches/mentors at schools and thus the quality of coaching and mentoring provided to teachers (Nolan & Molla, 2017; Kessels et al., 2008; Rots et al., 2007). Having said this, I think that the three types of CPD discussed above (INSET courses, cascading INSET, and coaching and mentoring) is a structured and imposed form of training. Teachers have no choice but to attend. The Ministry mostly likely developed it as a necessary training for teachers and not necessarily to be informed by different teachers' needs.

### **5.6.2 Informal CPD activities**

In addition to the formal CPD opportunities mentioned above, findings show that teachers participated in a number of other CPD activities; some of these are done at schools while others are done outside schools. However, the majority of these activities are again offered to teachers and funded by the Ministry which reflects the top-down nature of the educational CPD system in Oman.

#### **5.6.2.1 CPD done at schools**

The qualitative data shows that participants experienced many CPD activities carried out at schools which can fit into teachers' daily work and timetables. These activities are usually organised by SETs through preparing a PD plan that includes a number of activities to be done throughout the school year (see Appendix 22; the three schools PD plans). Laila clarifies why they do these PD plans and activities *"look miss, we SETS each year do a professional development plan at school and we try to do many activities to help teachers with their professional development...."* Examples of these activities as shown by the data are: peer observation, model lessons, discussion sessions, team teaching, English open days and workshops carried out by different staff members.

However, the quantitative data from the survey indicated some conflict regarding the activities experienced inside schools. On the one hand, it shows that peer observation is the most practiced activity as 86.3% of the respondents either

always, often or sometimes experienced that (see Appendix 21/b). On the other hand, doing action research is reported by respondents as the least practiced activity although it could also be practiced inside schools and fit into teachers' daily work and timetables. I think the main reason behind that is because teachers are not trained to carry out an action research properly.

As a whole, the findings revealed that the PD activities/events done at schools are slotted into teachers' daily work and timetables and participants were in favour of more PD activities/events to be carried out inside schools. As Amna suggests, in her view the Ministry should: *"keep doing professional development activities inside schools not to take teachers outside schools...."* In my view, this is an indication that the MOE and school administrations need to think of other more school-based CPD tasks and activities for teachers. Training teachers to do action research is one of these tasks/activities as evidence from local research confirms that Omani teachers strongly value classroom research and believe that it can have positive impacts on developing teachers, students and schools (AL-Farsi, 2006).

#### **5.6.2.2 Other CPD activities**

Participating in international/local conferences and symposiums, PD programmes carried out by other higher education institutions in Oman (e.g. Sultan Qaboos University), on-line courses, reading professional materials and participating in communities of practice, were some other CPD activities/events respondents experienced. Most common among these activities is joining local conferences and symposiums as a high number of participants (10 in total) referred to that in the interviews. Likewise, the quantitative data shows that 69.2% of the participants indicated that they regularly or sometimes participated in conferences/symposiums (see Appendix 21/b).

The quantitative data shows that participants experienced very few other CPD activities especially the ones that include collaborative forms of learning as only 10.7% of respondents claimed to have joined communities of practice. Despite that, all interview respondents stated that they value the types of activities that involve teachers as active and reflective participants. For instance, Farida talks about joining on-line courses, very favourably:

*“I joined online courses like the TKT and SEN (Special Education needs)... the good thing is that teachers from all educational governorates were in these online groups, so we get to know teachers and SETs from other regions, it was very good, we even created a whats app group to discuss some issues it was a very good way of exchanging experiences.”*

In sum, the data illustrates that participants have experienced a number of other CPD activities/events. Yet, the results clearly indicated that teachers were in favour of the collaborative forms of activities which involve collaborative learning opportunities where they can share experiences and learn from discussed ideas (Lee, 2002). This finding resonates with others that highlight the value attached to teachers for CPD which actively involve practicing teachers in collaborative forms of learning (e.g. Moran et al., 2017; Hung & Yeh, 2013; Butler & Schnellert, 2012; Lee, 2011). This suggests that the MOE in Oman should seriously think of adding more collaborative forms of CPD activities (e.g. communities of practice, online discussion groups...etc) to CPD provision and according to teachers' CPD needs; the latter is the focus of the following section.

### **5.6.3 CPD and teachers' needs**

There is a wealth of literature on the importance of engaging teachers in continuing professional development that meet their own personal and professional needs (Goodall et al., 2005; Muijs et al., 2004). However, teachers' needs can vary according to their circumstances, personal and professional histories and their current dispositions (Goodall et al., 2005:24). Teachers' needs were investigated in this study and the data has been classified into two sub-categories regarding study participants' views of current CPD provision: 1) meeting teachers' needs, and 2) current CPD is not enough.

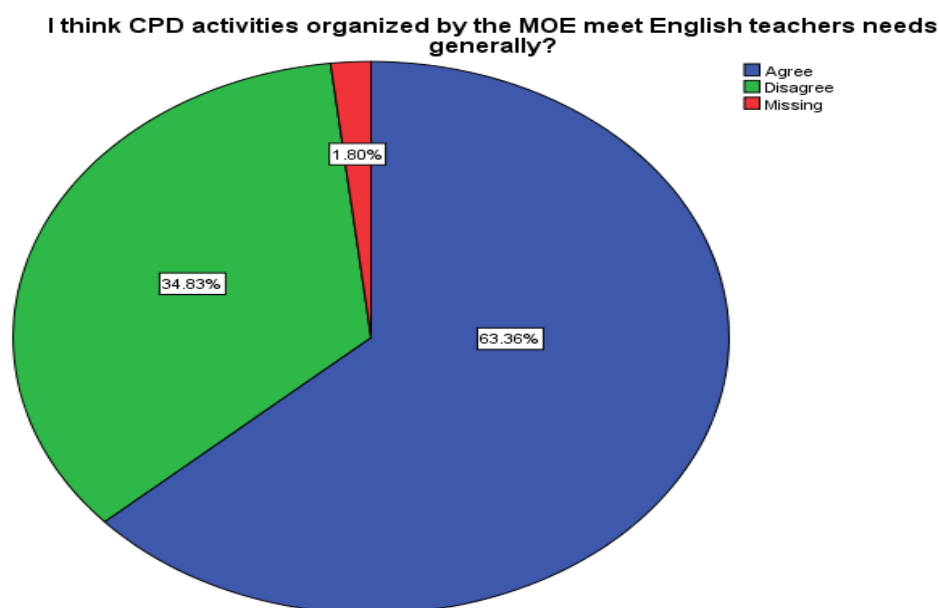
#### **5.6.3.1 Meeting teachers' needs**

The findings from both the quantitative and the qualitative data showed conflicts in respondents' beliefs regarding CPD and their needs. While some respondents seem to believe that CPD meets their needs others do not think that. A number of interview respondents (7 in total) state that the CPD activities they experienced met their needs in that it helped them learn new strategies that can be used in their classrooms as Lulwa for example highlights in the following extract: *“they met my needs in ways that I saw lots of strategies that help me to deliver the*



*message easily to my students, designing activities for my students, controlling the time, controlling the students....”*

Conversely, the data shows that the MOE is collecting EFL teachers’ needs occasionally but these needs are not met as stressed by Amna *“sometimes they ask us about our PD needs but usually they don’t take these into consideration or after stating our needs we are not seeing that we are joining specific programmes/activities that can meet our needs.”* In my viewpoint, this appears to illustrate that the Ministry of Education is not following a systematic way in assessing teachers’ needs. The qualitative findings were confirmed by the statistical results obtained from the questionnaire in that through a closed question respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the statement “CPD activities organized by the MOE meet English teachers’ needs”. 327 participants 98.2% responded to this question, from which more than half of them agreed with this statement 63.3% while 34.8% disagreed as could be seen in Figure 5.7.



**Figure 5.7: CPD needs**

Altogether, the findings indicate a conflict in participants’ ideas and feelings in respect to meeting their needs via CPD. It is obvious from the results that the MOE is not following a systematic way in collecting, analysing and assessing EFL teachers’ needs in Oman in order to meet these needs which might possibly result in such conflict in participants’ beliefs. This is an area which the MOE should seriously think about because needs assessment or needs analysis is always used to systematically explore the ways that should be used for accomplishing

learning and finding out expectations upon the outcomes of learning (Rouda & Kusy, 1995 in Wai Yan, 2011). Thus, for effective learning to take place, it is vital to provide appropriate PD forms/activities to meet the particular professional needs of teachers (Kabilan & Veratharaju, 2013; Wai Yan, 2011).

### **5.6.3.2 Current CPD is not enough**

Connected with the previous sub-category, the qualitative data shows that the current CPD activities organised and/or offered by the MOE in Oman are not enough. A large number of teachers complained about this in the semi-structured interviews. For example, Zilal was eager to join a CPD programme but she could not *“...the TKT I wanted to but it was full.”* The data from the focus-group interviews confirms that as Laila (one of the SETs) complained about the shortage in the number of CPD activities/events available to teachers by saying:

*“in fact professional development programmes and activities run by the Ministry currently are not enough, they are very few each year and teachers need more, some teachers wait for 5 years to get a chance of professional development from the Ministry.”*

The data shows that the key reason for this problem is possibly the large numbers of English teachers in schools. Another reason as suggested by the data could be that some of the offered CPD activities/events failed to meet teachers' needs. This was confirmed in the questionnaire through an open-ended question which asked teachers *“In what ways, have the continuing professional development activities available to you failed to meet your professional needs?”* Participants' responses have been categorized into 8 headings:

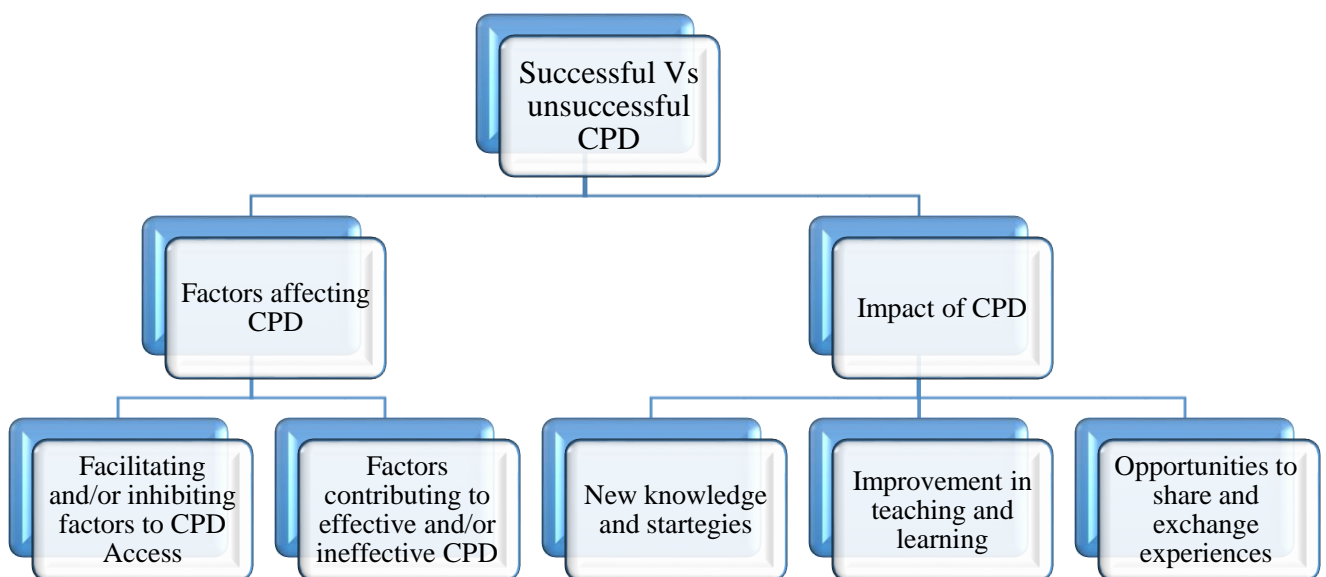
- Boring and repeated topics
- Lack of practical ideas
- Lack of individual relevance
- Poor quality provision (not planned well, unqualified instructors)
- Top down (teachers needs and experiences are ignored)
- Lack of time
- Teachers lack motivation (especially when it is compulsory)
- Lack of follow-up

To conclude, the findings reveal that the current CPD available to teachers is not enough due to the large numbers of English teachers in Omani schools in comparison to the low numbers of offered CPD activities. Moreover, some of the

offered CPD activities probably failed to meet teachers' needs. This is an indication that any CPD activity offered to teachers should be done through a systematic way of needs assessment. Thus, the offered CPD can match teachers' needs as Lee's (2002) study indicated. In addition, I believe that teachers should not rely a lot on the MOE; there should be lots of awareness-raising tasks for teachers to take a responsibility for their CPD as stated earlier. While investigating this issue in depth was beyond the scope of this study; it is an area which does suggest itself as a useful focus for continuing research in teacher CPD in Oman.

### 5.7 Successful vs unsuccessful CPD

This section reports on the findings regarding factors that facilitate or inhibit in-service TESOL teachers benefit from offered CPD programmes. In doing so, it seeks to answer the fourth research question posed by the study. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to investigate this. Analysis of data identified two main themes: factors affecting CPD and the impact of CPD. Both themes seem to be crucial in the success of CPD as literature on CPD has highlighted (e.g. Hustler et al., 2003; Lee, 2002). Moreover, effective CPD is linked to the positive impact it has on teachers, students and schools (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Garet et al., 2001). The analysis of the data related to these two themes fed into the emergence of a number of sub-categories as illustrated in Figure 5.8, as follows. These will be discussed in turn below.



**Figure 5.8: Themes related to successful vs unsuccessful CPD**

### **5.7.1 Factors affecting CPD**

The results of analysis revealed a number of factors that affect CPD; some of these factors are related to CPD access and teachers' participation in it while others are related to the effectiveness of CPD activities themselves. In the following parts, the facilitating and inhibiting factors affecting both CPD access and success will be first presented and followed by a comparison between them. The perceived factors are further discussed and illustrated in details using both quantitative and qualitative data.

#### **5.7.1.1 Facilitating/inhibiting factors to CPD access**

The factors that affect English teachers access to CPD in Oman were explored in the interviews and the questionnaire respectively. The interview data points out some factors that can facilitate teachers' access to CPD such as CPD timing and location. The data shows that it is better to have a variety of places including schools for CPD administration instead of always doing it in the training centres or in places that are not easily accessible for teachers. In my view, this might possibly inhibit teachers from participation in CPD events. The data shows that timing is also an important issue that positively facilitate access to CPD as Amal maintains in the following extract:

*"I hope that (some) professional development events were done for teachers when we started the school year last week, it shouldn't be done when we are teaching and have lots of duties to do."*

This probably suggests that some specific CPD events such as the local conferences at the educational governorates or the international ELT conference run by Sultan Qaboos University needs to be done at times that suit the majority of TESOL teachers in Oman, so many teachers can join these events. While this finding about timing as a facilitating factor to teachers' participation in CPD is in line with other studies (e.g. Wai Yan, 2011; Hustler et al., 2003), the other result on the need for the location of CPD to be varied seems more specific to the current study. Clearly, these results have implications for the scheduling and location of CPD activities by the MOE in Oman and these will be discussed in more detail in the following chapters.

Participants also reported a number of factors that can possibly inhibit teachers' access to CPD such as workload, lack of publicity for some CPD events/activities,

and family responsibilities. Workload was indicated as a key inhibitor by almost all respondents. As Salima highlights “...we are overloaded with lots of work and job duties, so you cannot participate in such events.” Moreover, workload sometimes negatively affects teachers’ actual participation in CPD as they cannot continue attending a specific CPD programme. For instance, Ameera explains how she joined the online TKT course but was not able to complete it “I had lots of workload I couldn’t continue all sessions of the course....” Other international studies also reported workload as an inhibiting factor to CPD access (e.g. Wai Yan, 2011 in Hong Kong; Hustler et al., 2003 in the UK).

Similarly, the questionnaire data brings to mind a number of factors that can facilitate or inhibit CPD access. In the questionnaire teachers were asked to rate a number of items which might affect their access to CPD. The scales were rated 1–5 with the extremes of the scale meaning 1 = most facilitating, 5 = most inhibiting.

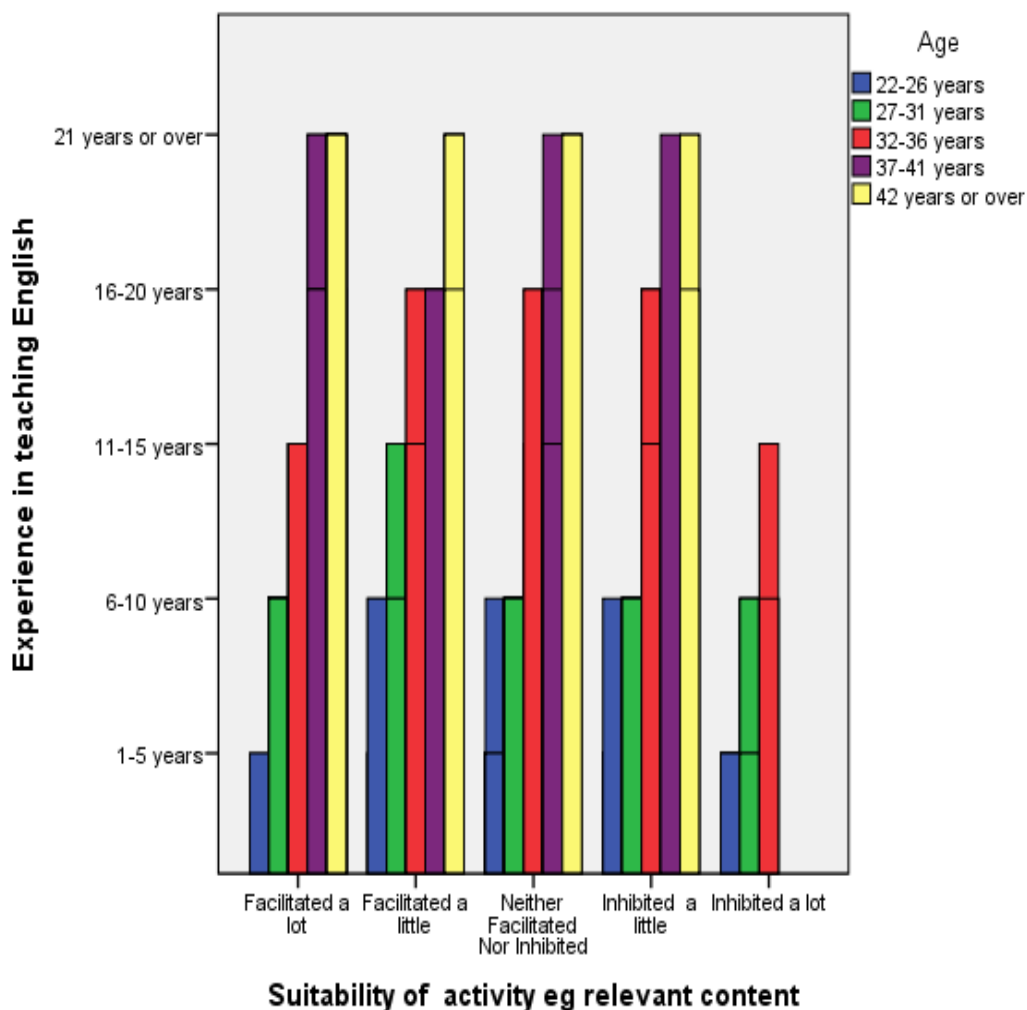
**Table 5.6: Factors affecting CPD access**

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
-work load	327	3.05	1.472
-Location of professional development activity	327	2.61	1.164
-Timing of professional development activity	327	2.72	1.165
-Suitability of activity e.g. relevant content	327	2.42	1.137
-Personal circumstances	327	2.61	1.226
-Other factors- Yes	68	1.00	.000
Valid N (listwise)	68		

It can be seen from the above table that workload was the most likely to inhibit access to CPD whilst suitability of the activity and relevant content were the most likely to facilitate access. Similarly, examples of inhibitors specified in the ‘other’ category by a number of respondents are “administrative work at school”, “No rewards” and “low quality of CPD”. Standard deviations are quite large indicating a wide range of responses. This means that respondents seem to have different

beliefs about facilitating and inhibiting factors to CPD access, but the majority of them seem to agree on workload as the most important inhibitor to CPD access.

Age and teaching experience showed differences in participants' beliefs about facilitating/inhibiting factors to CPD access. For instance, the majority of the older participants aged 42+ and more experienced ones 21 years of experience+ focussed on suitability of CPD tasks/activities and its' relevance as a key facilitator to their access to CPD. However, very few of the younger teachers aged 22-26 and the least experienced ones with 1-5 years of experience agreed on that (see Figure 5.9). This is an interesting result, and is worthy of deeper investigation in future studies.



**Figure 5.9: Suitability of CPD activity in relation to age and years of experience**

All in all, most respondents (167 in total) felt that timing and CPD to be done at different locations including schools were the most likely to facilitate their access to CPD whilst; unsurprisingly, heavy workload was the most likely to be the cause of their non-participation in CPD activities. However, individual comments from

the open-ended question in the online questionnaire indicated that to some extent teachers themselves were reluctant to leave their classrooms and join CPD activities/events either because they felt that they are not rewarded for their participation in CPD or they simply felt that their presence in the classroom was more important (Hustler et al., 2003). Similar factors were found to affect the effectiveness of CPD as will be discussed in the following part.

#### **5.7.1.2 Factors contributing to effective/ineffective CPD**

The qualitative data from the open-ended questions in the questionnaire indicates a number of factors that can positively contribute to the success of CPD. Suitability and relevance of CPD activity in terms of the topics presented in it and the ideas discussed was reported as an important factor to effective CPD (see Appendix 14). I think this means that teachers' value the CPD activity which involves some practical ideas that could be applied in their classrooms or help them find solutions to the challenges they are facing in the job. Therefore, suitability of CPD is a factor facilitating both CPD access and its success because if the activity is suitable in terms of its content and is relevant to teachers' work, then it encourages them to join and benefit from it. This finding is in line with other studies (e.g. Hustler et al., 2003; Lee, 2002).

What is more, some respondents think that CPD should be done by teacher educators that have good subject knowledge, and who are able to support them when needed. For instance, Farida felt that the TKT course she joined was effective because *"...in the TKT course we have had an online supervisor who was present online every week and was always helping and supporting us..."* This result again matches Hustler et al., (2003) research findings which disclose that the CPD provider is an important contributor to effective CPD.

Duration of CPD was also mentioned by many respondents as a significant factor to CPD success. It was found that longer CPD activities are more useful and beneficial for participants than shorter ones. From her own experience, Laila (a SET) noted: *"I also did the C1 course and it was very beneficial but the SET course was not that much beneficial because it was very short."* My personal experience of working as a teacher trainer does confirm that. This is because in longer courses participants have more chances to discuss issues, try out some

ideas in their classes and reflect on them the next session in the course. In this way, the activity is directly connected to classroom practice and participants act as reflective practitioners. Thus, participants might notice that such CPD activities are more beneficial.

Regarding factors contributing to unsuccessful CPD, unsurprisingly, the data shows that a number of these factors are similar to the factors contributing to CPD success but in a contradictory way. For example, irrelevance of CPD activity, CPD done by unqualified people and shorter CPD events were things highlighted that can hinder the success of CPD. Some other factors were also referred to as inhibitors to effective CPD such as the difficulty of applying some ideas suggested in CPD activities due to class size and workload (see Appendix 14 for data tables).

Accordingly, it is clear from the data that similar things were highlighted as leading to the success or the failure of CPD. While some of these factors are similar to those found in the literature (e.g. Wai Yan, 2011; Hustler et al., 2003; Lee, 2002) others are very specific to this study such as suitability of CPD in relation to age and teaching experience. Such differences could be related to Guskey's (1994) idea mentioned in the review of literature in Chapter 3 that effectiveness of CPD is context specific. The effectiveness of CPD and its success were not only considered from the point of view of influential factors but also with respect to the impact this was seen to have on improving schools, increasing teacher quality and improving the quality of student learning as will be presented below.

### ***5.7.2 The impact of CPD***

Part D in the survey (Q34) sought to investigate the impact of the CPD activities offered by the MOE on teachers' professional practice; teaching and learning. The online questionnaire respondents were asked to select from ten different INSET courses and other CPD activities, and were invited to identify any other ones not listed in the survey. Table 5.6 below shows that 45.7% of participants felt that the C2 course (for preparatory and lower secondary teachers) had the most impact on their professional practice. The research for PD course was noted to have the least impact (18.2%) on teachers' professional practice.



**Table 5.7: Perceived impact of CPD activities offered by the MOE**

	Responses		% of Cases
	N	%	
- C1 Course	118	13.2%	39.1%
- C2 Course	138	15.4%	45.7%
- Post Basic Course	89	9.9%	29.5%
- Curriculum support workshops	107	11.9%	35.4%
- Senior English Teachers Course	87	9.7%	28.8%
- Research for Professional Development Course	55	6.1%	18.2%
- Regional ELT conferences	96	10.7%	31.8%
- NET Course New English Teachers course	62	6.9%	20.5%
- Language course	74	8.3%	24.5%
- TKT online course	70	7.8%	23.2%
Total		100.0%	

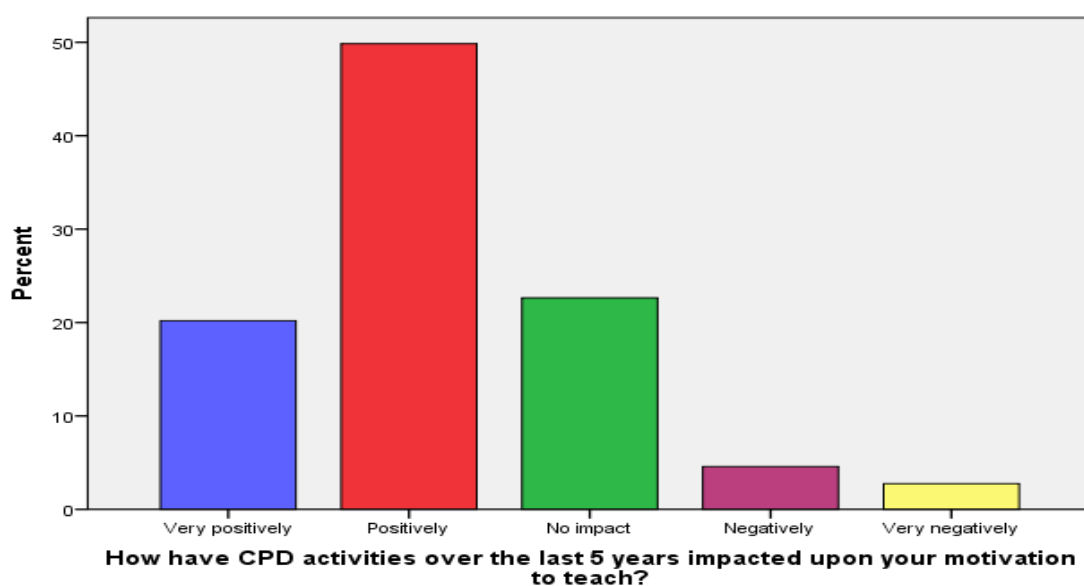
The above notes show that the INSET workshops/courses that focussed on methodology (e.g. C2, C1 and curriculum support workshops) are seen by teachers as having more impact on their professional practice compared to other activities. I think the research course has the least impact because teachers need more support in doing it and they need lots of follow up after the course and these elements are missing in the current research course offered by the MOE. This finding is in line with Uysal's (2012) study which investigated the impact of an INSET course for primary-school language teachers in Turkey. This study found that the main problem was the gap between the course and teachers' practices and suggested that follow-up monitoring and support should also be incorporated in future courses to bridge the course and the real context (Waters, 2006; Waters & Vilchez, 2000).

Furthermore, Question 35 in the survey asked participants about the ways in which the activities/programmes shown in Table 5.6 impact on their beliefs about their professional practice. The data revealed some interesting differences between teachers according to the age of the teachers and their amount of

teaching experience. With regard to the extent to which CPD activities were seen to transform their beliefs, interestingly 61.9% of the older teachers aged 42+ commented that CPD resulted in changing their beliefs towards teaching while only 4.8% of the younger teachers aged 22-26 stated that.

Similar results were observed according to their views about how far the CPD changed their classroom practice with more experienced teachers reported more changes in their beliefs towards teaching compared to less experienced teachers. In my viewpoint, this might be explained by the fact that changes in teachers' beliefs are not easy to happen and take a lot of time to be observed. In fact, the literature has documented that change is highly complex and that changes in teachers' beliefs are dependent on a multitude of factors (Calderhead & Shorrock, 1997 in Phipps, 2009).

In addition, Question 36 in the survey asked participants to rate the impact of CPD on their motivation to teach over the last 5 years. The rating scale ranged from 1 (a very positive impact) to 5 (a very negative impact). The results reported in Figure 5.10 below show that many participants think that CPD impacts positively upon their motivation to teach with 49.8% reporting a positive impact and 20.2% reporting a very positive impact. The minority of participants (22.6%) report no impact and only 2.8% report a very negative impact.



**Figure 5.10: The impact of CPD on participants' motivation to teach**

To sum up, taken together the findings reveal that some of the currently offered formal structured programmes/activities, especially the Cycle 2 methodology course, were perceived by participants to have some impact on their classroom practice. Yet, little change is reported in novice teachers' beliefs about teaching and on their motivation to teach though the majority of the formal structured activities run by the MOE are targeting those novice/less-experienced teachers (see Appendix 21/c a figure showing differences between novice and experienced teachers regarding the impact of CPD on their motivation to teach). To delve more into the ideas indicated in the online questionnaire, participants were asked in the interviews about the specific benefits of the CPD activities they experienced. The generated ideas were classified into 3 sub-categories as will be discussed below.

#### **5.7.2.1 New knowledge and strategies**

The qualitative data shows that respondents have gained some knowledge and strategies from participating in some formal structured activities. For example, some of the participants felt that the methodology courses they joined were beneficial as they added new ideas to them. Salima, for example, provides a specific example of how the C1 course for primary teachers helped her to learn new strategies:

*“...the cycle 1 course showed us the teaching steps regarding each skill ... For example, how to teach vocabulary to young learners, how can I help a young learner at grade 1 to acquire the new vocabulary items that I teach, I have learnt many ways for example how to explain the word using other ways, saying synonyms for it, how to play games with children to support the learning of new vocabulary items.”*

Ultimately, I think that the knowledge and strategies participants gained from joining some INSET and other CPD activities might be related to Shulman and his colleagues' domains of knowledge, and the content and structure of the professional knowledge base of teaching (see e.g. Grossman, Wilson & Shulman, 1989; Shulman & Grossman, 1988; Shulman, 1986). This means that some of the formal structured activities offered by the MOE may achieve their aims since a central purpose of CPD is to bring participating teachers into contact with new ideas and knowledge (Eraut, 1994).

### **5.7.2.2 Improvement in teaching and learning**

It is well documented in the literature that the importance of knowledge is that it is particularly relevant to understanding and changing classroom practices (Borko & Putnam, 1995). Some of the respondents elucidated that they used some of the ideas learnt from joining INSET programmes and other CPD events in their classes. For example findings show that when the new projects were introduced at schools (e.g. Jolly Phonics), many teachers did not know how to teach these projects properly before joining these initiatives. Shamsa, for instance, complained that she felt lost before joining the workshop and having a group meeting with her SET:

*“At the beginning I was really lost and did not know how to teach the syllabus that have the Jolly Phonics parts, but when I joined this workshop and the group meeting with my SET it helped me a lot....”*

Respectively, the data from the focus group interview also showed that the cascade carried out by SETs helped the new teachers cope with the syllabus such as Jolly Phonics innovation. For example, Badriya noticed this when she did a peer observation to one of her new staff after the cascade sessions:

*“I also visited teacher Amna if you remember her, and because she didn’t teach grade 1 before I was thinking how she will do the lesson, but her Jolly Phonics lesson was great and the students were actively engaged in the lesson and I felt she followed the steps that we discussed in the cascade session smoothly and intelligently.”*

In the long run, the findings indicate that some of the formal structured activities EFL teachers joined in showed them some ideas and helped them with their teaching. This result supports the literature in that teacher CPD is perceived as an important way to improve schools by increasing teacher quality, and thus enhancing students’ learning (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Craft, 2000; Hargreaves, 2000; Day, 1999).

### **5.7.2.3 Opportunities to share and exchange experiences**

Half of the interview participants also stated that some CPD activities helped them in sharing experience with other teachers and learning from others’ ways of teaching. In reality, peer observation was reported by the majority of respondents as a key activity that helped them exchange experience with their colleagues. It was also noticed that the PD plans SETs prepare have lots of peer observation opportunities for teachers during the school year. Peer observation seems to

positively impact teaching and learning as could be seen in the following quote by Anisa:

*“Honestly peer observation was very beneficial, you see other teachers experience, you see her teaching methods and techniques, you see how she controls her class, you see in reality what a teacher is doing and how she is coping with the class and her pupils not just by someone telling you in words, you see factual things... sure I saw many good methods in other teachers’ classes and I applied in my classroom and I as well as my students benefitted from it.”*

This result resonates with the findings of another study done in Oman by Al-Ghafri (2002) which shows that teachers’ value classroom observation as a source of their CPD. Yet, another Omani study reports that Omani English teachers feel that they want to have a clearer idea about peer observation and need more training in it (Al-Habsi, 2004). Such inconsistency in research findings regarding the same investigated issue could be due to the different ways of practising such activities at schools.

In sum, the data shows that with regard to the impact of CPD on teachers, some formal structured provision (i.e. INSET programmes and other CPD activities run by the MOE) seemed to have some impact on respondents, this impact was in some aspects only and was not mentioned by the majority of participants who undertook the questionnaire or interviews. So in comparison to the number of formal structured and other CPD activities offered each year for TESOL teachers by the MOE, I would argue here that such impact seem to be limited.

As reported earlier in this thesis, my interest in introducing the participatory form of CPD which constituted the third stage of my study design, was to address some perceived inadequacies with existing CPD provision in Oman. Despite some teachers highlighting some benefits received from current CPD programmes and activities, on the whole the impact of CPD on teachers is variable and limited. The results highlight a number of factors impacting on teachers’ engagement with formal CPD provision, including the fact that CPD does not fully meet teachers’ needs. These findings have helped confirm the need for a more participatory approach to CPD in Oman that was the focus of the third stage of the study design. Findings with regard to participants’ perspectives on participation in CPD are discussed below.

## 5.8 Participation in CPD

This section of the chapter presents the findings that address the last research question which concerns participants' reaction to the participatory approach to CPD. To investigate that, a number of data collection sources were utilized (e.g. semi-structured and focus-group interviews, the questionnaire, and clips from the online discussions). The data from all these sources has been categorised into 2 main themes: 1) teachers' involvement in the CPD process and 2) the participatory model of CPD. The first theme focuses mainly on teachers' beliefs and experience of participating in CPD whilst the second one highlights their views on the participatory model adopted for this study with respect to three areas shown in Figure 5.11, below, as well as a number of sub-categories within these as will be reported below.

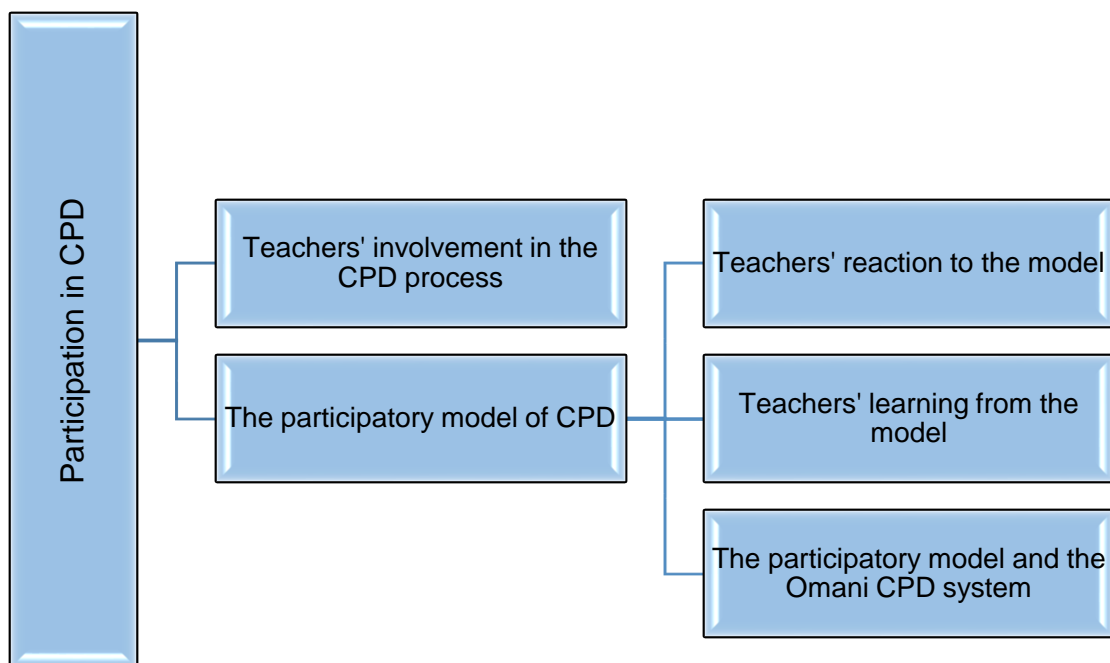


Figure 5.11: Themes related to participation in CPD

### 5.8.1 Teachers' involvement in the CPD process

The data demonstrates that the majority of respondents believe in teachers' involvement in their CPD process. Yet, the data shows that the current CPD system is probably not involving teachers in their CPD process as respondents complained in the interviews that they do not make any decision about their participation in CPD initiatives and they illuminated their dissatisfaction regarding that. For example, Shamsa explains how she joined the Cycle 1 course:

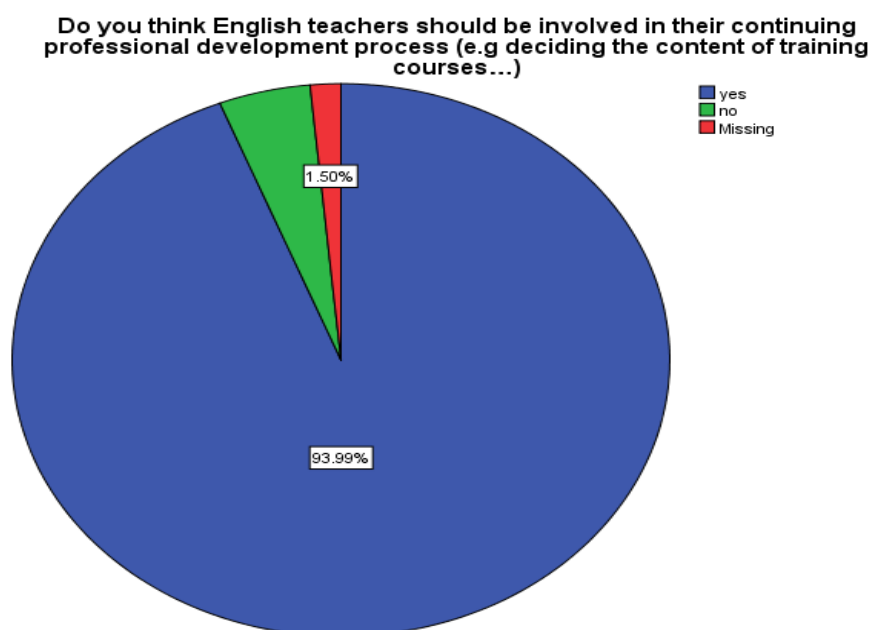
*“...but for example when we were nominated for the cycle 1 course it was compulsory, no one asked us for our preferences or needs.”*

This confirms my interpretation mentioned earlier that INSET training which is a dominant form of CPD in Oman is a structured and imposed form of training where teachers have no choice but to attend. This suggests that the current Omani CPD system is probably not responsive to the individual participating teachers’ concerns and it has little relevance to their needs (Fullan, 1991). Thus, the effectiveness of such CPD is questionable since effective CPD should be able to cater for and address teachers’ specific needs (Kabilan & Veratharaju, 2013; Goodall et al., 2005).

All interview participants agreed that teachers should actively participate in their CPD process. In the following quote Amal clarifies the reasons behind giving teachers the chance to be involved in their CPD:

*“...because the teacher is always working with his or her pupils so he/she knows what do they need and what is missing, what they are doing now is that they just plan things and professional development activities without knowing what do we need and want, we are in classrooms so we know our needs and requirements... we are closest to children and we know our and their needs, so we should be part of the process.”*

The quantitative data also highlights teachers’ preference for more participatory forms of CPD as the results for Question 46 in the survey, presented in Figure 5.12 below show. As can be seen almost all participants (94%) agreed with this statement regardless of their gender, job title, age, and teaching experience.



**Figure 5.12: Involvement in CPD process**

In my viewpoint, this result is perhaps not surprising given that it is to be expected that teachers are often very aware of their abilities and weaknesses and therefore their needs and as such should be able to participate in their CPD process by making decisions related to that. The minority of teachers who disagreed with this statement were mainly novice teachers and they justified their answer by commenting that they are still getting new ideas in teaching and therefore were not sure what CPD activities were most needed (see appendix 14, open-ended questionnaire data).

Examples of ways through which teachers can participate in their CPD process were specified by 68 participants who responded to the follow up open-ended question with the following being highlighted most frequently:

- \* Decide the title and content of training courses (especially SETs)
- \* Choose the topics and areas they are interested in/or based on their needs
- \* Choose the time/place of doing CPD
- \* Choose the trainer/instructor
- \* Choose the materials
- \* Decide which skill they need to improve
- \* Decide on the activities of the CPD event
- \* Be part of their needs assessment
- \* Run some CPD events (e.g. courses, workshops) themselves

On the whole, the findings demonstrate that the vast majority of respondents are keen to take part in their CPD process through different ways according to teachers' CPD needs. However, it remains the fact that the current CPD system does not make this possible. As has been made clear at various points throughout this thesis, I believe that this situation needs to change and this lies at the heart of my interest in undertaking the action research into the development of a participatory model of CPD which as discussed in Chapter 3 above (see Section 3.8) is increasingly being advocated in the literature. Research has also demonstrated the value of CPD that actively involve practicing teachers in their learning process (e.g. Moran et al., 2017; Hung & Yeh, 2013; Borg & Al-Busaidi,



2012; Butler & Schnellert, 2012). The results of the action research are discussed below.

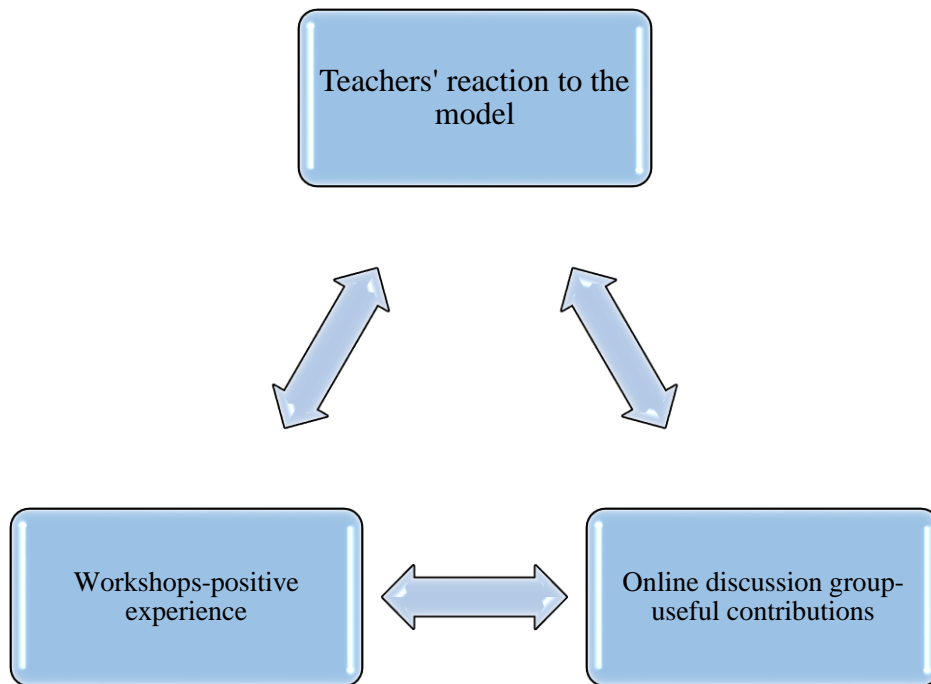
### **5.8.2 The participatory model of CPD**

There is a wealth of literature on paradigm shifts in teachers' learning and the contemporary approaches to teacher professional development from the transmission models to more constructivist views of education (Hung & Yeh, 2013; Reilly & Literat, 2012; Borko et al., 2010). These views call for more cultural-individual interactive approaches to the professional development of teachers (Caena, 2011) which involve teachers as active and reflective participants in the change process. Therefore, a participatory model of CPD has been adopted in the current study. My research participants were introduced to this model through the action research phase of the study.

As detailed in Chapter 4 above, the action research entailed the development of a participatory CPD intervention which involved teachers in three workshops (2 hours each), and an online discussion group which lasted 6 weeks. The evaluation of the effectiveness of this intervention has been considered with reference to Guskey's (2000) conceptual framework for the evaluation of CPD in schools discussed in detail in Chapter 3 (see 3.6). To this end the data generated from the action research sought to uncover three things highlighted by his framework: teachers' reaction to the participatory model adopted, their learning from this model, impact on their students' learning. It also sought to identify participants' views on the potential of a participatory model within the Omani CPD system. The results of this evaluation are considered with respect to these three dimensions in turn below.

#### **5.8.2.1 Teachers' reaction to the model**

Figure 5.13 below provides a summary of the organization of the results regarding participating teachers' reaction to the participatory model of CPD they experienced. Participants' reactions were investigated using a focus-group interview and follow-up semi-structured interviews with some respondents. Teachers were asked about the workshops they participated in and about their involvement in the online discussion group. Findings regarding these are discussed in turn below.



**Figure 5.13: Teachers' reaction to the model**

#### ❖ Workshops-positive experience

The results of individual interviews with participating teachers indicate that participating in the workshops was a positive experience for many participants (11 out of the 15 teachers stated that). This was echoed by two third of the participants in the focus group interview where they indicated that they liked the experience of joining in the three workshops, and they felt that their awareness about the workshops content had been enlightened. By the same token, all of the SETs reacted positively to the workshops in follow-up semi-structured interviews undertaken with them.

For instance, the three SETs commented that all their teachers liked the workshops and they were always talking positively about the ideas presented in these workshops. I think that the participatory nature of these workshops seems to positively affect teachers' beliefs about CPD as they participated with others to learn and be updated. In other words, it was a participatory learning context where thinking was made visible through networking with others; learning was not an individual task for the individual mind, but an exploration within a learning community (groups of teachers working together in these workshops), which

provided a rich, robust learning experience for all participants (Reilly & Literat, 2012).

In the following extract, Laila (a SET) explains how actively and collaboratively they participated in these workshops:

*“When we divided the topics in the workshops between us as groups...the first thing we did after knowing our topic is taking the reading article related to this topic, and dividing it between us as a group of teachers without differentiating between SETs and teachers (each one was responsible for reading part of the article) and I got my part like the other colleagues, each one read her part and we discussed about the whole topic and how we are going to present it to all teachers in the coming workshop, in the workshop the whole team presented our topic together where each of us talked about her bit and then we all concluded by suggesting some ways of applying this idea in our schools and with our students.”*

Consequently, the findings reveal that participating in the three workshops was a positive experience for the participants in that it positively affected their beliefs about the importance of CPD. The participatory nature of the workshops related to being actively involved in their learning process was valued by respondents. Such result resembles the findings of other studies (e.g. Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012; Lee, 2011). Thus, many participants agreed that the workshops were inspiring and added a lot to them. For example, Anisa (a teacher) emphasizes:

*“Personally I liked these workshops a lot and I hope that I always join such types of workshops that are inspiring and enriches our knowledge with new ideas and information, I liked all the workshops, honestly I have now 8 years of experience of teaching and I joined many workshops but I never met such workshops, it was really inspiring for me and I loved all the ideas discussed and the online group.”*

#### ❖ **Online discussion group-useful contributions**

Participants were asked for their views of the overall value of the online discussion groups as well as their views on the contributions of different group members and whether these added anything to them. Data was collected from individual and focus group interviews as well as from an examination of discussion posts (see Appendix 10 for a clip of an online discussion post).

The results of my analysis indicated that participating in the online discussion group was a useful experience for the majority of respondents and that

participants' contributions in this group were also seen as useful. This is because, these contributions were based on practicing teachers' real experiences as the data shows. For example, Halima remarks: *"(colleagues)...were contributing greatly and their ideas were really much appreciated because they were from their experience."* Moreover, all respondents agreed that the discussed issues were useful because they were of concern for everyone in the group as Huda notes: *"...the ideas that we discussed were concerning all of us, even all teachers I think."*

The data also shows that participants' contributions in this group were fruitful because they suggested practical ways that other teachers could benefit from (as discussed in more detail in section 5.7.2.2 below). For example, Huda explained that she benefited from the idea of creating a reading culture that was discussed in the online discussion. As she said: *"Ya for me they discussed how they applied creating a reading culture in their schools and I benefited from their ideas and used some of these ideas"*. Lulwa further liked the discussion on student discipline, as she said: *"...the ideas they discussed were really beneficial especially the ideas about punishing students for me was really beneficial and it added to me how others deal with the same issue."*

To sum up, the findings indicate that teachers' participation in the online discussion group appears to add a lot to them. This is because, the discussed ideas are based on participants experience; thus, they include some practical ways that other teachers could benefit from as the data indicates. In fact, research has found that engaging teachers in such collaborative communities has potential to impact their classroom practices in ways that benefit students (Butler & Schnellert, 2012). Therefore, recent voices from the educational field have aptly called attention to this need, recommending the establishment of initiatives such as "Digital Teacher Corps" that would facilitate a more innovative and relevant implementation of professional development at schools (Levine & Gee, 2011; Levine & Wojcicki, 2010 in Reilly & Literat, 2012). It is; hence, not surprising that online discussion forums have become the subject of considerable research, both regarding the design of discussion forum activities that support learning and the use of discussion forums to create a community that can support learning (Susan et al., 2007; Swan, 2004).

### 5.8.2.2 Teachers' learning from the model

While the above sections focussed on participants' reaction to the participatory model adopted in the current study, here I will consider findings regarding participants' learning from their experience of this, that is, following Guskey (2000) the knowledge and skills that participants think they have learnt as a result of joining CPD. The data related to participants' learning from the participatory model of CPD was collected from individual and focus group interviews as well as from an examination of discussion posts. The findings has been classified into 6 sub-categories as shown in Figure 5.14 below.

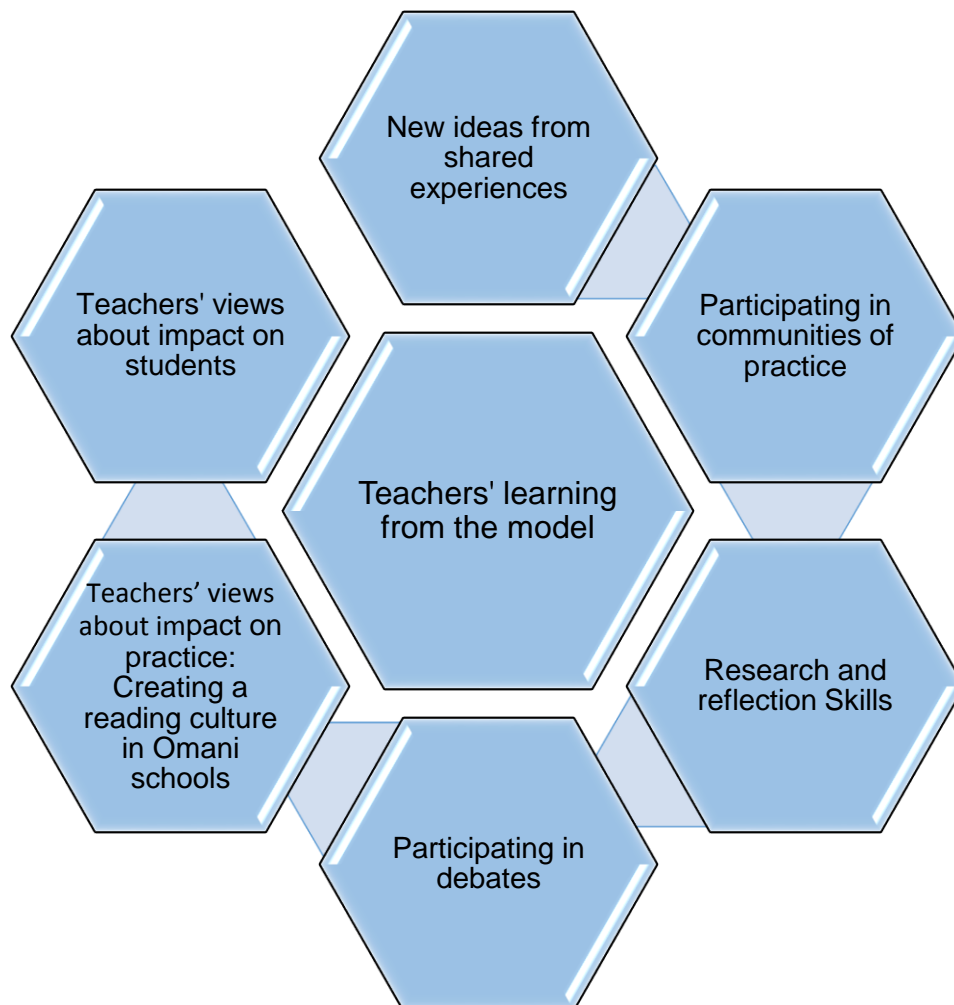


Figure 5.14: Teachers' learning from the model

#### ❖ New ideas from shared experiences

Rogers and Horrocks (2010) emphasized that adults are more self-directive of their own learning and that they learn more effectively through informal learning rather than formal learning. They stress the importance of actively involving participants in their learning process arguing, as does Adler (2000), that when

such participation is about the practice of teaching, teachers will become more knowledgeable about teaching. The data demonstrates that participating in the three workshops and in the online discussion group helped participants to learn new knowledge and ideas from their colleagues shared experiences. It shows that co-learning happened in these events where the participant teachers pooled their skills and knowledge, and shared them in the tasks of teaching and learning (Reilly & Literat, 2012).

For example, Badriya mentions the benefit she got from joining the workshops: *“... I feel that others ideas enrich my knowledge and honestly this workshop added a lot to me personally and gave me new ideas.”* Regarding the online discussion group, Alya referred to the benefit she took from joining this, saying:

*“Exchanging experience is very good and it shows us solutions to some problems we are facing where our colleagues in the online discussion group discussed issues that we are concerned about, also we ask them about their experience of some teaching methods they applied and felt were good...”*

The above quote suggests that participants have shared experiences with each other during the online discussions and got to know some ideas from each other and that these ideas were directly related to their teaching and classroom practice.

This finding corresponds with Appleby and Pilkington's (2014:48) model of critical professional development which supports the role of dialogue and discourse for professional learning. In fact, the workshops and the online discussions involved dialogue with peers and groups about different aspects of teaching, learning and the professional development of teachers. Moreover, participants' reflected on these professional exchanges and experiences which possibly enabled more rigorous and focussed learning and meaning making activity to take place (Vrikki et al., 2017).

Overall, the findings reveal that the participatory model of CPD has positively affected participants' learning. In my view, the dialogic process of learning that was a key feature of the participatory model of CPD is likely to have played a part in creating a positive learning experience. This is because through dialogue, talking and discussing with others, participants were able to share knowledge within their colleagues “a professional community” and this enabled the

interrogation of explicit learning and teaching theories in relation to teachers' subject-specific priorities (Appleby & Pilkington, 2014:52).

### ❖ **Participating in communities of practice**

Seashore et al., (2003, p. 3) points out that a professional learning community does not only represent discrete acts of teacher sharing, but it can establish a school-wide culture making collaboration expected, genuine, ongoing, inclusive and focused on critically examining practice to improve students' outcomes. They added that "...The hypothesis is that what teachers do together outside of the classroom can be as important as what they do inside in affecting school restructuring, teachers' professional development, and student learning." This means that participating in communities of practice is as important as teaching in contributing to teachers' professional development and learning as well as to students' learning and improving schools (Nolan & Molla, 2017; Vangrieken et al., 2017).

The data revealed that the participatory model of CPD has added a lot to the participants since they were joining a professional community of practice (me as a researcher, their colleagues, teachers and SETs from different schools) through which they discussed issues, shared concerns and learned from each other's' ideas and contributions. For example, Farida explains that:

*"The idea of communities of practice that we discussed in the workshops was a great idea, it showed me how easy it can be that when we face any problem we can find solutions for it by discussing and communicating with others, asking colleagues for their experiences and so on."*

Moreover, the following clip from one of the online discussions in the group provides an example of how Huda shared her experience of a book that she read, and how her colleagues discussed the ideas presented in the book to help children with their reading; thereby demonstrating the benefits of creating a community of practice for participants.

H: Hello dears, I really found this book useful, I think it is important for every mother and father as well as for every teacher "99 methods to develop the reading love in children" it is in PDF available at <http://t.co/mK0Ua1EBMY>

I: Thanks H I like it

B: I also like it, I found item no 4 relevant to our discussion about giving children books that are beyond their levels and how the child him/herself can after sometime choose the right books for his level, I think yes, this is an important issue

I: ya, good point, do you remember when we talked about the idea of not blaming ourselves if our kids are not reading, again they referred to this idea in this book

L: Yes miss but it also showed ways of dealing with those children, encouraging them and helping them to love the books and have a positive attitude towards books

Z: I also liked the idea of taking children to bookshops and letting them choose the books they prefer, I think this will make those children love the books and have a level of responsibility towards their choice ' I will read this book because I like it, I have chosen it myself not anyone else'

F: Ya a very good idea, also I liked the idea of reading stories for children in a loud voice, this of course can help them pay attention with you and recognise the importance of stories and reading in general

In sum, the results indicate that the research participants have learnt from their experience of being part of a professional community of practice which worked together in the workshops planning and delivering process, and discussed issues of concern in the online discussion group as can be seen from the above clip. Van Horn (2006) proposes that teachers are more likely to take risks, sustain attempts to make change, and develop, adapt and/or apply approaches designed to support students in their classrooms, when they are given opportunities to solve problems collaboratively and have access to rich resources.



## ❖ Research and reflection Skills

The data shows that participants have gained some skills as a result of joining the participatory model of CPD. Researching is one of these skills which some participants referred to. I think that this might be the result of the awareness-raising activities that were included in the workshop about the importance of research for teachers and carrying out action research. The literature has well documented that many teachers rarely engage in research unless encouraged to do so (Borg, 2009 in Wyatt, 2011). Thus, some teachers indicated in the follow-up individual interviews that they are planning to do action research after they joined the workshops. For example, Amal illuminates that:

*“...participating in these workshops helped me get new ideas, read in some topics and remind myself of the information I already have about action research especially and how can we do action research in reality, for example, I thought of doing an action research about the challenges teachers face in shared writing lessons.”*

In addition, the data shows that respondents have gained some reflection skills as they reflected on the ideas they discussed in the workshops and online discussion group. This is what Schön (1987) called *reflection-on-action* which takes place after the event and is a more deliberative and conscious process. This type of reflection involves looking back at an event (in this case after joining the workshops and online discussion group) it is a form of retrospective reflection (Schön, 1987). Alya expresses that:

*“...also inside the school sometimes we reflect on the ideas we discussed in the online discussion group.”*

From my viewpoint, both research and reflection skills that participants stated they have gained after joining the participatory model of CPD seem to help participants to critically reflect on their practice. Through such critical reflection on practice, they should then be able not only to examine the technical aspects of their teaching, but also to look critically at issues, both within the school as a whole, and outside which might have impacts on the quality of teaching and learning in the classroom (Harrison, 2011). Therefore, these skills are crucial for teachers' CPD which can help them explore more critically the underlying assumptions in their teaching practices, then to build their understanding of teaching and learning and add to their professional knowledge (Harrison, 2011; Pollard et al., 2008).

### ❖ **Participating in debates**

Giroux (2017) argued that one way of rethinking and restructuring the nature of teachers' work is viewing them as transformative intellectuals. He emphasized that through this view teachers should not be seen as merely as “performers professionally equipped to realize effectively any goals that may be set for them. Rather [they should] be viewed as free men or women with a special dedication to the values of the intellect and the enhancement of the critical power of the young” (Giroux, 1985: 378). This means that if teachers are to educate students to be active, critical citizens, they should be transformative intellectuals.

The idea of teachers as transformative intellectuals was discussed in the workshops. For instance, during the second workshop which was led by the participants, one group of teachers (group, 3) discussed the idea of Omani English teachers as intellectuals and the need to create an atmosphere for intellectual debate in Omani schools. Participants provided an example of that from an event that was taking place during the time of the workshops (October-2015) which was elections for the Shura council representatives (political representatives for the different governorates in Oman). This group intelligently showed participants how teachers in Oman can participate in intellectual debates like choosing the appropriate people to be the representatives of their states at the Shura council. They added that currently many people in different states in Oman are choosing their representatives according to family relationships or to cultural and social considerations. They railed against that arguing that teachers need to have an enlightening role in this regard by discussing such issues at their schools and even taking these ideas to their society by talking to their family members and the public people about choosing the best people to be their representatives at the Shura council. They stated that through participating in such types of intellectual debates or any other educational debates teachers can learn and develop professionally.

An example of participants' engagement in educational debates was present in the online discussion strings where teachers' agreement and disagreement with each other was clearly evident. I think such types of discourse are important in that they provide teachers with the chance to organize collectively to improve the

conditions under which they work (Giroux, 2013). The following clip from one of the online discussions shows participants' beliefs regarding punishment.

I: Hi ladies, I hope everything is fine with you, 'teachers should be allowed to physically punish the students whose parents give their consent to such punishment', what do you think?

Anisa: Hello all, I disagree, punishment because it is shaking from the student's personality and does not encourage him to learn and acquire the psychological insecurity and instability

I: What do you mean, can you give me an example?

Anisa: For example, if a student with me is very shy and does not participate in the class and his parents agreed to punish him, will the student try to participate after punishment? Of course not, but will increase his fear of providing answers and possibly he will say a wrong answer because of the punishment

I: Yes but some people say that punishment is good for controlling students behaviour, what do you think?

Anisa: There are several ways to avoid punishment for behaviour, for example, give him the role of leadership in the class room or let him be a young teachers...etc

L: Salam, let's be realistic, I think there is no one in this group who does not punish her students especially boys because they are the group who increase the teacher's blood pressure because of their behaviours and honestly we tries all the techniques with them but they didn't work, we don't punish except for behavioural problems but for the homework or slow learners we don't punish, in my view punishment is good sometimes and when we were students we were punished if we deserved it or not and that didn't affect us psychologically not it affected our levels and there are many pupils in class if you punish one of them for a behaviour the rest will be ok

Amna: I use both according to the situation because now students do not care with encouragement, its ok with them if you encourage or not my way of punishment is not hitting the students instead using other ways like asking them to do an activity...etc

N: in fact the teachers who hit more, their students are more controlled therefore we used this

In sum, the findings show that the participatory model of CPD encouraged teachers to participate in debates and discuss the idea of preparing teachers as intellectuals in Omani schools which could possibly contribute to their CPD. I believe that creating more opportunities like this would seem to be a crucial step in addressing the challenges associated with the top down system of CPD in Oman. This is because this step stresses that teachers have to take an active responsibility to raise serious questions about what they teach, how they teach it, and what the larger goals for which they are striving are (Giroux, 2013; 1985). Moreover, to demonstrate to the public the central role that teachers must play to any viable attempt to reform the public schools (Giroux, 2017).

## ❖ Teachers' views about impact on practice: Creating a reading culture in Omani schools

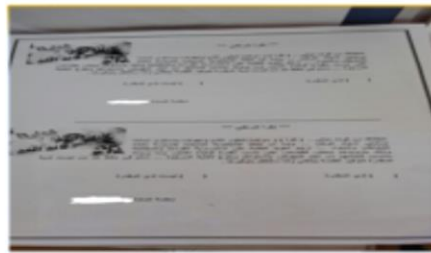
Guskey's (2000) fourth level of CPD evaluation focuses on participants' use of new knowledge and skills; whether what they have learned makes a difference to their practice. The data from individual and focus group interviews as well as online posts shows that participants claim to have used some of the ideas from the workshops and online discussion group in practice. A key idea that almost all participants said that they used regarding developing themselves professionally is reading. Many respondents (16 out of the 18) stated that they developed a love to read after participating in the workshops. Halima, for instance, clearly states that *"I also benefited from the reading, I myself started to read now after talking about it in the workshops, and I started loving to read."* The majority of participants also remarked that reading has become a habit for them as Laila for example states: *"...for ourselves now at least we specified a time for reading."*

Furthermore, the data shows that respondents tried to create a reading culture in their schools by encouraging their students to read as this was repeatedly reported by some participants. Moreover, the three SETs said that the majority of their teachers have applied this idea with their students. For example, Laila (a SET) explains the process through which they applied this idea in their school:

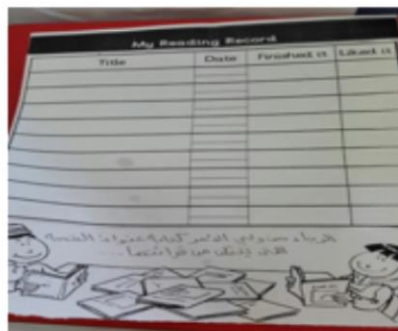
*"we started with our students by advising them on the importance of reading, then we provided them with story books and other books to read, we also encouraged our learners to borrow books and that each child finishes reading 7 books will be rewarded."*

This finding reflects McKool and Gespass's (2009) study findings which investigated the relationship between 65 elementary school teachers' personal reading habits and their instructional practices in three states in the USA (New Jersey, Florida, and Texas). The results of this study indicate that teachers who are readers themselves are more likely to engage in instructional practices that model their own passions for reading. In the following clip (from one of the online discussions) Huda shares with her colleagues how she used the reading idea with her pupils to encourage them to read and the process she followed regarding that.

H: Hi all, how are you doing, I have applied the idea of encouraging my students to read, I asked every child to buy a new story book that he/she can read, very simple and not expensive, every single child bought a story, they wrote their names on their stories and started reading their own stories, once each child finished reading his/her story, his parents wrote notes that the story was read by the child and then he brought it to class marked with his name, and all students put their stories in a box, then I asked each child to choose another story, take it home to read it and so on, here is the samples I used for that, the first form is a letter for parents explaining our reading project and what is expected from a child, this form also asks parents to buy stories for their children according to their levels and interests, I also emphasized that if any parent cannot buy just let me know and I will provide their kids with suitable stories (as below)



H: I also attached to each child's book a reading record where each child's parent can write the title of the story the child has read, date, whether the story was finished or not and the child's general impression about the story he/she has read (like this)



Altogether, the results indicate that participants have in practice used some of the ideas they were in contact with through the participatory model of CPD as they stated. Teachers developing a love to reading and making it a habit is one of these ideas. I think that this is crucial because research has proved that teachers' own personal reading habits do influence their instructional practices. If teachers want to influence their students' reading behaviours and attitudes in positive ways, then they, themselves, must value and engage in the act of reading (McKool & Gespass, 2009). The data shows that respondents have taken the reading idea further to their schools by encouraging their students to read and reward them. I hope that through engaging Omani students in such types of reading cultures, they can become life-long lovers of reading (Kane & Warner, 1997).

### ❖ Teachers' views about impact on students

The fifth and last level of Guskey's (2000) conceptual framework of CPD evaluation has suggested investigating the impact of CPD activity on students' learning outcomes which may include measures of students' attitudes, study habits and classroom behaviours. The data from the individual and focus group interviews indicates that some of the ideas presented in the workshops and in the online discussion group have positively impacted on students' attitudes towards reading. Some participants (7 in total) claimed that many students in their classes are now more eager to read. In the following quote Anisa for example confirms that:

*“some of my pupils only during this month read 18 stories and are still searching in their ipads for other stories to read instead of playing games in their ipads as they were doing before, their attitudes towards reading changed positively and now they love to read, and tomorrow I will reward my students those who read the biggest numbers of stories.”*

Kane and Warner (1997) stressed that the climate in which reading takes place becomes one of the most influential aspects of a child's motivation to read. There is some suggestions from the data that students' positive attitudes towards reading and the desire to read is a result of their positive reading experiences at school but more follow up research, outside the scope of this study, is needed to establish how far the participatory model has led to changes in student learning.

Broadly speaking, the findings show that some of ideas discussed in the participatory model of CPD and were applied by some respondents did positively have an impact on students' learning. Some participants frankly stated that their students became more enthusiastic towards reading. This result matches the findings of an action research carried out in a western suburb of Chicago, Illinois by Kane and Warner (1997). The students in that study showed a marked improvement in their motivation to read after applying some strategies to motivate them to read. The literature has well documented that effective CPD should have positive impact on students' outcomes and enhance their learning (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Blandford, 2000; Day, 1999). Having discussed teachers' learning from the participatory model of CPD, the following section will consider participants beliefs on the feasibility of using a more participatory model of CPD in Oman.

### 5.8.2.3 The potential of the participatory model in the Omani CPD system

In general, adopting Guskey's (2000) conceptual framework to evaluate the effectiveness of the participatory model of CPD in relation to the current Omani CPD system, shows that the model has some benefits as well as some constraints. Here I will consider participants' views on the perceived benefits of the participatory model as a way to critically appraise the suitability of this model as a form of CPD in Oman.

#### ❖ Benefits

When participants were asked about their views regarding the participatory model of CPD, the majority of them stated that they have benefited from their experience of this model. They remarked that this model has many advantages for teachers' and students, and thus might result in improving the quality of education (Bolam, 2000; Hargreaves, 1994). Figure 5.15 below summarises the different benefits identified from an analysis of qualitative data generated from individual and focus group interviews as well as clips from online discussions. These are discussed in turn below.

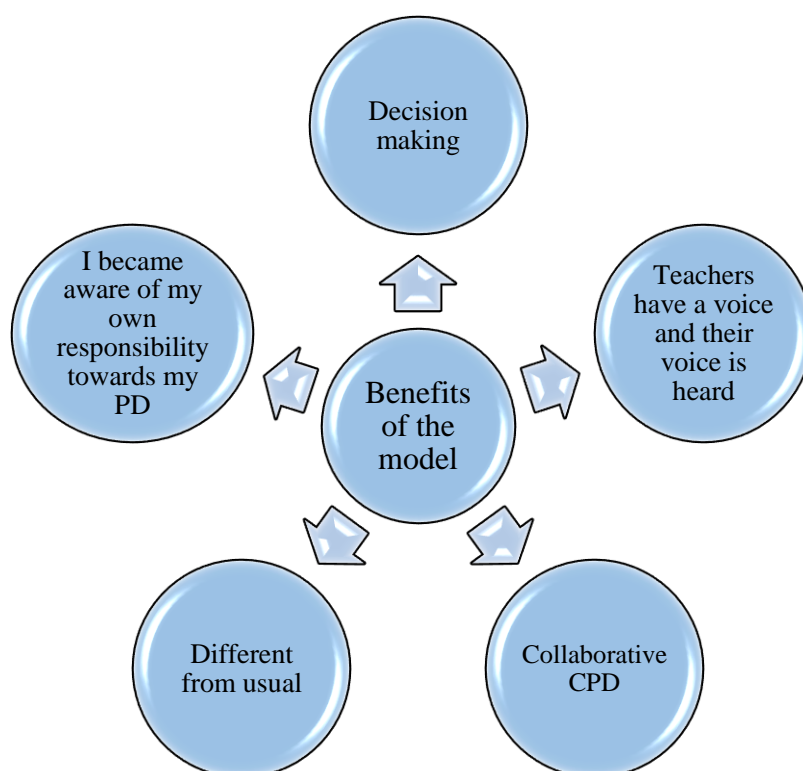


Figure 5.15: Benefits of the participatory model of CPD

### ➤ **Decision making**

The data shows that a key advantage of the participatory model is that participants were involved in their CPD process and have decided by themselves some of the content of the workshops. Halima, for example, states:

*"...what I like about this model is that I chose the things I wanted to talk about, I mean with my colleagues, we decided the ideas to present in the third workshop with no influence from anyone else outside our group not even from you miss..."*

In fact, workshop (3) was totally led by the participants, they thought of its content, prepared the materials, planned the session and delivered it. Teachers were working in groups, so each group has chosen the topic they wanted to talk about by themselves and the way of presenting it with no intervention from my part as a facilitator.

For example, one group of teachers (4 in total) decided on the content of their part in the workshop which was how they can write co-proposals for international conferences and how they can co-present in such conferences. They co-planned this topic together (the 4 of them) and co-presented it by dividing the roles between them as presenters. Moreover, they asked us as participants in the workshop to practically apply this idea by thinking in groups of a topic to present in the next TESOL ARABIA conference in Dubai and to plan it together during the session. They concluded that their decision behind this topic was based on their own needs on how to co-plan and co-present in international conferences. I believe that this way of involving teachers' in their professional development process and giving them the chance to make decisions regarding the content of the workshops gave rise to independence rather than a provision which can possibly facilitate and enable teachers to set the direction of their own professional learning (Beach, 2017; Bangs & Frost, 2012). This is because teachers made these decisions about the content of the workshops by themselves and probably made them according to their needs.

In sum, the data revealed that the participatory model of CPD enabled teachers to make decisions regarding their CPD. Sachs (2011) and several other specialists consider that the failure of the governments' regulations as regards teachers' CPD is directly linked to the low levels of teachers' participation and control. Sachs (2011) highlights that where renewal and development of the teaching profession is concerned, teaching standards must be overseen and



owned by the teachers themselves, and that it is not the school management or the government but teachers who should be the 'agents' of their own CPD. Moreover, this way of participating teachers in decision making regarding their CPD seems to empower their voices as will be discussed below.

➤ ***Teachers have a voice and their voice is heard***

The critical importance of empowering teachers by giving them a voice in education policy processes is now widely recognised (e.g. Giroux, 2017; Bangs & Frost, 2012; Gyurko, 2012). Bangs and Frost (2012) stress that teachers' voices should be heard on matters of policy and practice especially when we talk about professional development. This is because teachers, their professionalism, their wellbeing, and their PD are critical in any discussion related to improving the performance of education. They add that since teachers are among those most responsible for carrying out the policies adopted, their sense of ownership of policy is crucial to its effective implementation. Gyurko (2012) shows that teachers who feel that their voices are heard are less likely to leave the profession.

The data shows that the participatory model helped teachers to have a voice as noted by some respondents in the interviews. In the following extract, for example, Anisa explains how teachers can have a voice from being part of the participatory model of CPD, she says:

*"Honestly I see this model as very useful and beneficial, I like to discuss issues with my colleagues and to agree and disagree with things and to debate others ideas and sometimes challenge what others are suggesting or saying, in this way I feel I have an opinion within the community and give my justifications for my opinion whether I am with or against the discussed ideas/s, this of course affect positively my personality and will increase my self-confidence. The advantages as I said are increasing teachers' self-confidence and they feel that they have a voice and their voice is heard."*

I believe that respondents like Anisa felt that they have a voice because they were part of their own professional development process by deciding the content of some workshops as stated in the previous sub-category. Furthermore, in the online discussions participants have opportunities for 'knowledge sharing' based on real situations from their own experiences (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995). This helped them to say their opinions on the discussed issues and try to convince others by reflecting on their own experiences.

As Hargreaves and Shirley (2011) note, too often teachers' voices are not heard, and they are "the end-point of educational reform - the last to hear, the last to know, the last to speak. They are mainly the objects of reform, not its participants" (p. 1). Therefore, they as well as numerous other observers have called for greater teacher voice. Broadly speaking, the findings suggest that teachers in my study felt that they have a voice from joining the participatory model of CPD and given the importance of this, this is a key reason to recommend that the participatory model of CPD be added to the current CPD system in Oman.

### ➤ **Collaborative CPD**

As discussed in Chapter 3 above, the significance of other people in developing a sense of self has been stressed in the literature (e.g. Bandura, 1986; Maslow, 1970) as has being well motivated to see practice 'through others' eyes' (Loughran, 2002:33) to develop as a reflective practitioner (Pollard et al., 2008; Schon, 1987). The data from individual and focus group interviews indicates that the participatory model of CPD is a collaborative form which offered opportunities for participants to work together collaboratively. Huda, for example, states:

*"... we worked together in groups to discuss the ideas in the reading articles, we also planned and delivered our workshops together and reflected on these also together".*

I believe that the online discussion group further represents a collaborative form of CPD that participants have joined in. In this online group, participants discussed different ideas about teaching and learning and reflected on each other's experiences. Participants seem to value the importance of such collaborative forms of CPD as the results show that after participating in the three workshops and online discussion sessions, participants started initiating making smaller groups according to their interests and/or their needs and working collaboratively in these groups as is illustrated in the following extract from my interview with Amna:

*"Ok, I will tell you something we did after attending the workshops with you, we created a group, we all grade 1 teachers from the three schools that joined the workshops, and we discussed lots of issues related to teaching grade 1, the challenges we are facing, how we are dealing with them, and even how to motive and encourage students."*

I think such collaboration can support the development of teachers' skills and help sustaining teachers' CPD in a way that facilitates the professional development and growth of teachers (Day, 1999). Furthermore, social support can help teachers to learn from one another, develop shared expertise and gives them access to a wide range of ideas than would have been possible without collaborating with others (Moran et al., 2017; Kuusisaari, 2014; Fishman & Davis, 2006).

In all, the findings show that the participatory model provided participants with collaborative learning opportunities which were valued by them. This result supports another study done in Finland by Kuusisaari (2014) which focused on the collaborative learning of teachers during an in-service course which supported teachers to create knowledge and practices for teaching. The results showed that collaboration that supports collaborative development consists of ideation, further development of ideas and raising questions. I think that we need such collaborative types of CPD in our Omani CPD system.

➤ ***Different from usual***

The research participants were asked whether they think the participatory model of CPD should be added to English teachers CPD system in Oman and all of them agreed about that stating that this enabled them to play a more active role than in what is usually allowed in other CPD activities dominated by the traditional training paradigm built on knowledge consumption (Lee, 2011). In the following quote Laila talks about her benefits from the participatory model of CPD:

*"...benefiting from others experiences, applying some new ways to develop professionally like participating in communities of practice, applying methods for our students' betterment like creating a reading culture at schools, our information are updated through reading more and searching for information in books and the internet, using the new technology to develop professionally like participating in online groups, debating with others, agreeing and disagreeing to convince others and being convinced, it is different from the types of workshops and in-services courses we attended at the training centre or even here at our schools...."*

In fact, the majority of the INSET and other CPD events those teachers participated in previously were offered to them by the Ministry of Education as mentioned earlier in this thesis. The Ministry funds and standardizes the training courses/workshops on offer and other CPD events such as local conferences. In addition, SETs or regional English supervisors tell the teachers which

courses/workshops they can or should take and nominate some teachers to join the local conferences. Attending the training courses is compulsory as mentioned earlier. In my view, such top-down standardisation of training and other CPD activities can overshadow the need for teachers to actively identify and meet their own developmental needs in their subject areas (Van Veen et al., 2012). This means that there is a mismatch between supply and demand where teachers are urged to take courses for which they have no immediate need (Witte & Jansen, 2016). This could explain participants' positive views towards the participatory model as they were involved in its processes and made-decisions at some stages which enabled them to ensure the CPD activity was more closely aligned to their needs and preferences.

Sachs (2011) sheds light on the significance of teachers' participation in their CPD. She advocated that there should be a shift in teaching standards from government imposed to teacher developed, from regulations to development, from imposed accountability to individual responsibility, from direction and control by the government to development and management by the profession, from mistrust to trust, from external regulation to self-regulation, and from compliance to activism. I believe that this is another strong reason to suggest this participatory model of CPD to be added to the current system in Oman.

➤ ***I became aware of my responsibility towards my PD***

Current adult learning and situated cognition theories suggest that teachers should be reflective practitioners who take responsibility for their learning to improve the quality of their professional performance (Caena, 2011). This is significant because teachers themselves are a key in the process of learning; they are the locus of CPD, of professional insight and wisdom (Appleby & Pilkington, 2014). The data from the current study has shown that the participatory model of CPD has contributed in changing teachers' beliefs towards the importance of continuing their own PD. For example, Noora declares how her beliefs about PD have changed after joining in the participatory model of CPD. As she said: "...my way of thinking towards developing myself is changed." Huda also elucidates how her participation in this model raised her awareness of her own responsibility towards her CPD:

*“Yes I think to help teachers be part of their professional development process and share ideas with others and also learn from their ideas and solutions, participating with the workshops with you miss and in the online discussion group added a lot to us and I became aware of my own responsibility towards my professional development....”*

These results echo those found in a study carried out by Ali (2015) in the United Arab Emirates which neighbours Oman. This study focussed on encouraging a group of TESOL student teachers to pursue their professional development even before they start their careers through engaging them in a range of CPD activities. This study found that providing student teachers with the opportunity to participate in CPD sessions has given the participants an awareness of the importance of PD and of the need to continue to pursue PD opportunities throughout their careers. Participants in Ali's (2015) study became aware of the importance of developing themselves professionally, so after graduation they have continued their life-long learning. I hope that after this study my research participants will take similar serious actions towards continuing their PD.

The fact that raising teachers' awareness towards the importance of their own CPD and to take such responsibility seriously is another crucial benefit of the participatory model as the data has indicated is significant. This is because one of the established principles of quality CPD according to the literature and other research studies is that individuals take responsibility for determining what they need to learn, and for managing and undertaking their own CPD activity (Beach, 2017; Barrett, 2008).

### ❖ **Constraints**

The findings indicate that a number of things might prevent teachers engaging in a participatory model of CPD. These would need to be addressed if a participatory model of CPD is to be successfully introduced in Oman. The first constraint as the data has shown is time, the majority of interview respondents (16 in total) claim that they have no time for participating in such events as online group discussions and indeed not many respondents were active in these. When asked for the reasons behind that, they complained that time was a real challenge for them which stopped them from participating in some of the online discussions although they believe that if they had contributed more to discussions this would have made them more fruitful. For example, Badriya states that:

*“...usually they were discussing in times not suitable to me so I usually missed their discussions but honestly I always read what they write in that group, the different discussions and ideas before I sleep, I love to read others ideas to benefit from them even if I missed the discussion, these groups are really good but sometimes unfortunately due to some reasons not everyone can be present at the same time.”*

Anisa suggested that this challenge could be overcome through pre-planning on the part of participants and agreed commitment to participate between different participants. As she said:

*“The disadvantages especially for the online discussion group might be that not all can be free and online at the same time to discuss issues but by pre-planning and agreement I feel there will be no disadvantages with such ideas and models.”*

The second constraint as shown by the data is workload which was reported by all focus group and individual follow-up interview respondents as a key restriction impacting on their engagement with the participatory model of CPD. Some participants stated that such a participatory model adds more work and is an extra burden on teachers. Huda for example highlighted the challenge of undertaking classroom research:

*“...especially when we talk about the students reading project, you have to follow up students and even if you want to let them do it by themselves they come to you teacher I have read this and they need some attention from you and also we have to follow them from time to time which is more work added to us.”*

Nevertheless, the data shows that if teachers' workload is reduced then they can join the participatory model of CPD and develop professionally as Salima contends:

*“...but before applying such a strategy or others the Ministry should think seriously of reducing the workload on teachers, we want to do lots of things, we want to develop professionally, we want to change but with all the school responsibilities and home it is really difficult, I hope the Ministry will apply this participatory model but after reducing the workload on teachers because at the end we are human beings and we want to work and improve but also we need sometimes to have a rest.”*

The third constraint with the participatory model of CPD as participants noted is teachers' personality. The data indicates that some teachers are keen to develop themselves professionally while others are not. Karima (one of the SETs) gives an example in this respect from her own teachers, she articulates:

*“For example, from my school 5 teachers joined the workshops, 4 of them I can tell that really tried to benefit from the ideas presented in the workshop but 1 of*

*them no, she only attended and she is not only like that in these workshops we did with you miss or in relation to this topic, but this is her personality.”*

Yet, as I stated earlier in the literature review chapter, such personality of teachers and their intrinsic qualities cannot be separated from their professional development needs as both are directly related to Hargreave's (2000) idea of professionalism; the quality of teachers' practices. I think that such types of teachers need specific types of activities to participate in their CPD. These activities should include opportunities for those teachers to examine their own personal commitments, histories and teaching styles (Pollitt & Oldfield, 2017; Raymond et al., 1992).

#### ❖ **The participatory model and change**

All the above findings about the participatory model of CPD suggest that this model has the potential to lead to changes in teachers', students and schools generally. In fact, the results have shown that the model positively affected participant teachers' beliefs about professional development. This is because after joining the three workshops and the online discussion sessions teachers' stated that they became aware of the importance of CPD and their own roles and responsibilities towards that. In my view, this could suggest that in the future those teachers might take a more active role towards their CPD and initiate participating in more CPD events/activities. In fact, the literature on learning have shown that teachers' beliefs may intersect and influence their learning practices (Vries et al., 2013; Opfer et al., 2011). It would be interesting to follow up on this in a future study.

The findings further reveal that teachers have learnt many ideas, knowledge and skills from participating in the workshops and online sessions which has on the basis of their comments contributed positively to their professional learning and growth and resulted in changes in their professional development practices. One of these changes concerns the teaching of reading as mentioned earlier which appears to become a habit for many respondents and which has positively impacted on their students reading habits as the data shows. Opfer et al., (2011) remark that the relationship between beliefs, practices, learning and change in practice are reciprocally causative and they think that interactions between these

elements constitute an individual teacher's orientation to learning which is evidenced in their beliefs, their teaching practices, their current context, and in the learning in which they choose to participate. In other words, that change is best seen as emanating from the dynamic interplay between these three things and in so far as participants highlight shifts in their thinking and practice as a result of their experience of the participatory model of CPD that this has contributed to their on-going development as teachers.

Following Hopkins (2000 in Butler & Schnellert, 2012), it seems that the participatory and collaborative nature of the participatory model has resulted in changes in teachers' beliefs, practices and their students, as he points out this sort of model helps break down teacher isolation, enables collaborative professional learning to take place, encourages teachers to find joint solutions to shared problems, to exchange practice, knowledge and expertise, and to foster school improvement.

The findings highlight how, the participatory model of CPD adopted in this study appeared to result in teachers' learning and change. This occurred through a cyclical process of teachers' participation with other professionals (me, the SETs and other teachers from the three schools), participating in different forms of CPD that took into consideration individual's needs through collaborative learning opportunities, practical application of the discussed ideas, and critical reflection and feedback on the experience of delivering these, leading to change at the level of teacher beliefs, practice, and impact on students.). This means that using participatory and collaborative forms of CPD can result in changes in teachers and students which are connected to changes and improvements in schools. Therefore, these results add weight to my view that a participatory model of CPD should be seen as a useful complement to other form of CPD in Oman if policy makers are serious about the need to change and improve schools and education generally. This will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

## **5.9 Summary of Chapter Five**

A detailed account of the analysis of both the quantitative and the qualitative data collected from different sources (questionnaires, semi-structured interviews, focus-group interviews, observations, post-observation discussions and clips



from the online discussions) was presented in this chapter. Similarities and differences between the data generated from these different sources were seen to enrich the interpretation and presentation of the findings which sought to address the research questions my study is investigating.

The results show that participants hold different beliefs about teaching as a profession and have different reasons for becoming teachers. However, the reality of the teaching job, workload, and status of the job among other noteworthy issues seem to create a level of unhappiness and dissatisfaction with the job. Similarly, the findings indicate that participants hold a wide range of beliefs about continuing their own PD. Participants' responses seem to be affected mainly by their experience of participating in CPD events and/or the beliefs they hold about teaching and learning.

In addition to that, the results reveal that participants have experienced different types of CPD activities/events which were mostly offered to them through the Ministry of Education in structured and formal ways. Nevertheless, the data showed conflict findings regarding the contribution of these activities in meeting teachers' needs. Furthermore, the findings disclosed a number of factors that affect English teachers' CPD in Oman. Some of these factors positively affect teachers access to CPD and its' success while others not. Nonetheless, the top-down nature of the current CPD system seems to negatively affect the success of CPD in Oman.

The final part of the analysis evaluated the participatory model of CPD adopted in this study. The results showed that almost all respondents reacted positively to this model where they described their participation in the workshops as a positive experience and the ideas discussed in the online discussion group as useful contributions. The results indicate that this model has positively impacted on participant teachers' beliefs and practices related to CPD, and on their students. Having presented the research findings, I will now move to a discussion chapter in which I will critically reflect on these results and their implications for improving CPD for English teachers in Oman.

## **Chapter Six: Discussion**

### **6.1 Introduction**

Drawing on the findings presented in the previous chapter, this chapter considers a discussion of these results in relation to the aims of the study with a particular reference to the Omani educational context and the existing literature. The chapter, thus, shows how the findings of the present study can contribute to a fuller conceptual understanding of teaching as a career and the continuous professional development of teachers in the ELT context. It also aims at providing some suggestions on teacher recruitment and the CPD of teachers in Oman which can possibly lead to better working environments. Such environments can foster higher degrees of commitment, collaboration, increased teacher quality and improved student learning inside Omani schools. The chapter is divided into four main sections as follows:

The first section discusses teacher recruitment, attracting new teachers to the profession and retaining competent ones and teachers' initial preparation. The second section focuses on teachers' work and CPD by elaborating on the CPD in the ELT context in Oman. It also emphasizes the significance of raising teachers' awareness towards their responsibility regarding their lifelong career development, and recommends new forms of CPD to be added to the current CPD system. The following section provides a discussion of the participatory model of CPD adopted in the current study. It deliberates on the different roles teachers can play within this model, teachers' learning and change as well as the participatory model and Islam. The final section sheds light on the betterment of teaching and teachers' CPD in Oman and calls for new government policies and practices in this respect. It must be noted that because these themes are interconnected, a degree of overlap is unavoidable.

### **6.2 Teacher recruitment: Policies and practices**

The findings show that English language teachers in Oman hold different beliefs about teaching as a profession and have different reasons for becoming teachers. For example, while teaching was the dream job for some respondents, others entered this profession because it fitted in with their life style and family situation. Despite the different reasons participants had for choosing a career in teaching, the findings reveal that females, older and more experienced people were more

motivated to enter this profession in comparison to males and younger people. Al-Issa and Al-Bulushi (2012) stressed that Oman still has a shortage of national teachers of English especially males who prefer other jobs to teaching in general and ELT in particular for various reasons. In my view, the key reason behind this could be socio-economic; the payment in jobs in other sectors is usually higher than teaching and often has less stringent requirements.

However, in the female sector, there is now an excess of teacher supply in most subjects in Oman and a significant number of newly qualified teachers are unable to find teaching positions (Chapman et al., 2012). I think one of the reasons behind this surplus is that teaching is one of the most socio-culturally accepted jobs for women in Oman. Another key reason is that there are no criteria for teachers' selection before joining teacher education programmes. Thus, many Omani females joined a number of private teacher education institutions inside and outside the country to secure an income. The majority of these private institutions seem to be purely commercial and their concern is making money rather than providing the best teacher education to participants. Recently the Ministry of Higher Education has realised that a number of these institutions are not qualified enough to prepare teachers and as a result, has stopped giving accreditation to certificates issued by some of these institutions and issued a decision to stop the Omani students from registering in these institutions (Al-Rahbi, 2015).

Outside the Omani context, the teaching force in Australia, the USA, Europe and the UK is ageing at a time when new university graduates do not necessarily see teaching as a career priority (Watt et al., 2012; Cooman et al., 2007; Richardson & Watt, 2005). Similarly, in Belgium teacher attrition is high for newly qualified teachers who never start a teaching career and others who drop out after a short period (Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014). Therefore, a report from UNESCO published in (2013) emphasized that many countries are likely to face teacher shortages in the years to come. On the contrary, other countries face the problem of teacher surplus; they have more teachers than they need (Wong et al, 2014; Watt et al., 2012). In Hong Kong, the demand for teachers has reduced; the Professional Teachers' Union warned that more than 800 contract teachers and

teaching assistants will lose their jobs when the government cuts special grants to schools for those who are entering the teaching profession (Wong et al, 2014).

Consequently, it is clear that many countries around the world are facing a crisis of teacher recruitment, retention and morale and I would argue that Oman is of no exception. In fact, previously Omanis best and brightest secondary school graduates who scored the highest marks in grade 12 (the last basic school year) were joining the School of Education at Sultan Qaboos University (the only public university in Oman and until a few years ago was also the most prestigious) as teaching was rated as the second most admired profession after medical doctors in Omani society. However, nowadays, the situation is different, the majority of the new generations are joining other sectors such as the medical, engineering, business or the oil sector while the number of those joining the teaching profession is reducing year on year. Moreover, many experienced teachers are deciding to take early retirement with 1,200 teachers applying for this in 2016. Therefore, there is a real need now for new policies and practices to improve the quality and professionalism of the teaching force in Oman.

**The public image of teaching:** one of the issues of concern regarding the above is to improve the public image of teaching, to attract more teachers into the profession and retain the most competent ones. The findings from the current study show that workload and the decreasing status of the teaching job seems to negatively affect some teachers' attitudes towards it. Thus, a number of participants told me frankly that they are thinking seriously of resigning from their posts. This finding lends support to the results of a number of previous studies conducted in Oman (such as those by Al-Habsi, 2009; Alharrasi, 2005; Alhinai, 2002) in account of extra curricula administrative duties. Heavy workload also makes it harder for teachers to achieve feelings of competence and reduces a sense of autonomy (Wyatt, 2013). Regarding job status, in a survey of 150 teachers in an Omani region, Al-Habsi (2009) found that only one third of the surveyed teachers reported feeling valued by parents. Having professional relationships within the community and involving parents at schools is important to teachers in Oman to build a sense of belonging. Moreover, a study carried out in Oman by Klassen et al. (2011) which investigated teachers' motivation to enter teaching and their initial commitment to the job and which entailed a comparison

of pre-service teacher trainees in Oman and Canada found that Omani participants were more likely to view teaching as a fall back career than were their Canadian counterparts.

In the Omani context there could be a number of explanations for the above; yet, I believe that the education system in the country play a main role in this. Education in Oman, as it is the case in many of the Middle Eastern countries, is centralised where the government is the agency solely responsible for financing, policy making and delivering all educational services such as syllabi and curricula design, textbooks and materials production and both pre-service and in-service training and employment of teachers. These centralised educational systems are adopting a 'command-and-control' educational management structure for establishing, expanding and maintaining schools and teachers as many international reports have commented (e.g. The World Bank Development Report, 2008). Teachers in these systems thus do not receive high salaries and are promoted according to seniority instead of performance, their workload is usually high and teaching generally is not considered a socially prestigious career.

Such conditions can negatively affect teachers' professionalism and their occupational identity. Day and Sachs (2004) stressed that this can result in teachers' being deskilled along with a crisis of professional identity for many teachers who perceive a loss of public confidence in their ability to provide good services. Teachers' professional identity is informed by both sociological and cognitive psychological perspectives: people develop their identity through interacting with others (sociological perspective), but they express their professional identity through their perceptions of 'who they are' and 'who they want to become' as a result of the interaction (a cognitive psychological perspective) (Beijaard, 2006). Day et al., (2007) suggest that teachers' professional identity is the aspect of teacher's identity which is most influenced by changes in local and national policies as well as their roles and responsibilities.

In the international context, the image of teaching is no better as many studies reported teachers' dissatisfaction with the job due to the unfavourable working conditions such as work load (Cheong, 2009; Choi & Tang, 2009; Weiqi, 2007) or the status of teachers in society, their salaries and the opportunities they have

for promotion and for professional development (Pollitt & Oldfield, 2017; Gao & Xu, 2014; Karavas, 2010). It seems that the negative image of the teaching profession has dissuaded many from joining it in many countries around the world (Yuan & Zhang, 2017; Har Lam, 2012). Therefore, attracting and retaining competent teachers is a key concern when it comes to managing the supply and demand for teachers. In order to do that, governments worldwide, including in Oman need to stimulate work enthusiasm by helping teachers meet their expectations, encouraging respect for teachers, improving their work environment and conditions and making them attractive, lightening teachers' workload, and reforming the administration of education (Yuan & Zhang, 2017; Weiqi, 2007).

**Teachers' selection and recruitment:** another issue of concern in Oman is teacher selection and recruitment and the need for new pathways and requirements. This is important because with an oil-based economy, Oman now faces the prospect of the oil being largely depleted within the next 10 to 15 years (Ministry of Higher Education 2004; Ministry of Finance 2007; Chapman et al. 2009 in Chapman et al., 2012). The Omani government anticipates that developing an alternative economy will depend heavily on a well-educated citizenry. To that end, the government has been engaged in an active campaign of expanding school enrolments at all levels, raising education quality and extending post-secondary options in the country.

Raising education quality, however, needs qualified teachers, which means that recruitment into the teaching profession should no longer be automatic even if the country is facing the problem of teacher shortage and/or surplus. Chapman et al., (2012) investigated the career paths of 625 university graduates who prepared to be secondary school teachers in Oman. The researchers found that nearly half of the participants were at least somewhat ambivalent about teaching as a career. Those ambivalent about entering teaching tend to also be the ones that continue to be ambivalent about staying in teaching once they start work. The study findings suggest that, at least in Oman, if the government's goal is to ensure a supply of well-trained teachers, it would be worthwhile to ensure that those entering teacher education programmes have a reasonably high level of

commitment to becoming teachers. This means that the government needs to give considerable attention to teachers' selection and recruitment.

In fact, some countries around the world have developed systematic and successful policies and practices regarding teacher recruitment which have resulted in them being top the list when it comes to providing high-quality teacher education. Among these countries are Finland, Singapore, the Netherlands, the UK, Hong Kong, Canada, Australia and the USA (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012). For example, Finland is regarded as one of the world's most literate societies. Teachers are the main reason why Finland now leads the international community in literacy, as well as in science and mathematics achievement (Sahlberg, 2012). In relation to teacher recruitment, the teacher selection process is stringent and follows criteria and different stages in Finland, so access to teacher education is highly selective and only the most capable candidates are admitted (Sahlberg, 2012). Likewise, in Singapore participants are interviewed before choosing them to assess their interest in teaching where the selected teachers must have a passion to teach and the belief that they can make a difference (Goodwin, 2012). I think we need similar criteria in Oman for teachers' recruitment and selection.

**Teachers' initial preparation:** the initial preparation of teachers is an issue of concern in Oman as is evident from the findings of my study. This is because the results indicate that some of the pre-service teacher preparation programmes do not qualify teachers to do their job properly. Thus, many teachers lack some basic teaching skills and strategies despite spending 4-5 years in teacher education programmes at higher education institutions. Previous studies in Oman reported the ineffectiveness of teacher preparation programmes. For example, Al-Shihy (2003) investigated 120 Omani EFL teachers' perceptions of the EFL teacher education programme at SQU. The researcher found that teachers perceived the general education and university elective courses as not being useful and they rated the teaching practicum as being 'inadequate' to 'moderately adequate'. According to Al-Issa (2005), the vast majority of English teachers who graduated from SQU were found to be lacking both in terms of language knowledge and teaching methodology.

In Oman, teachers' initial preparation programmes are designed to prepare Omani teachers' well for the job and thus, to enhance teaching and learning in Omani schools. Currently two governmental institutions do these pre-service preparation programmes for teachers; SQU and Rustaq College. Although to enter the teaching profession, student teachers need to acquire different types of knowledge about instruction and student learning (Shulman, 1986), it seems that teacher education programmes in Oman focus a lot on the technical knowledge that student teachers need to know which is firmly based on theory. They ignore the promotion of other elements which can to bridge the gap between theory and practice (Percy & Troyan, 2017; Korhonen et al., 2017; Gleeson et al., 2017). I would argue that the ethical and moral dimensions of the teachers' work also seem to be ignored in these programmes. Thus, the findings from my study indicate that some teachers' ethical understanding is inadequate; they are missing some teaching values and ethics which is affecting their commitment to the job. Another element the data showed is that Omani teachers are not prepared well for the reality of the job at schools, so this reality "shocks" many participants when they start teaching.

In the international context, initial teacher education is an area that has generated considerable debate in both policy and academic contexts. Research studies have tended to focus on the issues of relevance, quality, what student teachers need to know and be able to do, and the role that initial teacher education plays over the continuum of professional learning (Clark et al., 2012). Several authors suggest that student teachers' learning does not happen as a result of teaching them educational theories, and does not result from the 'serial learning of concepts on a scale of growing complexity' (Korthagen, 2010:99). Korthagen, and his colleagues (e.g. Korthagen, Loughran & Russell, 2006; Kessels & Korthagen, 2001; Korthagen & Kessels, 1999) stressed that novice teachers need to be embedded in the experience of learning to teach (in Percy & Troyan, 2017). Through their use of the Platonic and Aristotelian concepts of episteme and phronesis, Korthagen and colleagues have created a foundation for how teacher educators can understand novice teachers' meaningful engagement with practice. They explained that Episteme is scientific, fixed, expert, and abstract knowledge, whereas phronesis is knowing through experience about "concrete particulars". Korthagen and colleagues have asserted that much of traditional teacher



education focuses on conceptual knowledge (episteme), which creates a gap between novice teachers' understanding of concepts and their experiences. They argue that episteme is too abstract for novice teachers to apply to their classroom settings. Instead, they argue, working from novice teachers' perceptual knowledge (phronesis) that novice teachers have generated through their experiences (cited in Peercy & Troyan, 2017:29). From such a perspective, student teachers' learning is viewed as being part of the process of participating in social practices, especially at schools. This is because some researchers have noted that the effects of university teacher education is 'washed out' by school experiences (Zeichner & Tabachnik, 1981 in Korthagen, 2010:98). Likewise, the 'practice shock' phenomenon has started to draw international attention, and many researchers from various countries confirm that graduates from initial teacher education programmes face severe problems trying to survive in the classroom, and implement little of what they learnt during their professional teacher preparation programmes (Korhonen et al., 2017; Korthagen, 2010).

As a result of the above, a number of studies have called for developing strong educational policies regarding initial teacher formation (e.g. Nicu, 2015). For instance, in a recent study done in Malaysia, Ngang and Chan (2015) recommended that keeping abreast of developments in teacher education would ensure that novice teachers remain up-to-date in their profession, and that they should be equipped with necessary ethics, moral and professional skills to survive in an increasingly complex teaching environment. In the Netherlands, student teachers are prepared for the "reality shock" where aspects of the "reality shock" are incorporated into teacher preparation programmes both theoretically and practically (Hammerness et al., 2012). I agree that these skills are of utmost importance to be added to teacher preparation programmes in Oman to effectively prepare new generations for the job.

In sum, I believe that in Oman we need to improve the public image of teaching by making strides to develop and enhance the professional image of teachers both inside and outside the school system so as to attract more people into the profession and retain the competent ones (Müller et al., 2009; Weiqi, 2007; Hargreaves, 2000). In addition, we need new policies and practices to recruit teachers. In this respect, teaching as a job should be competitive, so not any one

can become a teacher. Instead there should be criteria for selecting the applicants. Besides, in order to prepare effective teachers, teacher education programmes in Oman should be re-planned and important components should be added to them. Having said that, teacher learning is not complete when they leave pre-service preparation. In many ways, the most powerful learning begins as teachers start teaching (Darling-Hammond & Lieberman, 2012).

### **6.3 Teachers' work and CPD**

Teaching is forever an unfinished profession; thus, professional development is intrinsic to the vocation of teaching. This means that by its very nature, teaching is never complete, never conquered, always being developed and always changing. As Day and Sachs (2004:3-4) put it "Higher expectations for higher quality teaching demands teachers who are well qualified, highly motivated, knowledgeable and skilful, not only at the point of entry into teaching but also throughout their careers". Teachers CPD can lead to improving teachers' qualities and their teaching practices, yet teachers differ greatly in the extent to which they engage in CPD (Vries et al., 2013:338) and, as this study has indicated teachers hold a wide-range of beliefs and experiences related to CPD as will be discussed below.

#### ***6.3.1 Relationship between teachers' CPD beliefs and practices***

In extensive research into which factors can affect teachers' participation in CPD, the effects of teachers' beliefs have received limited attention, despite the strong influences they have on people's learning and working (Vries et al., 2013). The results from the current study show that participants hold a wide range of beliefs about CPD. While the majority of them looked at the term from a more positive perspective, there were some negative views associated with the term CPD. In the Omani context, a previous study (Al-Lamki, 2009) also examined teachers' beliefs and practices regarding CPD and showed that teachers hold a range of sometimes incompatible views. The researcher attributed such incongruity at least partially, to the lack of an explicit and shared policy document for teachers with reference to CPD. However, the Omani educational system is rigidly centralised as mentioned earlier, so one would expect a unified system which should have explicitly stated and shared guiding document/s from policy makers at the MOE for all involved in teachers' CPD including teachers themselves. Yet,

since there is no formal guidance for teachers about the CPD opportunities available to them, how to access CPD, teachers' own roles in their CPD process, it is inevitable that beliefs about CPD are more likely to be inconsistent as they might depend on people's own preferences, understandings and interpretations (Al-Lamki, 2009).

Developments in cognitive psychology had highlighted the importance of teachers' beliefs through the influence of thinking on behaviour. This suggested that understanding teachers requires an understanding of their mental lives rather than an exclusively focus on their observable behaviours (Borg, 2015). This is because beliefs are used by individuals as a filtering mechanism through which new encounters and experiences (e.g. participation in CPD initiatives) are screened, interpreted, understood and absorbed. Beliefs are clearly subjective judgements and may at times 'defy logic' and are by nature 'disputable and disposable' (Kumaravadivelu, 2012:60). Thus, in order to understand teachers, researchers needed to study the psychological processes through which teachers make sense of their work.

The results from this study showed that a key source for teachers' beliefs is their practices. It is obvious that participants' responses are affected mainly by their experience of participating in CPD events and/or the beliefs they hold about teaching and learning. In a similar vein, Vries et al., (2013) note that a comparable relationship exists between teachers' beliefs about teaching and learning and their own learning activities or CPD. The study findings also reveal that many of the research participants hold positive beliefs about continuing their PD; they value the importance of CPD and believe in the strong relationship between teaching and CPD. They think that some CPD activities that teachers join can enrich them by supporting their teaching skills and thus they feed teaching and develop it. This is encouraging as it is well-documented that teachers with more positive attitudes towards CPD are more likely to have beneficial learning experiences in CPD programmes (Haney et al. 1996; Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995).

In general, in many countries worldwide including Oman, the roles of schools are changing and so is what is expected of teachers. Teachers are asked to teach in

increasingly multicultural classrooms; to place greater emphasis on integrating students with special learning needs in their classrooms; to make more effective use of information and communication technologies for teaching... (OECD, 2009). This suggests that no matter how good pre-service training for teachers is, it cannot prepare teachers for all the challenges they will face throughout their careers. Education systems therefore should seek to provide teachers with opportunities for in-service CPD in order to maintain a high standard of teaching and to retain a high-quality teacher workforce (OECD, 2009). Yet, any such CPD initiative should consider teachers' beliefs if teacher educators and policy makers are seeking for change in teachers, students and schools.

### ***6.3.2 Learning opportunities for EFL teachers***

The data revealed that respondents experienced different learning opportunities through participating in formal structured activities (e.g. INSET courses, cascading INSET, coaching and mentoring) as well as informal CPD activities (e.g. peer observation, team teaching, participating in conferences...). All of these seem to be organised and/or funded by the MOE in Oman for English teachers. However, the findings indicated that out of all these initiatives, structured formal in-service training (INSET) courses seem to be the most dominant in the CPD system in Oman. Rich et al., (2014) reported that structured formal INSET opportunities in Oman are seen as an important support mechanism to encourage EFL teachers to remain professionally invigorated and to appreciate the importance of ongoing professional development throughout their careers. To this end, early-career teachers are offered a number of workshops and courses to help them become familiar with the philosophy underpinning the curriculum and the effective ways of implementing it, and to help them maintain their English proficiency and develop their understanding of the English language system.

However, while such formal structured activities are needed for teachers especially the novice ones, they do not always respond to all teachers' needs. The research literature highlights the complexity of linking such programmes and activities to tangible outcomes such as changes in the quality of teacher practices and of student learning (Chalmers & Gardiner, 2015; Devlin, 2008). The findings from the current study also showed that although teachers' participated in a

number of INSET courses and workshops, many of these failed to meet their needs. It is obvious from the results that the MOE is not following a systematic way in collecting, analysing and assessing EFL teachers' needs in Oman in order to meet these needs. Thus, these activities are not always seen by teachers as effective. This result lends support to a number of previous studies both in Oman and internationally.

For instance, some Omani researchers questioned the effectiveness of INSET courses in contributing to changes in EFL teachers' beliefs and/or their classroom practices (e.g. AL-Balushi, 2009; Al-Lamki, 2009). Correspondingly, in a recent study conducted in China, Yan and He (2015) investigated a cohort of 120 senior-school EFL teachers' perspectives about their short INSET course experience. The study found that the level of endorsement for the course among participants was rather low. The underlying reason for the low satisfaction level was found to be the course features resulting from the one-shot and one-size-fits-all mentality of course providers. This study confirms the drawback of limited impact caused by the nature of short INSET courses and reveals that such courses could hardly fulfil diverse needs of participants.

Theoretically speaking, this sort of approach to doing INSET contradicts Maslow's theory of hierarchical needs which moves from lower order needs (such as psychological needs, safety needs, belonging and love needs) through to esteem needs, need to know and understand, aesthetic needs and higher order needs (self-actualization and transcendence needs) (Maslow, 1970). Maslow argues that needs at the lower end of the hierarchy must be at least partially met before a person will try to satisfy higher-level needs. Although teachers must achieve the level of *need to know and understand*, ultimately the CPD goal is to aid them in self-actualizing or becoming 'all that one can be'. Yet, teachers have different needs and goals behind CPD which means that the one-size-fits-all approach to CPD will not meet the needs of all teachers. The self-actualisation need is to make actual what are potential for teachers regarding their personal growth and development by following their own passions and interests that help them meet their own needs.

The dominance of INSET in the Omani context reflects the centralised educational system and the top-down CPD system. In other words, policies are usually formed by outside experts and people at the upper level in the hierarchy of the MOE. In such systems, CPD takes place through increasing governmental interventions for the purpose of accountability and performativity. This could be related to the pressure of globalization which have universally shaped government policies for education provision generally and CPD in particular. The power of globalization is clearly defined by the Commission on Global Governance (1995) as “the shortening of distance, the multiplying of links, the deepening of interdependence: all these factors and their interplay, have been transforming the world into a neighbourhood” (in Day & Sachs, 2004:4). This has resulted in educational systems in many countries working towards delivering programmes for both students and teachers that are internationally comparable in terms of their efficiency, effectiveness and economic viability (Gleeson et al., 2017; Day & Sachs, 2004).

In reality, however, the stages of development are different in developed and developing countries and this needs to be taken into consideration regarding the broader issues of education (Christie et al., 2004). This means that there can be no taken-for-granted assumptions about what is basic in the way of our being and our knowledge when we transcend our culturally specific educational domains. Jofré and Johnston (2014:5) highlight the fallacy of assuming that “across cultures, people have the same basic beliefs about being and knowledge”. This was evident in my context as the data showed that the top-down centralised educational system in Oman has moulded teachers’ way of understanding PD in that they relate it to attending INSET courses and workshops and that it should be offered to them by the Ministry and delivered by experts. This of course is different from the globalized meaning of the term PD/CPD and how teachers in other contexts understand and conceptualise the term.

As regards teachers’ professionalism, such governmental interventions in CPD content and form usually result in the development of an alternative form of teacher professionalism; namely ‘managerial professionalism’ (Day & Sachs, 2004:5-6). This is particularly the case with the consequences of reform initiatives related to organisational change, imperatives for teachers in schools to be more

accountable and for systems to be more efficient and economically viable in their activities. This is not only specific to the Omani centralised educational context, as the CPD provision in other contexts like Europe and South America suggest that the latest policies within the education sector promoting devolution and decentralisation have provided sympathetic conditions for a discourse of managerialism to emerge and flourish (Avalos, 2004; Sugrue, 2004; Day & Sachs, 2004). Such 'managerial professionalism' reflects the corporate management model which emphasize that "The criteria of the successful professional...is of one who works efficiently and effectively in meeting the standardised criteria set for accomplishment of both students and teachers, as well as contributing to the school's formal accountability processes" (Brennan, 1996 in Day & Sachs, 2004:6). Yet, educational systems should seek for more than such management models as will be discussed in section 6.4.1 later.

Importantly, despite the significant investment in such structured formal training by governments, there is an uneven picture of how effective or efficient in economic terms many of these initiatives have been. Buchner and Hay (1999) maintain that national in-service training courses are often forced and not planned. They are not presented according to the needs of teachers, resulting in the teachers experiencing the training as demand, instead of needs-driven. According to Mashile and Vakalisa (1999), different school contexts were not taken into consideration and training was provided as if all schools are similar and all would benefit from the same 'blanket-fit-all' type of in-service training (in Makgato, 2014). These issues are also highlighted by Borko (2004) who emphasized that each year governments spend millions, if not billions, of dollars on in-service training and other forms of professional development that are fragmented, intellectually superficial, and do not take into account how teachers learn. The situation in Oman is no exception in this regard as policy makers in such top-down systems tend to underestimate the contextual realities in their planning of these formal structured training.

Overall, for dynamic teacher development, teacher education and training in the 21st century globalised world, there is a need to focus on learning from previous systemic initiatives. This may reveal future possibilities in terms of the purpose, function, design and delivery of such initiatives. In this respect, Day and Sachs,

(2004) suggested that three major issues emerge. First, is how to develop a teaching force in which CPD is the core value for all teachers whereby governments' needs are achieved through such formal training and any other CPD initiative without ignoring the individual learning of teachers. Second is sustainability of CPD initiatives, entailing the development of networks and partnerships which requires significant levels of trust and the development of new types of relationships among teachers and between those who support teachers and teachers. Finally, the role of teachers themselves in the provision of CPD is significant; the way teachers are currently seen as grateful recipients of CPD does not provide the conditions for intelligent and responsive teaching profession. Writing about English language teaching (ELT) in particular, Kumaravadivelu (2012) has argued that the linguistic and cultural sensitivities triggered by cultural globalisation have prompted the ELT community to try to make a meaningful shift in policies, programmes, methods and materials governing English language teaching and the PD of teachers in order to address these. As he points out that there is also a growing realization that in order to make a meaningful shift, we need to first go beyond the transmission models of teacher support. That is to identify post-transition forms of CPD, such as the more participatory models I have advocated for in this thesis.

### ***6.3.3 The need for other forms of CPD –Post transmission models***

The findings indicate that the MOE in Oman offers many formally and informally-structured CPD activities each year. However, mainly due to their top-down nature, these are not enough to meet all teachers' needs as the findings have highlighted and therefore will, in many cases, lack individual relevance. Thus most of the CPD activities offered follow transmission approaches/models of teachers' learning because "they seek to transmit a set of predetermined, pre-selected, and pre-sequenced bodies of knowledge" from teacher educators to teachers (Kumaravadivelu, 2012:8).

As Kumaravadivelu (2012) has observed the problem with these models is that they generally produce teachers who end up playing the role of a conduit. That is, they become passive technicians channelling the flow of information from one



end of the educational spectrum (experts) to the other (learners) without an opportunity to bring their own highly relevant and valuable personal practical knowledge to bear. The main aim of these models is helping teacher learners to comprehend and eventually master content knowledge but in order to help teachers develop the capacity to address their classroom realities and to evolve as professionals there is a need for alternative post-transmission approaches to helping teachers learn, ones which are grounded in their realities and centred on their own professional growth. In relation to the Omani context and partly in response to this interpretation, alternative ways to teacher learning should be added to the CPD system as the data from the current study shows. There is a need to move from the current transmission and expert model, which asserts that teachers' PD is the result of training by other expert teachers, to more post-transmission models that help support teacher-learners to be more self-directed in their own professional learning and growth (Beach, 2017).

This suggests a shift to more socio-constructivist paradigms of teachers' learning which imply that teachers construct their own knowledge through deconstruction, interpretation and reconstruction when they are engaged in social discourse and CPD activities that take place in a certain context (Kuusisaari, 2014; Vygotsky, 1978). In other words, knowledge is situated and is socially and culturally constructed (Vygotsky, 1978). This means that teacher education and the professional development of teachers are underpinned by socio-cultural perspectives, with a particular emphasis on the importance of discourse in the promotion of learning. This can be achieved by adding other forms of CPD to teachers' CPD system in Oman.

For example, there is a real need for more dialogic and collaborative forms of CPD activities. Policy makers and teacher educators in Oman need to think about adding such forms to the CPD system. This is because the findings clearly indicated that teachers were in favour of the collaborative activities whereby teachers can share experiences and learn from discussed ideas. While this finding is consistent with many studies done internationally, it contradicts a study carried out in my own context. Al-Hakamani (2011), for instance, investigated the collaborative forms of CPD available for teachers in Oman such as peer observation, team teaching, staff-meetings...etc. She found that such activities

have limited contribution to Omani TESOL teachers' professional learning and development. In my view, the key reason for such limited contribution is the nature of these activities which despite having the appearance of being responsive to teachers are still top-down (especially since supervisors and SETs suggest them and plan them for teachers).

As was highlighted in Chapter 3, the importance of collaboration within a community for teachers' professional practice and learning has been well-documented (e.g. Peercy & Troyan, 2017; Vangrieken et al., 2017; Kuusisaari, 2014; Kennedy, 2011; Day, 1999). Yet in a paper by Kennedy (2011) which explored the perceptions of stakeholders about the desirability of collaborative CPD and examined potential barriers to this by drawing on the results of two projects which each explored teachers' views of CPD in Scotland, an aspirational view of collaborative CPD was noted but occupational realities meant that CPD continued to be realised in more traditional ways not conducive to collaborative endeavour. This finding might explain the reasons behind the limited benefit of the collaborative forms of CPD studied by Al-Hakamani (2011).

In the Omani context, socio-culturally, collaboration as a concept is well activated in society where people are used to collaborating with each other; their family members, neighbours, teachers, students...etc. This involves social solidarity where rich people in society help poor ones. It also involves direct and open communication and respect for different perspectives. Such collaboration reflects the principles of their Islamic religion. This might suggest that dialogic-based and collaborative forms of CPD can be part of teachers' professional development since these concepts are part of their daily social-life.

Theoretically speaking, Vygotsky's (1978) notion of (ZPD) or zone of proximal development emphasises the essentially social and collaborative nature of knowledge construction which has led to the growing interest in dialogic and collaborative forms of CPD. The ZPD, according to Vygotsky's (1978:86) original definition: "...is the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers". The sociocultural approach of Vygotsky

emphasises that human's actions are mediated by tools and signs, mainly that of language and that the higher mental functioning of the individual has social origins (Vygotsky, 1978). Such collaborative learning does not entail learning through social interaction alone as Kuusisaari (2014) puts in; instead it involves collective learning whereby the group as a whole strives towards the shared aim.

In recent years Vygotsky's sociocultural model of learning is one that has been enthusiastically embraced in education and in those concerned with teacher learning and development and has helped fuel a growing appreciation of the need for, interactive and collaborative models of PD and has helped convince me of the importance of, ensuring that dialogic and collaborative forms of CPD should form part of teachers' CPD system in Oman. Such forms can cover many activities ranging from working together with colleagues in informal, unplanned ways to structured, more formalized 'communities of enquiry' or 'learning communities' (Kennedy, 2011:26). They can be online (e.g. through using social media such as twitter, Facebook, blogs...etc.) or face-to-face. What all forms of dialogic-based and collaborative CPD have in common is the value placed on the learning stimulated by working with others and the effective role of dialogue in promoting learning (Vrikki et al., 2017). This form of CPD has the capacity of satisfying all three of Bell and Gilbert's (1996) dimensions of professional learning: personal, social and occupational (in Kennedy, 2011:26). While the conditions and features of the various types of collaborative learning can vary, the one thing they have in common is that learning is socially situated and not an individual isolated activity.

#### ***6.3.4 Awareness-raising towards life-long career development***

The findings show that English teachers' CPD is the responsibility of a number of parties involved in ELT in Oman although the MOE is currently the main CPD provider for English teachers in Omani schools. Yet, the findings also disclose that the current CPD available to teachers is not enough due to the large numbers of English teachers in Omani schools in comparison to the low numbers of offered CPD activities. Thus, the findings highlight that it is not enough for teachers to wait for PD opportunities to be offered to them by the MOE in Oman. Instead, they should become responsible for the continued development of their teaching skills and thus for their lifelong career development.

This is vital because according to Rich et al., (2014) currently there is no sufficient capacity to fully meet all of the CPD needs of English teachers in Oman. They highlight that priority tends to be given to the needs of teachers in the early stages of their career, meaning that experienced teachers have fewer opportunities to engage in CPD initiatives. Based on my knowledge of the context, I believe that the problem might become bigger in the future since Oman has an oil-based economy, and with the decrease in oil prices internationally, there will be cuts in the government's grants to the different Ministries including the MOE. As a result, the numbers of formal training and other CPD opportunities offered to teachers generally and EFL teachers in particular will almost definitely be reduced, as is already proving to be the case.

Some key principles of adult learning were introduced in Chapter 3 of my thesis above to help create the case for the more informal and participatory approach to PD that I advocated for and made the focus of the action research stage of my research design. Raising teachers' awareness towards their life-long career development is related to self-directed learning that is the goal of andragogy, which, as explained in Chapter 3 above (see 3.4.3) in contrast to pedagogy, builds on the experience adults bring to learning and recognises their responsibility for their self-education. According to Mezirow (1985), to understand self-directed learning, it might be useful to differentiate between three interrelated but distinct functions of adult learning: instrumental learning through task oriented problem-solving which is relevant to control other people or the environment; dialogic learning, through which we try to comprehend what others mean when they communicate with us; and self-reflective learning through which we come to understand ourselves.

The critical perspective that is connected to social change in some ways, has received further attention when describing self-directed learning (Brookfield, 1986; Mezirow, 1985). Such a perspective focuses on bringing about change in the current social, economic and political order through questioning the assumptions which learners hold about the world in which they work and live. This critically reflective process of learning is coupled with actions directed at altering how organisations and societies generally are organised and are usually functioning (for example, changes in policies and procedures, legislative changes, and role

changes) (Caffarella, 1993). Mezirow (1985) emphasized that participating as a self-directed learner in the process of dialogue can require full knowledge about alternatives as well as freedom from coercion and self-deception. He added that this freedom requires an understanding of the biographical, cultural, and historical reasons for the person's interests, wants and needs, particularly when they are derived from neurotic or ideological misrepresentations. In self-directed learning, such kind of self-knowledge is a prerequisite for autonomy (Beach, 2017). I think that these are useful guiding principles for CPD support programmes and activities which seek to promote self-directed learning. Thus, I propose that teacher educators at the MOE in Oman can take into consideration these principles to raise teachers' awareness towards their CPD.

Oman is an Islamic country where learning, education and continuing education are some of the fundamental principles of Islam. The revelation of the first surah (verse) of the Holy Quran concerns education and the significance, variety and benefit of education were mentioned directly and indirectly in many surahs (Salleh, 2009). For instance, a verse from the Holy Quran reads "Rabbi Zidni Ilma" which means my Lord! Increase me in knowledge (Ta-Ha: 114). The Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) also highlighted that education in Islam is a life-time process, from "the cradle to the grave". Therefore, education should not be limited to instruction within the walls of a classroom. Education comprises a lifelong endeavour, and it is the duty of all Muslims to learn from and to teach one another reciprocally (Brockwell, 2016). This also applies to teachers who are educators of different generations; they should continue education and learning throughout their career and life generally. This is crucial to contribute fully to the reconstruction and development of their society in order to achieve well-being in this world and well-being in the hereafter as stated in different verses of the holy Quran (Al-Baqarah:201; Al-A'raf:156; An-Nahl:122).

In relation to my study, the data revealed that the role of teachers themselves in the provision of CPD is significant and as such they should be encouraged to take full responsibility for their CPD and participate collaboratively with others to develop professionally. Studies in other contexts also reported the importance of this. For example, Richter et al., (2011) investigated teachers' uptake of formal and informal learning opportunities across their career cycle. The analyses were

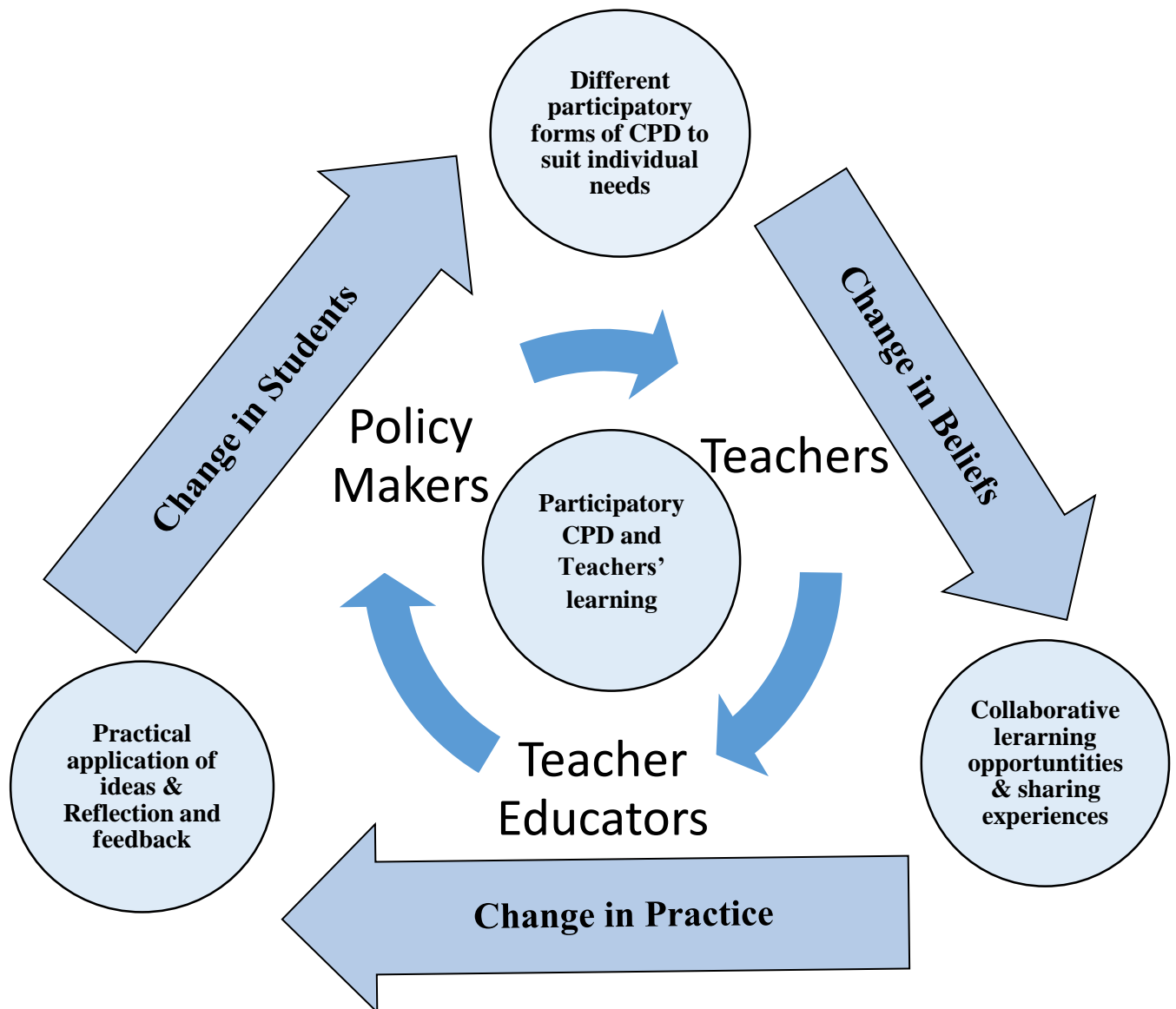
based on data collected from 1939 German secondary school teachers in 198 schools. The findings showed that informal learning opportunities (e.g. individual activities such as reading books, classroom observations and/or collaborative activities such as conversations with colleagues...etc) showed distinct patterns across the teaching career. Sawyer (2001) has determined that, over the years, the focus and provision of professional development changed from external expertise to empowerment. By empowering teachers, professional developers are encouraging them to take the initiative to identify and act on their own individual needs (in Mushayikwa & Lubben, 2009).

Altogether, the above suggests that teachers in Oman should be expected and encouraged to undertake self-directed professional development activities as Rich et al (2014) observe. Teacher educators, thus; need to raise teachers' awareness towards the importance of continuing their life-long career development. Teachers have to become responsible for identifying and addressing their own PD needs. This is crucial because one of the hallmarks of being identified as a professional is to continue learning throughout a career and the teachers' CPD is a key component to develop children's learning and also to implement policy whether school or government policy (Earley, 2010). Raising teachers' awareness of the importance of continuing their PD and involving them in their CPD process were key benefits of the participatory model of CPD adopted in the current study.

#### **6.4 Promoting a participatory model of CPD in Oman**

Based on my critical reading of the literature and my identification of the gap in the Omani educational CPD system, I designed a participatory model of CPD which is built out of my own synthesis of the relationship between CPD activity and transformation and my understanding of the contribution of my study to effective CPD. The designed model as represented in Figure 6.1 below assumes that through a cyclical process of teachers' participation with other professionals, participating in different forms of CPD that takes into consideration individual's needs through collaborative learning opportunities, practical application of the discussed ideas and critical reflection and feedback on the experience, teachers' learning can happen (Moran et al., 2017). Within such learning three aspects of

change can be noticed (beliefs, practices and change in students) as was the case in my study. This is because teachers' learning can result in change in their beliefs about teaching and learning which is connected to change in practice, and positive changes in teachers' practices can result in changes in students (see Figure 6.1 below).



**Figure 6.1: The participatory model of CPD, teachers' learning and change**

My research participants were introduced to this model through the action research phase of the study by participating in three workshops (2 hours each), and establishing and joining an online discussion group for 6 weeks. Then, the model has been evaluated to see its effectiveness by using Guskey's (2000) conceptual framework for the evaluation of CPD in schools. The findings revealed that the participatory model of CPD adopted in this study did result in the participant teachers' professional learning and change as three aspects of

change were noticed: teachers' beliefs and practices about CPD, and change in students (e.g. their reading habits).

This finding corresponds a number of studies which have demonstrated the value of CPD that actively involves practicing teachers in their learning process internationally (e.g. Hung & Yeh, 2013; Thanh Vo & Mai Nguyen, 2010), in the gulf countries (Guefrachi & Troudi, 2000) as well as in Oman (Borg & Al-Busaidi, 2012). For example, in the EFL context, Thanh Vo and Mai Nguyen (2010) explored the experiences of a group of Vietnamese EFL teachers during their participation in a critical friends group over one semester. This group is composed of peers where there was no 'hierarchy of expertise' and it supported a collaborative, reflective, and democratic community of learners as they participated in PD activities. The findings show that participants expressed their great pleasure and satisfaction with their critical friends' group experience. It offered them a rare opportunity for exchanging their professional ideas, learning from each other, and helping each other to develop professionally, all in a relaxed manner. It further helped them to build up a sense of professional community and good working relationships.

Regarding the participatory model of CPD in education that was introduced in this thesis as shown in Figure 6.1 above, the premise of this model are:

1. In order to generate effective models of participatory professional development, an engaged collaboration is needed between multiple professionals (Reilly & Literat, 2012) including English teachers (and SETs), teacher educators (teacher trainers and regional English supervisors), and policy makers (school administrators and CPD administrators in the MOE). Those professionals should work together in a cyclical process to contribute to the success of teachers' CPD.
2. While the role of all professionals in this process is vital, teachers have a key role in the participatory model of CPD. They are expected to participate actively with others such as teacher educators and policy makers in their CPD process.
3. Different forms of CPD should be available to teachers such as communities of practice and study groups which take into consideration school needs as well as individual teachers' needs (Hustler et al., 2003), and their interests and



priorities (Appleby & Pilkington, 2014). This is crucial as such notions of CPD can positively support educational change (Hoban, 2002).

However, participatory PD should not be seen merely as a discreet and separate form of PD , rather it is an approach that can be used within existing INSET provision in the existing CPD system as well (cascading, coaching/mentoring and action research) through an active participation of teachers in the planning, delivery and evaluation process. In other words, all forms of CPD should have a collaborative endeavour that supports transformative practice (Kennedy, 2005). Teachers should participate in collaborative learning opportunities where they can share experiences and learn from discussed ideas (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Lee, 2002). They should have opportunities to practically apply the discussed ideas (Hustler et al., 2003) and to reflect on these ideas/activities as well.

Involving teachers as active participants in CPD activities can facilitate the process of teacher learning (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Reilly & Literat, 2012; Lee, 2011). Such learning does not result from policy makers suggesting specific forms of CPD for teachers or teacher educators imposing new ideas, new theories or new methods on teachers (Lee, 2011). Instead, teachers should actively participate in selecting the suitable forms of CPD for them. They should participate in designing the CPD activities and engage in professional sharing and critical reflection of these activities so they can connect knowledge to unique contexts.

In addition to that, the beliefs and experiences teachers' bring to their own learning and the contexts in which they work constitute their orientation to learning which influences not only whether they learn from the different activities but also whether they are involved in certain learning activities to begin with. As a consequence of this strong determinative relationship between a teacher's orientation to learning and involvement in learning, the designed model assumes that a teacher's orientation to learning will have direct impacts on teacher learning change as Opfer et al., (2011) found in their study.

Generally speaking, going forward the participatory model of CPD proposed in Figure 6.1 can be used to inform the development of a participatory model of CPD which fits within the constraints of the teaching and training context for school teachers in Oman. This I propose that groups of Omani teachers can be trained to work together collaboratively both online and sometimes through meetings. School and PD administrators can facilitate the administration of such initiatives. In those meetings and online discussions teachers can participate with INSET teacher trainers and English supervisors (a learning community) in initiating and designing INSET courses, workshops and other CPD activities for teachers. Moreover, they can share concerns, suggest ideas, and design supporting materials to overcome the challenges with the syllabus.

Participants should be provided with efficient training on coaching, mentoring and cascading skills. Those groups of participants can then take these ideas to their schools or other schools by doing workshops for other teachers. As well as that, they can do collaborative participatory action research to investigate teaching-learning issues and try to find solutions to problems. The plan is to start with a small group and then to join as many teachers as possible from different areas in Oman.

The values that are shaping the design of this proposed participatory model of CPD are:

### **1. Participation, not indoctrination**

There is a critical need, in the field of education, to transition from professional development *for* teachers to professional development *with* teachers. Participatory learning relies on a model of “distributed expertise”, assuming that knowledge, including in an educational context, is distributed across a diffuse network of people and tools. Similarly, CPD for teachers should be considered and implemented in a participatory, non-hierarchical and inclusive way (Sales et al., 2016; Reilly & Literat, 2012).

### **2. Exploration, not prescription**

In order to inspire this sense of co-design and ownership in participants, professional development initiatives must allow ample room for personal and professional exploration. Attention also should be paid to what teachers want from CPD experiences, rather than just what is required

from them. Through allowing teachers to explore who they are and what their professional goals and needs are, the CPD activities could provide teachers with opportunities to connect to the content and to display their own individuality in the process (Reilly & Literat, 2012).

### **3. Iteration not repetition**

In order to sustain continuing learning, the design of successful CPD activities/events should provide opportunities for constant improvement, troubleshooting, and evaluation. In this sense, assessment emerges as a problematic yet nevertheless vital topic in the realm of CPD implementation. It is hoped that assessment practices in CPD will increasingly mirror the participatory shift in programme/activity design and reflection (Reilly & Literat, 2012). These values offer a framework for an innovative type of professional development. By incorporating these values into the design of PD activities/events, practitioners can efficiently craft initiatives that are non-hierarchical, participatory, professionally and personally meaningful, flexible, relevant and sustainable.

All in all, introducing my research participants to the proposed participatory model of CPD, the findings reveal that participants were in favour of this model and all of them agreed that this model should be added to teachers CPD system in Oman. This is due to the post-transmission perspective underlying this model which seeks to restructure teachers' CPD so that it transcends the limitations of transmission models (Taylor, 2017; Kumaravadivelu, 2012). The critical participatory nature of this model also paid attention to broader historical, political, social, cultural and educational factors that impact teaching and the CPD of teachers in Oman (Moran et al., 2017). It helped participants to make decisions regarding their CPD, to play the role of reflective practitioners and possibly help them become transformative intellectuals. Consequently, this model encouraged 'democratic professionalism' of teachers which directly contrast with 'managerial professionalism' mentioned earlier; issues will be discussed in details in following sections.

#### **6.4.1 Teachers as decision makers and reform agents**

The findings from the current study revealed that the participatory model of CPD enabled teachers to make decisions regarding their CPD and be the 'agents' of their own professional development. This is because they were involved in their CPD process and have decided by themselves the content of workshops 2 and 3. They also decided the topics they wanted to discuss in the online discussion group and led these discussions by themselves. Such findings are significant because a new discourse circulating about teacher professionalism is that of 'democratic professionalism' which seeks to "demystify professional work and build alliances between teachers and excluded constituencies of students and members of the community on whose behalf decisions have traditionally been made either by professions or by the state" (Apple, 1996 in Day & Sachs, 2004:7). The core of 'democratic professionalism' is the emphasis on collaboration and cooperative actions between teachers and other educational stake holders. It suggests that the teacher has a wider responsibility than the single classroom and this includes contributing to his/her school, the system in general, other students not only the ones he/she is teaching, the wider community and collective responsibilities of teachers themselves as a group and the broader profession (Brennan, 1996 in Day & Sachs, 2004).

However, teachers are often 'marginalized' in the policy-making process and sufficient consultation is often absent in relation to their CPD (Wong, 1995, in Wai Yan, 2011). The effectiveness of such a kind of 'bureaucratic-managerial approach' to teacher CPD policy is under doubt (Vonk, 1991 in Wai Yan, 2011). This marginalization of teachers raises the myth of teacher professionalism, in which teachers' professional status has been neglected in the policy formulation process. Similarly, the data from the current study confirmed at the quantitative and case study phases that teachers are in a passive role in relation to their own PD. The majority seem to believe in the importance of their involvement in CPD process; yet, respondents complained that they do not make any decision regarding that and they illuminated their dissatisfaction with such process.

Likewise, in two previous studies done in Oman by Al-Lamki (2009) and Al-Yafae (2004), teachers articulated their desire to be involved in decision-making regarding their professional development and stated that they are dissatisfied

with the fact that their voices are not heard in relation to being nominated for formal INSET courses and their passive participation in the process of these formal activities regarding their aims and content. Similarly, in the UAE teachers feel voiceless as Raza (2010) found in her study. Likewise, in another EFL context, Wai Yan (2011) investigated teachers' perceptions and experiences of CPD opportunities and needs in Hong-Kong primary schools. He found that teachers PD needs were not well taken into consideration in generating the government's CPD policy framework and that the involvement of teachers in the policy-making process of CPD was limited.

All told, nowadays educational researchers call for teachers' voice and their active participation in CPD process. For example, Bangs and Frost (2012) accentuated that it is time to consider approaches to teacher and school development that puts the teacher at the centre of the process if we want them to influence both policy and practice. This could explain participants' positive reaction to the participatory model of CPD adopted in this study as they felt they have a voice and their voice is heard through their CPD participation. Thus, any serious attempt to move from transmission to post-transmission "must take into account the importance of recognising teachers' voices and visions, the imperatives of developing their critical capabilities, and the prudence of achieving both of these through a dialogic construction of meaning" (Kumaravadivelu, 2001 in Kumaravadivelu, 2012:9).

#### ***6.4.2 Teachers as reflective practitioners***

The findings from this study revealed that teachers have learnt some skills from being part of the participatory model of CPD. Becoming aware of the importance of researching their own practice and reflecting on what they are doing are some skills that respondents probably have gained from participating in the workshops and online discussion groups. This means that the participatory model has helped participants to critically reflect on their practice and become reflective practitioners. Yet, such practices are not well activated in the current CPD system in Oman as some previous studies have shown.

For example, Al-Zedjali (2004) investigated teachers' reflective practices and fostering professional development through post-lesson discussion. She looked

at the perceptions of EFL teachers and supervisors. This study found that the concepts of reflection and teacher autonomy are encouraged in theory but they are absent in practice in Oman. Similarly, in another context, Wongwanich et al., (2014) assessed the needs for Thai teachers to become reflective practitioners. The study found that Thai teachers need to become more reflective on the professional strength and weakness of their own and their colleagues. This study recommended as confirmed by the priority need index that the development of critically reflective skills for Thai teachers should be a top priority.

The literature has well documented the importance of reflection and reflective practices for teachers' professional growth and development (Vrikki et al., 2017). For Example, Schön (1987) introduced concepts such as reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action to explain how professionals meet the challenges related to their work with a kind of improvisation that is improved through practice. Reflection-in-action describes the teacher's ability to resolve situations while they are happening whereas reflection-on-action happens after the event has taken place. This involves developing a repertoire of experiences and can force teachers to think about what they would do ideally if the situation occurred again. Schön believes that both reflection types are necessary for teachers to become effective practitioners and reflecting on one's strengths and weaknesses helps in teacher development.

In the ELT literature, Richards and Lockhart (1996) discussed the idea of critical reflection and how it can trigger a deeper understanding of teaching because it involves examining teaching experiences as a basis for evaluation and decision making as a source for change. In other words, critical reflection involves posing questions about how and why things are the way they are, what value systems they represent, what alternatives might be available, and what the limitations are of doing things one way as opposed to another. They added that teachers who are involved in critical reflection are better able to evaluate their stages of professional growth and what aspects of their teaching they need to change. When such reflection is done routinely, it enable teachers to feel more confident in trying different options and assessing their effects on their teaching. In my view, the participatory model of CPD helped teachers to be reflective practitioners through an experiential learning cycle. This is related to Kolb's (1984) experiential

learning theory which suggests that people learn from their experience and the way this happened is through reflection on the things they did (concrete experiences); and experimentation (action) in similar situations at another time, in order to gain further experience, participants reflect again and so on, and this cyclical process of reflection allows teachers to learn from their experiences (in Harrison, 2011). Likewise, Pollard (2008) proposes that through such cyclical or “spiralling” process, teachers monitor, revise and evaluate their own practices continuously and this supports the development and maintenance of professional expertise; the process of reflection feeds a constructive spiral of professional development and capability.

Throughout the action research part of this study, I think that my research participants were exposed to both Schön’s (1987) notions of reflection as well as Richards and Lockhart’s (1996) idea of critical reflection through an experiential learning cycle. This is because they discussed some issues in the three workshops and applied some of these ideas practically such as creating a reading culture in their schools among teachers and students. Participants further reflected on this in the online discussion sessions and then went back to their schools to make changes to the ways of administering such reading culture according to their colleagues’ ideas in the group. Experiential learning also acknowledges that much informal learning takes place outside formal educational settings. This is true for my research participants as the results show that after participating in the three workshops and online discussion sessions, participants started initiating establishing smaller groups according to their interests/needs and working collaboratively in these groups to discuss issues of concern. For instance, grade 1 teachers created a group to reflect on ideas discussed in the workshops and online discussion sessions in relation to teaching grade 1. In this way reflective practice allowed those participant teachers to make sense of all learning opportunities available to them, both formal and informal, and to recognise and evaluate it when they talked about the benefits and constraints of the participatory model of CPD and the activities they were engaged in.

However, such experiential learning and reflective practice was not a highly instrumental practice; instead, it has deeper forms of reflective practice and criticality in learning. These forms require freedom from the gaze, in the

Foucauldian sense, of the institution in which we work (Foucault, 1980: 155). Thus, research and autobiographical approaches in teachers' professional education and development do provide the freedom to think more about self in context, personally and socially, and in potentially radical ways (in Harrison, 2011). In the case of my study, this happened to my research participants when they were making decisions by themselves regarding the CPD activities and according to their own and their school needs as the data showed.

In sum, the participatory model of CPD adopted in this study encouraged participant teachers to play the role of critical reflective practitioners. Kumaravadivelu (2012) stressed that those reflective practitioners deeply think about the principles, practices and processes of classroom instruction and bring to their task a considerable degree of creativity, artistry and context sensitivity which empowers teachers' voice and develops their critical capabilities. Critical reflection is a key process for critical reflective practitioners as they review their teaching practices within the broader cultural, political, and sociological contexts in order to organize learning that suits differences (Wongwanich et al., 2014).

#### ***6.4.3 Teachers as transformative intellectuals***

The findings show that the participatory model of CPD encouraged teachers to participate in debates and discuss the idea of preparing teachers as intellectuals in Omani schools which could possibly contribute to their CPD. This seems to be a crucial step in the Omani centralised top-down context whether regarding teachers' CPD or education in general. This is because teachers have a significant role in society and education. Teachers are one of the most significant resources a nation has for providing the values, knowledge and skills that prepare young people for productive citizenship but even more than that to give sanctuary for their aspirations and dreams for a future of hope, dignity and justice (Giroux, 2013:458).

Giroux and Giroux (2006) believe that public education is a crucial sphere to create people equipped to exercise their freedom and competence to question the basic assumptions that govern democratic political life. They think that in such education systems, teachers in both public schools and higher education should assume their responsibility as citizen scholars by taking critical positions and



relating their work to larger social issues. In their view, teachers should offer students' knowledge, dialogue and debate about pressing social problems and provide the conditions for students to have hope and a belief that civil life matters, and that they can make a difference in shaping it so as to expand its democratic possibilities for all. This means that governments need to rethink the relationship between education and democracy, the very nature of teaching and its relationship to social responsibility, and the roles of teachers as engaged citizens and public intellectuals.

In the Arab context and in response to a number of terrorist events that happened in a number of countries recently, an Omani Educator wrote an article called "Education...susceptibility to terrorism industry". In this article, Al-Mamari (2016) questioned how the terrorist organisation who call itself ISIS (Islamic Society in Iraq and Syria) was able to convince young adults to "kill others"? He related this to two issues: the first is the decline in the enlightening role of Education and its institutions in the Arab countries, though there are many of these, and their insistence on not changing their curriculums to cope with these emergency conditions, and the second is the recognition that the ISIS curriculum and teachers might be better than ours that they are able to convince those young adults to do that. The writer concluded his article by suggesting that ISIS and such targeting of the young adults cannot be stopped politically and militarily only but also through an intellectual confrontation by our educational institutions before it is too late.

In many countries including Arab countries and Oman, one of major threats facing prospective and existing teachers is the increasing adoption of corporate and instrumental ideologies which emphasise technocratic and product-oriented approaches to both teacher education and classroom pedagogy (Kershaw, 2012; Hargreaves, 2003). In this view, teaching is reduced to a set of skills and strategies and it becomes synonymous with methods or techniques. Hence, instead of learning to raise questions about the principles underlying different classroom methods, theories of education and research techniques, teachers are often preoccupied with mastering the best way to teach a given body of knowledge. Yet, this retrograde view ignores any understanding of pedagogy as a moral and political practice which can function as a deliberate attempt to

influence how and what knowledge, values, and identities are produced with particular sets of classroom social relations (Giroux, 2013:461).

The use of such technocratic and product-oriented approaches seem to represent forms of education that are based on the concept of “business/banking model of education” (Freire, 1970). In this view, education is seen as a process of depositing knowledge into others where knowledge is a gift bestowed by those who consider themselves knowledgeable upon those whom they consider to know nothing as Freire noted. He railed against this and argued that banking classrooms are mechanical rather than creative, and the transmission of knowledge through teacher monologues silences students’ voices and discounts their personal backgrounds and experiences. In such banking schools/classrooms, problematic issues arise because the educational content, the processes used for decision-making, and the social relations produced by such traditional models of education prevent students and teachers from developing critical thinking skills and becoming autonomous beings capable of transforming their lives and the lives of others around them (Kershaw, 2012).

As the “banking model” of education has generated and continues to generate greater and greater failure (Freire, 1998), there are more calls for post-transmission perspectives of education which anticipate teachers to play the role of transformative intellectuals who strive not only for academic advancement but also for personal transformation, both for themselves and for their learners (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). This means that there is a need for defending schools as institutions essential to maintain and develop a critical democracy and also to defend teachers as public intellectuals who combine scholarly reflection and practice in the service of educating students to be thoughtful, active citizens (Giroux, 2017; 1988). By viewing teachers as public intellectuals, we can illuminate the important idea that all human activity involves some form of thinking, and the category of intellectual becomes a way of linking the purpose of teacher education and development, public schooling, and in-service training to the principles necessary for developing a democratic order and society. Recognizing teachers as engaged and public intellectuals means that educators should never be reduced to technicians just as education should never be reduced to training (Giroux, 2013).

To sum up, the findings from this study reveal that the participatory model of CPD can prepare teachers as transformative intellectuals. In the Omani context, a starting point to interrogate the social function of teachers as public and transformative intellectuals is to view schools as social, cultural, and economic sites that are inextricably tied to issues of control, power, and politics (Giroux, 2017; 2013; 1988). In other words, schools should do more than pass on a common set of knowledge and values in an objective fashion. In contrast, schools should be places that represent forms of social relations, language practices, knowledge and values that are particular selections and exclusions from the wider culture (Hargreaves, 2003; Pai, 1990). In such schools, the impact of teaching extends beyond the classroom to the community, the country and even the world.

#### ***6.4.4 The participatory model of CPD and Islam***

Given the fact that all teachers who participated in this study are Muslims, this might possibly be one of the reasons for the effectiveness of the participatory model of CPD among those teachers. In fact, reading a lot about the participatory model and the values and principles underpinning it and relating this to those teachers' religious, I found that the principle of participation is also a fundamental and important one in Islam. So, in principle the concepts of cooperation and participation are not alien to my research participants and to Omani teachers in general. This is because, in the holy Qur'an, Allah the Almighty says (interpretation of the meaning): People cannot live unless they cooperate with one another, Help one another in Al-Birr and At-Taqwa (virtue, righteousness and piety) (Al-Ma'idah 5:2). This confirms that cooperation and mutual support among Muslims is something essential that Allah has enjoined and made the basis for religious and worldly well-being.

Moreover, many verses of the holy Qur'an and the hadith of the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) state that Islamic solidarity among Muslims—individuals, societies, governments and peoples— is one of the most imperative of ideas, and one of the duties which are essential to the welfare of society, the well-being of their religious affairs and the soundness of their interactions. Islamic solidarity means helping one another, as well as supporting and advising one another. That includes enjoining what is good, forbidding what is evil, and guiding

people to that which will lead to their happiness and salvation, in this world and the Hereafter. For instance, the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) confirmed that: “The relationship between one believer and another is like a structure, parts of which support other parts...” (Al-Bukhari and Muslim). This hadith (or saying) and others clearly indicate that mutual support, compassion and care among Muslims, and cooperation in doing good are obligatory. In this way, they will become united and integrated, and they will succeed in their life (islamforchristians.com, 2015).

Not only cooperation in social life but even democracy and participation in decision making in common matters, and in political issues is encouraged in Islam; it is called “Shura”. “Shura” means a serious and effective participation in making a decision. Allah the Almighty in the holy Quran addresses the Prophet Mohammed (peace be upon him) who received divine revelation to rely on “Shura” in making decisions concerning common matters for which no specific revelation had come: (interpretation of the meaning) “...and take counsel with them in all matters of common concern; then, when you have made a decision (accordingly), trust in God.” (Al-Imran 3: 159). The distinguished Andalusian Quranic commentator Ibn Atiyya stated his commentary on this verse: “Shura is one of the basics of Islamic law, and a mandatory rule; and any [who is entrusted with a public authority] who does not take the counsel of those who have knowledge and are conscious of God, should be dismissed from his [or her public] position, and there is no argument about that.” (al-Muharrar, 280-1 in Osman, 2012).

“Shura” as a concept, however, has arguably been connected to democracy and there are different views regarding the compatibility or otherwise of Islam and democracy. AL-Farsi (2013) claimed that the Muslim world is not ideologically monolithic; thus, it presents a broad spectrum of perspectives ranging from those who deny a connection between Islam and democracy to those who argue that Islam requires a democratic system. Yet, a number of Muslim scholars such as Rifa’ah Tahtawi (1801-73), Khairuddin Al-Tunisi (1810-99), Jamal ad-Din Al-Afghani (1883-97), Muhammad Abduh (1849-1905), Abdurrahman Al-Kawakibi (1849-1903) and Muhammad Rashid Rida (1865-1935) believe that there is no contradiction between “Shura” and democracy. The Tunisian scholar Ghanoushi

(1993) argues that if democracy indicates a (Western) political system that preserves people's rights, gives them a wider space for political participation to choose their leaders or representatives and provides a system for the circulation of power, then there is no single text in Islam that contradicts democracy.

Broadly speaking, although arguably incompatible views regarding Islam and democracy have been put forward in mainly Western media, it is obvious from the above discussion that participation in decision making is encouraged and supported in Islam where any decision made should be based on the results of "Shura" or effective participation in making a decision. This suggests that the participatory model is not a new notion to Muslim teachers and it is a significant one through instilling the values of cooperation and participation between people in all matters of their life. Relating such notions to education in Islam, a number of educationalists and researchers in the Islamic world have called for reform agendas in some education curriculums to prepare the Muslim nations to be democratic, tolerant, caring, and peace-loving citizens who have the requisite knowledge, values, attitude, and civic participation skills to live in harmony with each other (e.g. Ahmad, 2004).

## **6.5 Towards the betterment of teaching and supporting critical professional development of teachers in Oman**

The findings from the study showed that teaching as a profession in Oman and the CPD of EFL teachers in particular are facing many challenges which of course can negatively affect education in general. For example, when the Arab spring began in many Arab countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen which has resulted, at least in part from social deprivation and/or sense of disenfranchisement which could be associated with high unemployment rates, it has impacted on some Gulf countries since there were high levels of unemployment among Gulf citizens as well.

In relation to Oman specifically, in the port town of Sohar, many graduates from different fields including teachers manifested and demanded the government for employment opportunities as mentioned in Chapter 1. The Omani government has tried to respond to their requirements by directing officials of various institutions in the country including the MOE to try to find jobs for those young

people. In response to this, the MOE appointed the majority if not all teachers who were waiting for jobs for several years. Yet, many of those teachers including EFL teachers, were found to lack the basic teaching skills and strategies since they were not prepared well for the job. This random appointment of teachers has negatively affected teaching and the quality of education in Oman generally and ELT in particular.

Karmani (2010) complained that despite huge levels of investment in ELT in the Gulf Cooperation Council Countries (GCC): Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates over a period of more than three decades, English language learning in the region has been mostly unsuccessful. A key reason for such a lack of success is that there still exist no definitive locally-produced approaches to ELT that meet the current language learning needs of the region. The reliance on imported curricula with 'one-size-fit-all' approach to the region have proven to be a failure (As Sayed, 2003 in Karmani, 2010). While in Oman this is not the case in basic education (primary to secondary) as we have locally produced text-books, the majority of higher education institutions still rely on imported curricula.

Outside the Omani and GCC context, it seems that there are many factors affecting the quality of education internationally and it might be fair to argue here that the GCC countries are of no exception from these factors. For example, Hargreaves (2003) stressed that knowledge society and globalisation have negative effects on education internationally. This is because globalisation is clearly suffering from a vast morality deficit where we have global markets but we do not have a global society and a global society cannot be built without taking account of moral considerations. Relating this to Education, it should not be only about cognitive learning but also promoting critical values education which aims at developing a range of interpersonal and social capacities which include a sense of rights and responsibilities, the building of trust, citizenship and identity formation (Brownlee et al., 2016; Johnson & Johnson, 2016).

However, education generally and teacher preparation programmes in particular in many countries including Oman are still focussing more on technicalities and ignoring values and morality; this study found that some teachers' ethical

understanding seems inadequate as mentioned in Chapter 5 (5.3.3). Furthermore, in many of teacher education programmes, little, if any, multiculturalism, human-rights or social democracy occur (Dolan & Kaufman, 2017). The findings from this study also revealed that teachers are voiceless in the current Omani CPD system. In fact, it seems that not only teacher education and development but education systems generally are suffering from being undemocratic.

For instance, Piketty's (2014) book stressed how the traditional civics curricula fail to address the ways in which economic disparity undermines democracy and the public good in America (in Wright-Maley & Davis, 2017). From a similar perspective, Joseph and Nichols (2017) stated that the marketization of public schooling and the corporation of the curriculum have created an environment necessary for individualistic, economically focussed citizens to grow and flourish. This influence is troubling for those who are concerned with democratic ideals particularly because democracy is the product of associated living. For many youth, having authentic opportunities to practice democracy is minimal or altogether absent where schools and society generally do not offer young people productive ways to have their voices heard. Additionally, well-intentioned educators face a variety of obstacles to creating a classroom environment that cultivates participation, leadership and democracy (Kornfeld et al., 2017).

Hargreaves (2003) also emphasized that in the developed Anglophone world, issues such as humanitarianism, democracy and public life have largely disappeared from governments education-reform agendas. Instead, there has been an exclusive focus on test scores and examinations, academic results, and international competitiveness (Oolbekkink-Marchand et al., 2017). Giroux (2017) believes that this is due to neoliberalism; he emphasizes that democratic education is struggling under neoliberalism whose reform efforts focus narrowly on high-stakes testing, traditional texts and memorisation drills. Similarly, Dolan and Kaufman (2017) complained that in order to meet proficiency standards, many districts in the U.S "have narrowed their curricula, in some cases teaching only test-specific content" (p. 130). This exactly applies to Oman as in recent years there has been a lot of pressure on schools to gain high scores in international tests such as TIMSS and PIRLS. TIMSS stands for trends in

international mathematics and science knowledge of students around the world, and PIRLS is an international assessment of first language reading achievement in fourth graders; it is conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement. Moreover, echoing the situation elsewhere humanitarianism, values and democracy are given less attention if not totally ignored in Omani schools. The data confirms that by showing that teachers are voiceless (no democracy) in the current CPD system and that some teachers seem to be missing some teaching ethics and job commitment (values) as mentioned before.

The preoccupation with proficiency standards leads to what Haberman (1991) refers to as a 'pedagogy of poverty' as he used this term to describe systems where school curricula function only to improve marginalised students' test scores, rather than to prepare them to participate fully in society. In his view, such systems fail to provide students with the tools to participate in democratic society, and yet schools place the blame on students for this deficiency. In schools that promote a 'pedagogy of poverty' teachers take charge while students maintain appropriate behaviour and success is measured through students assimilation, passive acquiescence to hegemony and their silence civic voices (Haberman, 1991, pp.290-291). Such pedagogy is compounded when teachers with good intentions nevertheless fail to see the problem.

Generally speaking, in order to improve teaching and support the critical professional development of teachers, a key recommendation from this study to Omani policy makers is to reform education. Education in Oman as in many other contexts should be reformed in a way that teaching agendas include a dedication to building character, community, humanitarianism and democracy in young people. This is important to ensure that they learn to understand their rights and responsibilities as citizens in a democratic way, internalize the required values, attitudes, and patterns of behaviour, and commit themselves to fulfil these responsibilities (Johnson & Johnson, 2016). In building these, we must believe that all people have the capacity to develop and exercise their own intelligence in shaping their own future (Dewey, 1939 in Pai, 1990).



Regarding teachers CPD, values, social justice, and caring have to be central to professional development among teachers in Oman and to the agenda of large-scale policy making if change is to make schools better for all students and foster the public good (Williamson, 2017). Narvaez and Lapsley (2008:156) highlight that the idea of education is a “values-infused enterprise”, and argue that, there is a growing awareness on the importance of character-building, ethics, and spirituality in education. They suggest that CPD should involve more than learning knowledge and skills; it is through personal and professional development that teachers build character, maturity and other virtues in themselves and others making their schools into caring communities.

If given the opportunity, teachers can grow socially, emotionally and intellectually, so that they cannot only decide what is good for them but also find the most effective means of attaining it (Pai, 1990). Thus, professional development, is not just about gaining certificates and/or attending in-service training courses which are the most dominant in the CPD system in Oman as the data confirmed. Rather, it is a personal path towards greater professional integrity and human growth. This means that PD opportunities in Oman must pay attention to the vital processes of informal learning and personal growth.

Teaching beyond the knowledge society also calls for teachers to work together in long-term collaborative groups committing to and challenging one another as a caring professional community. Forming professional communities among teachers is crucial to improve the current top-down CPD system in Oman as the findings from this study indicated. In these communities, individuals spend time together, feel secure, and feel trusting and motivated enough to share their human and decisional capital resources which can contribute to social capital building (Nolan & Molla, 2017; Fox & Wilson, 2015).

In sum, teaching in the in the 21st century should be a career of first choice, a job for growing-up intellectuals, a long-term commitment, a social mission and a job for life (Hargreaves, 2003). Teachers should become self-determining and self-transforming individuals who have to develop their professional, procedural and personal knowledge base (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). They should also analyse their learners’ needs, motivation, and autonomy, recognize their own identities,

beliefs and values, perform teaching, theorizing and dialogizing, and monitoring their own teaching acts. There should be opportunities for critical professional development and critical professionalism of teachers which can be supported by providing lots of awareness-raising tasks for teacher educators and trainers about these issues. Moreover, by providing learning opportunities for them as well as for teachers means providing opportunities which can vary (they may be formal or informal, organized or unstructured, face-to-face or online virtual networks) but should always be social, contextually meaningful and take into consideration values, social justice and caring. This advocates for the need for critical and participatory models/forms of CPD for teachers both in Oman and elsewhere that have been an important focus of the study reported in this thesis.

## **6.6 Summary of Chapter Six**

In this chapter the main findings were discussed in light of the aims of this study, the Omani context and the existing literature. The first part of this discussion focussed on teacher recruitment in Oman and highlighted that many countries around the world including Oman are facing a crisis of teacher recruitment, retention and morale nowadays. It called for new policies and practices to improve the quality and professionalism of the teaching force in Oman.

The second part sheds light on teachers' work and CPD where the findings showed that a key source influencing teachers' practices and their CPD participation is their beliefs. The findings further showed that there were many learning opportunities for Omani EFL teachers; however, these were based on transmission models of teacher development which did not respond to teachers' individual needs. The chapter proposes a need to shift from the current transmission models of teachers' learning to post-transmission, interactive and collaborative models which aim at self-directing and self-determining teachers' learning and development.

The third part of this chapter discussed the participatory model of CPD designed and adopted in this study, the values underpinning it and the findings from it; how this model enabled teachers to make decisions regarding their CPD and encouraged them to play the role of critical reflective practitioners as well as preparing them as future transformative intellectuals. The chapter also claimed

that this model is not a new notion to Muslim teachers because the principles of participation and cooperation are also fundamental and important ones in Islam. This suggest that such collaborative CPD forms as the participatory model can work effectively in Omani society and among Omani teachers because it is very much aligned with values and sociocultural norms of this society.

The last part of this chapter emphasized the significance of reforming education, teaching and CPD provision for teachers in Oman in ways in which teachers can teach beyond the knowledge society agenda to help with the building of character, community, humanitarianism and democracy in young people. Moreover, values, social justice, and caring have to be central to teachers' CPD and to the agenda of large-scale policy making if change is to make schools better for all students and teachers.

## **Chapter Seven: Conclusion; The way ahead**

### **7.1 Opening remarks**

This concluding chapter summarises the key findings of this study along with the main theoretical, practical and methodological contributions in the investigated area. The chapter also highlights the significant implications and offers some recommendations for how the study results can be taken forward in relation to teaching as a profession generally and the CPD of teachers in particular for the betterment of Education in Omani schools. The chapter then presents the study limitations and identifies some directions for further research. Finally, the chapter concludes with an account of the researcher's personal insights and reflections on the research journey.

### **7.2 Key findings of the study**

Overall, the major findings of the study as detailed and discussed in the previous two chapters (5&6) provided a conceptual understanding and practical suggestions on teacher recruitment and their CPD in Oman generally and in the ELT context in particular. The findings pertinent to research question 1 "What are the beliefs of in-service TESOL teachers in Oman about teaching as a profession?" showed that participants hold different beliefs about teaching as a profession and have different reasons for becoming teachers. The results indicated that the reality of the teaching job, workload, and status of the job among other noteworthy issues seem to create a level of unhappiness and dissatisfaction with the job. The study highlighted that in the years to come, Oman will continue to face a crisis of teacher recruitment, retention and morale. Therefore, there is a need for new policies and practices to improve the teaching force in the country.

Furthermore, participants were asked about their beliefs regarding continuing their own PD. The findings pertinent to research question 2 "What are those teachers' beliefs towards CPD?" indicate that a key source influencing teachers' practices and their CPD participation is their beliefs. The results revealed that participants hold a wide range of beliefs about continuing their own PD. Participants' responses seem to be affected mainly by their experiences of

participating in CPD events and/or the beliefs they hold about teaching and learning. This could be also related to the lack of an explicit and shared policy document for teachers with reference to CPD (Al-Lamki, 2009). The current study suggests that any CPD initiative should consider teachers' beliefs if teacher educators and policy makers are seeking for change in teachers, students and schools.

As regards the findings pertinent to research questions 3 of the study "Do the offered CPD opportunities by the Ministry of Education in Oman meet in-service TESOL teachers' needs?", it was shown that participants have experienced different types of activities/events which were mostly offered to them through the Ministry of Education in structured and formal ways based on transmission models of teacher development which did not respond to teachers' individual needs. Furthermore, the findings disclosed that the current structured and unstructured CPD activities available to teachers are inadequate given the large numbers of English teachers in Omani schools. Thus, the role of teachers themselves in the provision of CPD is significant; the way teachers are currently marginalized and seen as grateful recipients of CPD do not provide the conditions for intelligent and responsive teaching profession.

With reference to the findings pertinent to research question 4 "What are those teachers' perceived factors that facilitate or inhibit their benefit from the offered CPD opportunities?", it was found that a number of factors affect English teachers' CPD in Oman; some of these factors positively influence teachers access to CPD and its' success while others not. Nonetheless, the top-down nature of the current CPD system seems to most negatively affect the success of CPD. The data revealed that this centralized top-down system has moulded teachers' way of understanding PD in that they relate it to attending INSET courses and workshops and that it should be offered to them by the Ministry of Education and should be delivered by experts. Yet, the effectiveness of these activities and their contribution to teachers' learning have been questioned both internationally and locally (e.g. Makgato, 2014; AL-Balushi, 2009).

Concerning the results related to the last research question and the action research "How do in-service TESOL teachers in Oman react to the participatory

model of CPD?”, the evaluation of the participatory model of CPD adopted in this study has shown that almost all respondents reacted positively to this model. Teachers described their participation in the workshops as a positive experience and the ideas discussed in the online discussion group as useful contributions. The results confirmed that this model has positively impacted on participant teachers’ professional learning and change as three aspects of change were noticed: teachers’ beliefs and practices about CPD, and change in students (e.g. their reading habits). The data showed that the participatory model of CPD enabled teachers to make decisions regarding their CPD and encouraged them to play the role of critical reflective practitioners as well as preparing them as future transformative intellectuals.

All in all, the study recommended that with all its benefits and the very few limitations that could be addressed, the participatory model of teachers’ CPD in education can be added to the current CPD system in Oman to improve it. This is because the findings suggest that this model can lead to change in teachers’, students and schools generally. The study further emphasized the significance of reforming teachers’ CPD in Oman to help teachers teach beyond knowledge society. This includes dedication to building character, community, humanitarianism and democracy in young people. Besides, values, social justice, and caring have to be central to teachers’ CPD and to the agenda of large-scale policy making if change is to make schools better for all students and teachers. Having summarised the main findings of research, the following considers the contributions, implications and recommendations of the study.

### **7.3 Main contributions and implications of the study**

In this section, I will address the main contributions to existing knowledge this study makes in relation to teaching as a profession and teachers’ CPD, and the particular implications of these in the Omani and the Gulf context as well as internationally. I will be focusing in turn on 1) the theoretical contributions of the study, 2) the practical contributions and 3) research and methodological contributions.

#### **7.3.1 Theoretical contributions**

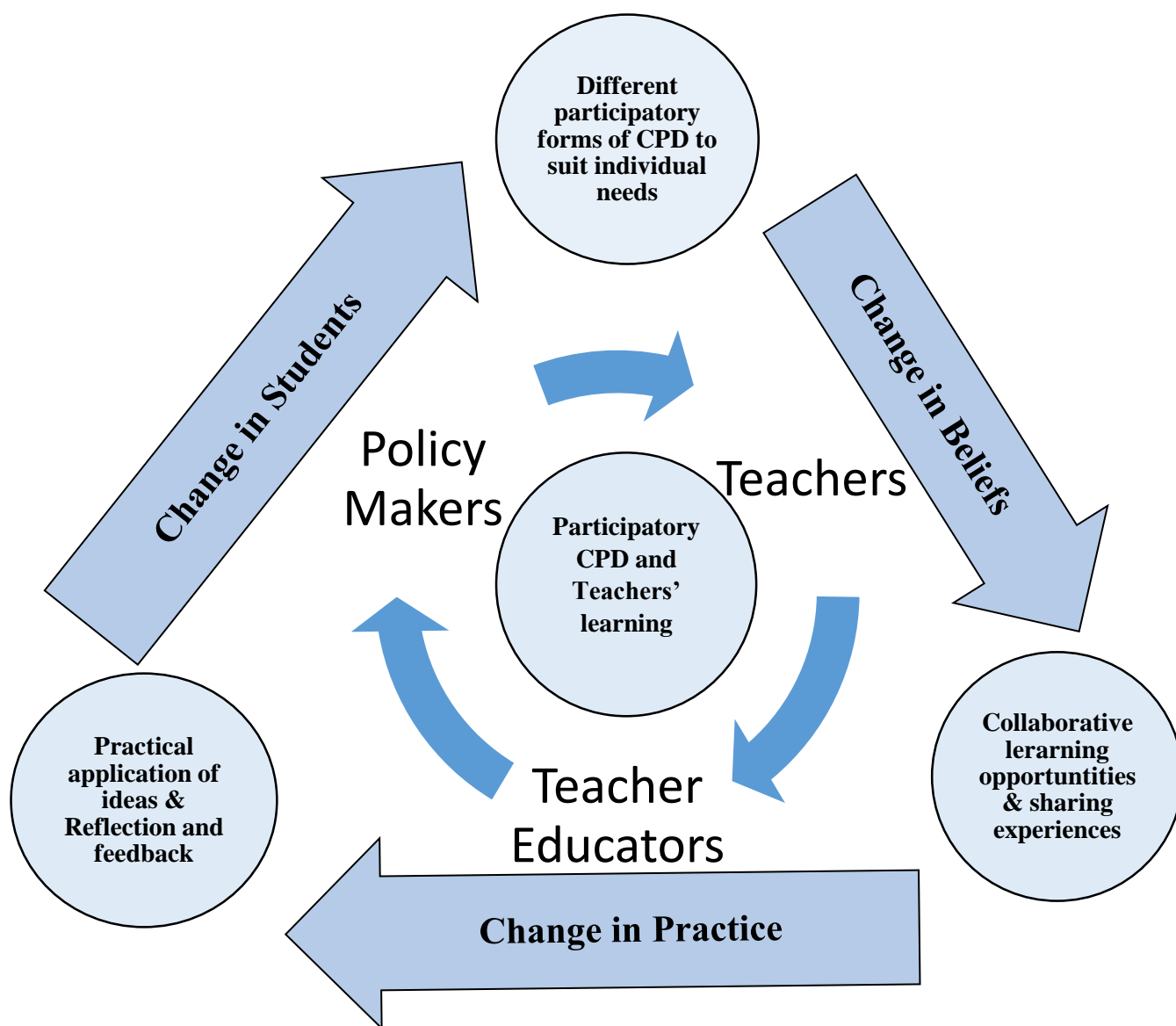
Through the design and the implementation of the participatory model of CPD in Education for in-service TESOL teachers in Omani schools, the current study

makes a major theoretical contribution to knowledge not only in the Omani context but even in the Gulf region and internationally in the sense that it presents an additional perspective on how to look at and work on teachers' CPD. Theoretically speaking, emerging participatory practices, facilitated by technological and socio-cultural developments, have given rise to a new model of knowledge circulation (Reilly & Literat, 2012). In this way, knowledge can be increasingly distributed among numerous and diverse networks. Individuals can have the capacity to become creative producers of information and learn from each other.

In fact, an emphasis is often placed on the benefits of collaboration within a professional community for supporting teachers' learning and practice revision (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Butler & Schnellert, 2012). Hence, recent voices from the field of education have aptly called attention to the need for providing teachers with participatory learning initiatives, recommending the establishment of initiatives such as "Digital Teacher Corps" (Levine & Gee, 2011; Levine & Wojcicki, 2010 in Reilly & Literat, 2012) or professional learning communities (Vangrieken et al., 2017; Seashore et al., 2003) that would facilitate a more relevant and innovative implementation of professional development in schools. This study; thus, has a theoretical contribution in this area since it designed a participatory model of CPD that encouraged teachers to work online and in communities of practice at schools to share knowledge and expertise.

In the Omani context, the designed model is the first attempt at introducing an additional and participatory model to the CPD system in the country, so it provided a theoretical base to understanding participatory models of CPD in Education. This is because, the designed model as demonstrated in Figure 7.1 below has taken into consideration the Omani educational context, teachers' beliefs and how they learn as well as features of effective CPD. The model is also underpinned by many values that offer a framework for an innovative type of CPD. By incorporating these values into the design of any PD programme/activity/event, practitioners can efficiently craft initiatives that are non-hierarchical, participatory, professionally and personally meaningful, flexible, relevant and sustainable (Sales et al., 2016; Reilly & Literat, 2012). The designed model further provides an explanation of its implementation framework and guidelines so it can be easily

understood and/or used by practitioners and policy-makers in the Omani educational system.



**Figure 7.1: The participatory model of CPD, teachers' learning and change**

In addition, during the action research phase of this study, participants worked together in three workshops and in online discussion sessions and their participation in these activities helped them build a base of common experiences and through discussion and dialogue facilitated conceptual understanding (Vygotsky, 1987). Teachers in Oman are expected to develop similar conceptual understandings if this model is applied in the Omani CPD system. The participatory model was also evaluated after being introduced to a group of TESOL teachers and SETs. This evaluation provided the possible effects and



benefits of implementing this model in the future. Therefore, this model can be a useful body of knowledge for educators including educational policy makers, educational researchers, teacher trainers, supervisors, senior teachers and teachers in Oman in the area of CPD.

Another theoretical contribution for this study is the realisation that the participatory model can work effectively among Muslim teachers in Oman and globally. This is because Islam as a religion emphasises the significance of cooperation between people in their social lives as well as participation in decision making in common matters and in political issues as has been mentioned in many verses of the holy Quran and sayings by the Prophet Mohammed (Osman, 2012). This means that the principles of participation, cooperation between people and decision making underpinning the participatory model of CPD in Education are not alien to Muslim teachers all around the world. These principles are fundamental and important in their everyday life because such concepts are based on the values underpinning their religion. Such a contribution provides a useful body of knowledge for Islamic scholars, educators and researchers in this area. This study also has a number of practical contributions and implications on educational policies and practices in the Omani context as the following section highlights.

### ***7.3.2 Practical contributions***

The practical contributions of this study are related to teaching as a profession and the CPD of teachers. Regarding teaching as a profession and in response to the findings mentioned earlier, Oman is beginning to face a crisis of teacher recruitment, retention and morale like many other countries (Yuan & Zhang, 2017; Watt et al., 2012; Richardson & Watt, 2005). This study calls for new policies and practices to improve the quality and professionalism of the teaching force in the country. This can be done, for instance, through stimulating work enthusiasm by helping teachers meet their expectations, respecting teachers, improving their work environment and conditions, lightening teachers' workload, and reforming the administration of education (Weiqi, 2007).

Moreover, the findings from the current study show that the Omani government needs to give considerable attention to teachers' selection and recruitment in

order to improve the quality of the teaching force in the country. Yet, this is not an easy job as recruiting and selecting highly effective teachers are the greatest challenges facing today's educational leaders (Ostovar-Namaghi & Hosseini, 2015). Practically speaking, the current study asks for developing systematic and successful policies and practices regarding teacher recruitment in Oman. This means that teachers' selection process should be stringent and follows criteria, so access to teacher education can become highly selective and only the most capable candidates to be chosen to join the teaching profession.

Furthermore, participants in the current study complained about the ineffectiveness of teachers' initial preparation programmes. This is an issue of concern for researchers both in Oman and internationally (Gleeson et al., 2017; Korthagen, 2010; Al-Shihy, 2003). Teacher initial preparation programmes tend to focus a lot on the technical knowledge that students teachers need to know and the theories underpinning the philosophy of education and teaching (Hargreaves, 2003). Yet, many Omani teachers especially the new generations seem to lack some teaching ethics and values and are not prepared for the "reality shock" as this study found. Thus, there is a need for developing strong educational policies regarding the initial teacher formation. This study implies that teacher preparation programmes should aim at balanced development of the teacher's personal and professional competences to effectively prepare Omani new generations for the job. For example, these programmes should prepare student teachers for the "reality shock", and the ethical and moral dimensions of the job should be part of any teacher preparation programme in Oman.

Concerning teachers' CPD, the current research practically contributes to the design, administration and evaluation of CPD initiatives. There is a growing realization to make a meaningful shift in teachers' CPD from transmission models of education that considers the role of teacher-learners as passive knowledge-absorbers to more constructivist views of education that assumes teacher-learners to be self-directed in their own professional learning and growth (Beach, 2017; Hung & Yeh, 2013) and in the ELT field in particular (Kumaravadivelu, 2012). However, the Omani CPD system is top-down and based on transmission models of teacher development. The current study; thus, practically and actively engaged a group of teachers and SETs from different schools in Oman in the

participatory model of CPD which is based on post-transmission models of teachers' learning.

For example, the design of this model is based on socio-constructivist paradigms of teachers' learning where teachers could construct knowledge of their own when engaged in CPD activities (e.g. workshops) and in social discourse (online-discussions) that collaboratively took place during the action research phase of the study (Vygotsky, 1978). This study also has some practical contributions regarding CPD administration in collaborative forms. As an example, the online discussion group that is established as part of the participatory model of CPD for teachers is an example of a professional community of practice where participants shared ideas and learnt from each other. This study further utilized the technological revolution and the new generations' love of social media through the use of online chats between participants for their PD. Hence, the study provides practical suggestions on how to form both virtual and face-to-face communities of practice in Omani schools.

The study further has some practical contributions in relation to CPD evaluation. It used Guskey's (2000) conceptual framework on CPD evaluation in schools to evaluate the participatory model of CPD in education which is adopted in this study. Yet, while this is not the only way/approach CPD can be evaluated; the way I followed in evaluating the adopted model can provide useful insights for practitioners and policy makers in Oman into how CPD evaluation may be approached. Having said this, the study further has a number of research and methodological contributions as will be detailed in the following part.

### ***7.3.3 Research and methodological contributions***

This study intends to contribute towards an emerging body of research regarding the issue of teachers' CPD in a number of ways. First of all, in relation to investigating teachers' beliefs; this study adds to the body of research done in this area both locally and internationally (e.g. AL-Balushi, 2009; Borg, 2011). This study confirmed that teachers' beliefs influence their practices as well as their CPD; something which as besides, Vries et al., (2013) have stressed not a great deal of prior research has focused on. The current study sought to address this gap by investigating teachers' beliefs about CPD and their beliefs about their

profession; their beliefs about the job and whether these beliefs affect their benefit from CPD.

Besides this, although an increasing range of literature focuses on particular aspects of CPD, there is a paucity of literature addressing the spectrum of CPD models (Kennedy, 2005) and the contribution of these models in teachers' professional learning and growth. This study, hence, tried to address this gap by investigating the CPD models applied in my context for in-service TESOL teachers. For example, while it added to the body of research done in Oman and investigated INSET courses (e.g. Al-Iamki, 2009; AL-Rasbiah, 2007; Al-Ghatrifi, 2006), to the best of my knowledge, this research is the first attempt in Oman that investigated both the cascade and the coaching and mentoring models. The study is also the first in Oman that adopted an additional model (the participatory model of CPD in education) to improve the CPD system. Thus, this study is a vital contribution on researching CPD models both in Oman and internationally.

Furthermore, a number of Omani researchers have called for teachers' active participation in their CPD process (e.g. Al-Ghatrifi, 2016; AL-Aufi, 2014; Al-Yafae, 2004). This study has sought to provide an example of how this can be achieved. As such, the study contributes to educational researchers' calls for recognition of teachers' voices and visions in relation to their CPD (Bangs & Frost, 2012). The data showed that teachers in this study felt that they have a voice and that their voice is heard. This implies that if participatory forms of CPD are added to the Omani educational system, it can encourage teachers' voice and their active involvement in their CPD process.

Methodologically speaking, empowering teachers' voices is related to the philosophical underpinnings of the current study as it adopts a critical paradigm and is informed by some of its' tenets. As mentioned earlier, the CPD system adopted by the Omani Ministry of Education is top-down and teachers are marginalised from participation in their CPD process. Thus, the current study adopts an emancipatory research design seeking action and change in the CPD system in order to redress such forms of injustice and marginalization (Troudi, 2015). Moreover, the study tried to focus its critiques on changing teachers' ways of thinking about CPD and raising their awareness towards their own CPD

responsibility. With such perspectives, the current study is the first attempt of this kind in my context; hence, it makes a methodological contribution in the sense that it presents a new perspective from which to investigate teachers' CPD and its implications on educational policies and practices in the Omani context.

The current study tried to respond to calls for a critical approach to research in education generally and language education in particular to “uncover the quality” of language education policies in the Gulf region and the Arab World generally (e.g. Troudi & Jendli, 2011) in a context where quantitative research in specific is appreciated for the purpose of accountability and generalizability. The present study revealed the social, political and economic factors that can affect the teaching profession and English language teachers' CPD in public education in Oman and the factors that have contributed to shaping the participants' beliefs and practices as far as CPD is concerned. By doing this, it is hoped that the present research will trigger some interest among TESOL researchers in the Omani context, the Gulf region, the Arab world and those in the wider ELT community, encouraging them to further pursue such critical forms of inquiry.

In addition to that, the current study adopted a multi-methodology design to achieve the research aims and at such it has another methodological contribution in the area of investigating teachers' beliefs and their CPD using multi-methodologies. This is because, some researchers have found a lack of multi-methodological work and called for more practical guidance to design and develop these kinds of approaches (e.g. Williams & Gemperle, 2017; Päivi, 2009; Mingers, 2001; Robey, 1996). The current study has sought to go some way to filling this gap. It adopted multi-methodologies (case study and action research); it used a case study for an in-depth qualitative investigation of teachers' CPD followed by an action research to contribute to changes and improvements in the Omani CPD system. The phases and ways followed in this research can provide useful guidelines for educational researchers in Oman and internationally on how to develop multi-methodology designs to advance a richer understanding of the investigated area.

## 7.4 Recommendations of the study for policy and practice

This study throws light on several issues relating to the teaching profession in Oman and the CPD of TESOL teachers which could be beneficial for the government represented by the Ministries of Education and Higher Education as well as practitioners. TESOL teachers, professional development coordinators, teacher educators, school principals, regional administrators, and educational policy makers may use the results of this study to improve policy and practice in teaching and teacher education and development. The results of the study and the related literature call for a number of recommendations in this regard as illustrated in Figure 7.2 and discussed in details below.

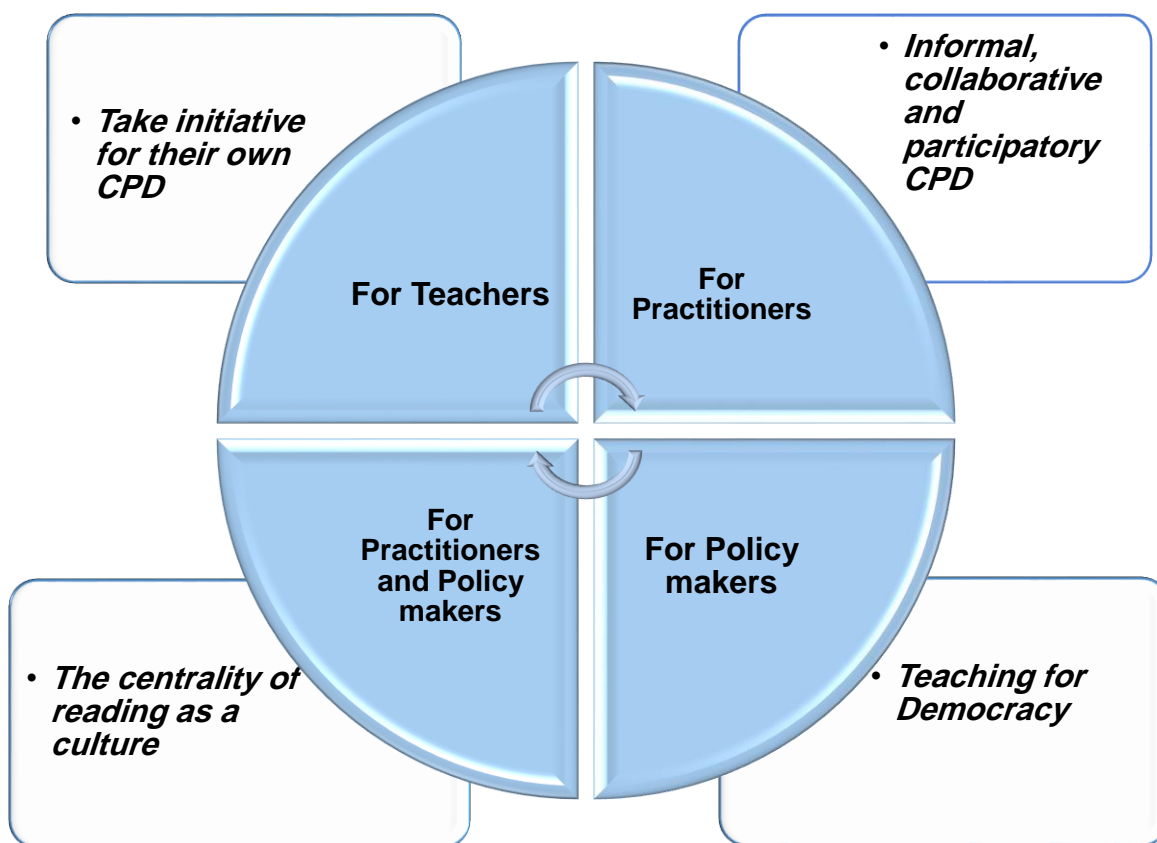


Figure 7.2: Recommendations of the study for policy and practice

### 7.4.1 For teachers

The findings from this study shed light on the significant role of teachers in their own CPD by being keen to take responsibility for the continued development of their teaching skills and thus for their lifelong career development. One way to achieve that is through utilizing the free online materials as will discuss below.

#### **7.4.1.1 Take initiative for their own CPD**

The current study recommends teachers in Oman to participate in different CPD activities/types to take initiative of their own PD. These activities could be at schools, professional communities outside schools, and online. For instance, they can participate in MOOCs or Massive Open Online Courses which are available online and free for teachers in every subject area worldwide. Every participant can choose a course/programme according to his/her needs/interests and at the time that suits him/her best. In the case of English language teachers, many Moocs are prepared by experts from top leading ELT institutions and universities internationally such as Cambridge, Harvard and many others for English-teaching professionals. These free Moocs provide opportunities for EFL teachers and educators to improve the quality of their teaching methods. Participants will have access to materials and methods for teaching English.

The benefits of these courses will enable teachers/educators to establish, adapt, and evaluate their methods, materials, and classroom activities to improve their students' learning. Due to their online nature, these courses offer unique, multimedia-rich collaborative environment where participants can interact with top-ranked English-language educators from all over the world (<https://americanenglish.state.gov/mooc-english-teaching-professionals>).

Therefore, MOOCs are great opportunities and rich sources of teachers' CPD because they can learn for free in a flexible online environment, getting the opportunity to collaborate with, and learn from, virtual colleagues. So, teachers in Oman are encouraged to make use of such opportunities.

#### **7.4.2 For practitioners (Teachers, SETs, CPD coordinators, TTs, RSs)**

Through the participatory model of CPD, this study provides practitioners including teachers themselves, SETs, CPD coordinators, teacher trainers and regional supervisors with fruitful data to identify how they all can work collaboratively to meet teachers' CPD needs.

##### **7.4.2.1 Informal, participatory and collaborative CPD**

A key recommendation from this study is the need for more informal, participatory and collaborative forms of CPD to be added to teachers' CPD system in Oman.

This does not mean that the current study is against the formal structured activities such as the training model, the cascade model and the coaching/mentoring model used intensively in the current educational CPD in Oman. These might be needed for teacher education especially for the novice teachers as Rich et al., (2014) stated to help them become familiar with the philosophy underpinning the curriculum and the effective ways of implementing it. Yet, the current study is calling for teachers to take a more active role in these formal activities. As an example, suggesting the content of some INSET courses and workshops based on their needs.

Moreover, teacher educators (teacher trainers, regional supervisors and SETs) should raise teachers' awareness of the importance of taking responsibility for their CPD and encourage collaborative and participatory forms of CPD. For instance, teachers can participate in communities of practice, discussion groups, and do participatory action research (Allison, 2014). Moreover, teachers can do peer-observation, professional learning visits to other schools, team-teaching and the other activities that are part of teachers' PD plans in Omani schools currently. Yet, they should actively participate in these CPD initiatives by for example deciding the content of these PD plans with their SETs.

They can further initiate by themselves and design or participate in any other form of CPD activity/event that they want according to their needs and/or interests. Participation in such informal activities is generally not mandatory but is at teachers' own initiative. As such, teachers are not merely recipients of knowledge; rather, they organize the learning process and determine their learning goals and strategies independently (Richter et al., 2011). These activities can be school-based or done outside schools.

An example of a school-based CPD that is not currently activated in Omani schools and can contribute to teachers CPD is the 15 minute forum. The idea is to set up a regular time slot during the school week when teachers can meet to share good ideas and resources (Allison, 2014). Such forums work best if they take place at the same time and on the same day every week. Each session is led by a colleague who is willing to share a successful teaching strategy and/or resource that he/she has used in his/her own classroom through presenting for 5



to 10 minutes. This is then followed by a brief discussion about the strategy/resource by other colleagues, and then they all go back to their work. Such forums can be done between the same subject teachers (e.g. all English teachers) or teachers of different subjects. The idea is to work collaboratively to share ideas and learn from each other.

Another example of school-based CPD that can be activated in Omani schools is the Japanese and Chinese art of teacher professional development 'lesson study' (Vrikki et al., 2017; Norwich & Dudley, 2016). Lesson study is a good example of a participatory CPD this study adopted. This is because it shares some underpinning principles of the participatory model of CPD such as involving teachers in their CPD process and teachers' working collaboratively as reflective practitioners. To explain more, lesson studies involve a group of teachers who identify an area of teaching that needs to be developed. This group then together plans the research lesson to address the area that needs developing with a specific focus on particular students as a way of monitoring their progress. Then, one of the teachers deliver the research lesson while the rest of the group members observe. They then interview the targeted students to gauge their engagement and progress during the lesson. Then the lesson is reviewed by the group to identify the strengths and further areas for improvement. Based on this review, the group then repeats the process with someone else teaching the research lesson (Norwich & Dudley, 2016; Allison, 2014).

For example, to implement lesson study properly, some school leaders are now organizing their year plans and timetables to plug this kind of professional learning activity right into the heart of their school's improvement. This prevents regular teaching from being disturbed, encourages teachers to take part, and reveals development needs and triumphs to leaders, which all makes lesson study very good value (Norwich & Dudley, 2016).

### ***7.4.3 For practitioners and policy makers***

In order to sustain a learning community, policy makers and practitioners (Teachers, SETs, CPD coordinators, TTs, RSs) should work collaboratively together to create a climate that promotes the continuous professional learning

of all school participants; one way to achieve this is through encouraging reading in Omani schools.

#### ***7.4.3.1 The centrality of reading as a culture***

A recommendation from this study that could start at schools and then move to the whole society is the centrality of reading as a culture in Omani schools among teachers and students. Reading is important for knowledge growth and learning; thus, it can positively contribute to students' better achievement and teachers' CPD. In the Omani society, the majority of teachers and students seem to rarely engage in reading habits. This suggests that reading needs to be activated in schools in Oman through providing easily accessible libraries and reading materials for teachers and students, as well as specifying a time each day for reading (e.g. 10 minutes after break time or any other time). During this time, everyone at school (teachers, students, the head teacher...) can choose a book, novel, newspaper or any other reading material according to his/her interest/need and read it, and they can even discuss their readings with their colleagues. I think that over time they will love reading and it could become a habit as the data from this study confirmed. After starting such an idea at school, it could be taken further to society by involving parents.

#### ***7.4.4 For policy makers***

In order to improve the current situation, policy makers at the MOE in Oman need to assess the policy governing the CPD of teachers. One of the issues that this study participants have called for is reducing workload on teachers so they can have more time for their CPD. Besides, the formal structured CPD activities such as INSET courses need to be credited to motivate teachers to participate in them which could also be used for teachers' promotion. Furthermore, there is a need for more collaboration between the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Higher Education to bridge any gap between the pre-service teacher education and the in-service teacher education and development. For example, they can collaborate regarding the practicum stage of teacher preparation through giving more focus on that stage and involving student teachers actively in schools to avoid any reality shock. In general, policy makers' roles should switch from

bureaucrats who aim at achieving organisational goals, to facilitators who should genuinely show their commitment on the CPD of teachers and teaching generally.

#### ***7.4.4.1 Teaching for democracy***

According to all the above recommendations, reforming the centralized top-down Omani CPD educational system is an essential requirement this study recommends. In this regard, democracy in education and teachers' CPD and the need to focus on values and morality in relation to education generally and teacher education and development in particular should be taken into consideration in the reform agenda. Such reform should start as early as selecting teachers for the job through stringent criteria as this study found. Moreover, teaching as a profession in Oman should focus on building character, community, humanitarianism, values and democracy in young people.

This suggests that teacher preparation programmes should focus on these issues to prepare teachers well for their job. In this respect, curricula need to be changed and updated with these issues. Moreover, teacher educators both at the pre-service context (those working at higher education institutions) as well as in the in-service context (those working for the Ministry of Education) in Oman needs lots of awareness raising tasks and training to educate novice teachers properly on these issues. After graduation, teachers also need to transfer these values and teach them to their students to prepare democratic generations of students. Teachers have an enormous responsibility of engaging and motivating their students to develop strong civic voices (Dolan & Kaufman, 2017). This advocates that teachers must create spaces where students can express their perspectives, listen to others, learn how to agree and disagree, and discover what is happening in their communities and the world.

One way of achieving the above is through activating the conundrum of modern life which is social media. This is because, social media (Face-book, Twitter, blogs, Instagram...) are part of our lived social experiences, and if schools are to be responsive, educators should consider how to effectively and intelligently engage with them. Krutka and Carpenter (2017) argue that social media presents not only opportunities for communication and engagement, but also opportunities

for connected learning and occasions for re-creation of identities and selves. They state that educators, thus, need to help students navigate online spaces so they may grow as netizens at the local, national and international levels. Social media is also a rich resource for teachers' CPD. It allows teachers to discuss and share ideas with thousands of other teachers, all over the world, and at a time that suits them best (Allison, 2014).

Having said that, all teachers' CPD opportunities in the in-service context (online, school-based, out of school, communities of practice...) should prepare teachers for their role of being democratic and preparing democratic generations of students. This means that any CPD initiative for teachers should involve more than learning knowledge and skills. Instead it should focus on values, social justice, and caring. Teachers need to be given the opportunity to grow socially, emotionally and intellectually (Hargreaves, 2003). This can be achieved through activating teachers' voice and their active participation in decision making regarding their CPD, and they should become critical reflective practitioners. In the case of novice teachers, teacher educators need to engage them in models of critical reflection in order to help them develop their own critical questions and their own voice. For example, new teachers need to be given the opportunity to engage in serious conversations about learning and teaching in the context of increasing pressures for accountability (Canestrari & Marlowe, 2013 in Dolan & Kaufman, 2017).

Most importantly, teachers should play the role of transformative intellectuals who strive not only for academic advancements but also for personal transformation, both for themselves and for their learners (Giroux, 2017; Kumaravadivelu, 2012). The findings from this study showed that teachers are voiceless; they are in a passive role whether regarding their CPD or other educational policies which reflects the centralised Omani educational system and the top-down CPD system. This means that teachers' professional status has been neglected in the policy formulation process. Thus, I propose that pre-service coursework in Oman should explore the Omani educational system and teachers roles and responsibilities in it. Hence, teacher educators must design courses that empower pre-service teachers to understand, evaluate and challenge the current educational system (Dolan & Kaufman, 2017). Not only teachers but also

academics, students, parents, community activists and other socially concerned groups must provide the first line of defense in trying to protect “public education as a resource vital to the moral life of the nation, and open to people and communities whose resources, knowledge and skills have often been viewed as marginal” (Giroux, 2017:20).

All the above requires not only a new revolutionary educational idea but also the desire to build a powerful social movement as a precondition to real change and free quality education for everyone. I hope that educators, of all groups in Oman would be the most vocal in challenging the centralized educational system by making clear that learning should be directed toward the public good, by both creating a culture of questioning and promoting democratic social change (Giroux, 2017). This is crucial because it seems that not only teacher education and development but the current educational system is generally suffering from being democratic.

In sum, all recommendations mentioned above and implications presented in the previous sections will be communicated to stakeholders and decision makers including teachers, practitioners, CPD coordinators and policy makers at the MOE in Oman using several approaches. First, I will take these into consideration when designing any future CPD event/activity for teachers, SETs and regional supervisors or participate in co-designing with colleague teacher trainers. Moreover, I will try to participate in local conferences done for English teachers as well as for other subject teachers in the different 11 governorates in Oman to present and disseminate these research findings. Furthermore, I will try to reach and talk to policy makers at the Education Council in Oman as well as policy makers at the Ministries of Education and Higher Education such as the Directorates General of Human Resource Development and the head of the Specialised Centre for Training Teachers to share the findings of this study, its' recommendations and implications with them. Finally, I will present papers at the ELT conference in Oman, regional conferences targeted at GCC countries (e.g. TESOL Arabia and Qatar TESOL) and also at other international conferences.

## 7.5 Study limitations and directions for future research

Given the scope of the study, there are inevitably several limitations to the study. In regard to aspects of research methodology, some of these have already been pointed out in Chapter 4. Yet, there are two major limitations related to the study scope that affect the generalizability of findings and the action research phase of the study. However, these limitations along with the overall findings of the current study do suggest directions for future research that might be carried out in a number of areas within the Omani educational context and that may also be applied to other contexts.

The current study was limited in scope especially in its qualitative phase where it focused only on three primary schools in one educational governorate in Oman. Thus, the findings may not be generalizable to teachers from other primary or secondary schools or to other educational governorates in Oman. In future studies this limitation could be addressed by incorporating a large number of participants from the other 10 educational governorates in Oman especially rural areas. It can also involve teachers from lower and upper secondary schools to investigate the effects of such participatory CPD forms on different level teachers.

Another limitation of this study could be the time scale of my action research. Although the findings of this study evidenced that the action research did result in some changes in the participant teachers' beliefs and practices related to CPD, the scope of the action research phase was limited to 3 months which means that the results may have changed and participants could have benefitted more with an increased time frame of the action research. Moreover, the power of my action-research to empower other TESOL teachers in Oman; those who did not take part in this study and to contribute to changing the CPD system in the country might be questioned. It could not be said that this research findings could possibly empower stakeholders at the MOE and thus changes could happen to the CPD system in Oman as a result of this study. Townsend (2014) stressed that one of the challenges with action research is trying to extend any learning, or change in practice, which might happened in the action research beyond the particular contexts they are associated with.

In this instance the question is on how action research can lead to changes which are more widespread than the immediate setting. The challenge remains in finding ways to build upon the conduct of particular applications of action research for developing knowledge and practices which can span beyond particular settings and can be of relevance across entire disciplines (Townsend, 2014). This suggests that a parallel study should be conducted to raise the awareness of stakeholders and decision makers at the MOE towards the findings of the current study about the participatory model of CPD. The recommended study could research their beliefs regarding these findings and whether it is possible to apply such a model in the Omani CPD system for teachers' professional learning and growth. Other suggestions for extending the study scope include investigation of the beliefs of teacher trainers, supervisors, and other subject teachers' not only English teachers.

This study highlighted that in the years to come, Oman will continue to face a crisis of teacher recruitment, retention and morale. Therefore, there is a need for new policies and practices to attract new generation into the profession and retain the competent ones. In this regard, future studies can investigate Omani teachers' passion for teaching by interviewing them at the pre-service stage of their preparation as teachers.

The findings of the current study emphasised the importance of teachers' own roles and responsibilities towards their CPD. Thus, it is recommended that further studies can be done to investigate how teacher educators and policy makers in Oman could raise teachers' awareness to take responsibility for their CPD. Moreover, the findings from this study showed that EFL teachers in Oman associated the term PD with attending formal training and INSET days. This suggests that more work needs to be carried out to examine ways of changing such thinking. The study also revealed that teachers seemed to be complaining that their needs are not met despite the MOE's yearly collection of these needs. It is obvious that more work should be done on how to meet teachers' needs.

Furthermore, there is a need for more critical forms of inquiry to be carried out in my context to investigate the quality of education generally and teacher education and development in particular. Recent voices from Oman also called for change

in the ELT research directions to critical dimensions that can advance Omani ELT at the micro and macro levels (Al-Issa, 2015). In this respect, Troudi and Jendli (2011:42) emphasize that “without a critical approach to issues of education, the nomothetic and at times erroneous nature of the claim to scientific objectivity by educational policies ... will continue to exert a lot of power and influence on the lives of generations of students”. Thus, critical and emancipatory kinds of research are needed in my context to contribute to changes and developments in educational policies and practices. An example of a critical topic and a major thought provoking area that should be researched in Oman is investigating democracy in education.

## **7.6 Personal reflections on the research journey**

The process of carrying out this research has been a great learning opportunity that has influenced me as a researcher in many ways. In particular, there are four significant points of personal learning during the course of my PhD journey.. First of all, with regard to my understanding of the educational philosophies in my context and internationally and how such philosophies are affecting the teaching profession in general and teacher education and development in particular. One of the key things that I have become more aware of is the pressure of globalization and the ways in which this is shaping policies for education provision generally and teachers’ CPD in particular and how globalization internationally is clearly suffering from a vast morality deficit.

Second, in relation to teachers’ CPD, this research journey provided a great opportunity to reflect on my experience as an in-service teacher trainer. The results of this study enhanced my understandings of teachers’ beliefs about teaching as a profession and its relation to teachers’ beliefs and experiences of CPD. The study further provided valuable data into teacher beliefs about CPD models, the factors affecting CPD success and failure, and teachers’ CPD needs. This could possibly help me in the future participate in planning professional development for TESOL teachers more strategically according to their needs and preferences.

Thirdly, reflecting on my work as teacher trainer, I have noticed that teachers have minimal input into planning CPD activities so the discovery that my ideas are ones that are shared with large numbers of other teacher trainers was exciting



and a revelation to me, to some extent. The opportunity to design, apply and evaluate a participatory model which sought to address this was another valuable learning opportunity for me. This research journey has also expanded my understanding of research processes and skills, both in terms of how to conduct social science research in general and how to carry out critical and emancipatory forms of research in particular.

Furthermore, during the action research phase of the study, I was both a researcher and a teacher trainer training my research participants on the participatory model of CPD. However, such roles can be challenging for the researcher and can raise questions regarding researcher's bias and subjectivity. In this respect, some authors suggested reflexivity as an important approach to overcome that. Reflexivity is the researcher's self-awareness and critical self-reflection on his or her own biases and predispositions as these may affect research processes and outcomes (Woods et al., 2016). I approached this in two main ways during the study. Firstly, I consciously tried to identify potential biases I might have. So, for example, I suspected that introducing participants to the participatory model of CPD might encourage me, albeit subconsciously, to expect to see evidence of participants' preferences of this model in comparison to the other forms of CPD used in Oman. Therefore, I added some questions to the interview schedule about participants' views of the disadvantages and challenges of applying such a participatory model in Oman. Secondly, I tried to overcome respondent bias by consciously trying to avoid leading questions during interviews, and also by reiterating to participants before all interviews that I was not expecting any particular answers and that I was interested in their real opinions on the participatory model (Robson, 2002).

In addition, during the course of this journey I realised that being a doctoral student is not just about getting a good degree. Studying for my Ph.D. at the University of Exeter was also a good opportunity to develop my personal and practical skills. I found it motivating and interesting to share my work with my fellow research students at the University of Exeter especially those from the TESOL field. For example, the group meetings my first supervisor arranged with his international research students frequently provided us with great opportunities to share knowledge, expertise and concerns with the supervisor and other colleagues. These meetings helped in finding ways of tackling any difficulties and

in maintaining interest to continue the work on the study. They also included wonderful moments of joy and delight which have undoubtedly helped in reducing the pressure caused by the demands of the study.

Most significantly, with boundless support from my supervisor, experienced lecturers and professional level staff, I have joined numerous professional development sessions to develop my researching skills, to learn how to publish my research in journals, and to manage time and stress , among many other skills. I have also got many opportunities to present my work at local conferences in the UK as well as international conferences, and to publish some of these. The gains from sharing my work with the wider audience were invaluable and tremendous. These exceptional experiences not only gave me insights into my work but also gave me a good idea about what it means to be part of the wider academic community.

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## Appendices

### Appendix (1) Literature review studies

**Table 3.1 International and local studies of teachers' beliefs about teaching**

<u>Source</u>	<u>Focus</u>	<u>Context</u>
Gao & Xu (2014)	EFL teachers' motivation to teach and professional commitment in China's hinterland regions	10 EFL teachers' in China
Har Lam (2012)	Teachers' Motivation to Teach in Hong Kong	38 (beginning teachers) in Hong Kong
Karavas (2010)	Investigating the motivation and job satisfaction levels of Greek EFL teachers	400 EFL teachers in Greece
Klassen & Anderson (2009)	Investigated the level of job satisfaction and the sources of job dissatisfaction in 2007 and compared the results with the results from a similar study published in 1962	210 secondary teachers in southwest England (63% female)
WEIQI (2007)	Secondary school teachers job satisfaction and its relationship with attrition and work enthusiasm	230 secondary school teachers in Japan
Day, Flores & Viana (2007)	Effects of national policies on teachers' sense of professionalism	240 teachers (both primary and secondary) in Portugal and in England
Manuel & Hughes (2006)	Exploring pre-service teachers' motivations for choosing to teach	a cohort of pre-service teacher-education students, undertaking a five-year, full-time combined undergraduate and initial teacher education degree program at the University of Sydney, Australia.
Richardson & Watt(2005)	Exploring reasons behind graduates' decisions to pursue teaching as a career	152 (114 females and 38 males) 1-year pre-service teacher education program-candidates for a Graduate Diploma in Secondary Education at a Melbourne University. Australia. All respondents held previous degree qualifications
Albelushi (2003)	A Study of Omani Teachers' Careers: A Journey from Enthusiasm...	In Oman: 29 female secondary school pupils with varying levels of English language proficiency (their proficiency level was determined on the basis of their English language teachers' judgement), 13 male and female university student teachers in their final term at Sultan Qaboos University (Expected to become English teachers), and 45 preparatory and secondary female EFL teachers. The teacher sample was randomly drawn from two regions - Muscat and Al-Dhahira.

**Table 3.2.a International studies of teachers' beliefs about CPD**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Context</b>
Vries, van de Grift and Jansen (2013)	How teachers' beliefs about learning and teaching relate to their continuing professional development	260 Dutch secondary school teachers
Borg (2011)	The impact of in-service teacher education on language teachers' beliefs	6 female British Delta (Diploma in English language teaching to adults) Course participants in the UK
Wai Yan (2011)	Teachers' perceptions and experiences of continuing professional development	3 Primary schools in Hong Kong
Maskit (2011)	Teachers' attitudes toward pedagogical changes during various stages of professional development	520 teachers in primary schools, junior high schools, and high schools in Israel.
Phipps (2007)	The impact of four months of an 18-month course on the beliefs about grammar teaching.	A teacher of English in Turkey

**Table 3.2.b Local studies on teachers' beliefs about CPD**

<b>Source</b>	<b>Focus</b>	<b>Context</b>
A'Dhahab (2009)	EFL teachers' perceptions and practices regarding reflective writing	English teachers and Senior English teachers at 13 primary and 4 secondary schools in Dhofar Governorate in Oman.
Al-Rasbiah, (2009)	Peer Observation: teachers' beliefs and practices	6 English teachers teaching in Sharqia South Governorate in Oman.
Al-Jabri (2009)	Post-Basic teachers' attitudes towards reflection	60 English teachers (38 female and 22 male) Omanis and expatriates teaching in Muscat Governorate in Oman.
Al-Sidairi (2009)	Post-Basic school English teachers' views about peer observation	All English teachers teaching grades 11 and 12 in Dhahira Govern in Oman.
Al-Belushi (2009)	English teachers' perceptions of professional development activities	A random sample of schools in Batinah North Governorate in Oman. All English teachers in these schools.
Bani Oraba (2008)	Teachers beliefs about peer observations	110 teachers from 12 schools in Oman.
AL-Sawafi (2006)	Teachers and supervisors perceptions of effective supervisory visits	42 male and 40 female English teachers from Al-Dhahira Governorate in Oman.
AL-Habsi (2004)	Peer Observation in ELT in Oman: how it is carried out and teachers attitudes about it	65 teachers from 15 schools in Sharqia North Governorate in Oman.
AL-Ghafri (2002)	Teachers' attitudes to classroom observation in Oman.	50 English teachers from Dhahira Governorate in Oman.

**Table 3.4 International/local studies that investigate the training model and INSET**

<u>Source</u>	<u>Focus</u>	<u>Context</u>
Enever (2014)	Primary English teacher education and development in Europe	Over 1,400 children, their teachers, school principals, and parents of primary FL learning in state schools across seven European country contexts (Croatia, England, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, Spain, and Sweden).
Laime (2004)	The influence of a programme on teachers' attitude, perceived methodology and practice before and after the in-service period	4 Japanese teachers of English taking part in an overseas teacher-training programme designed to support a major curriculum innovation.
Hayes (1997)	Examining an in-service training session developed to help teachers to cope with large classes	Participants of the INSET course (EFL teachers in Thailand)
Pacek (1996)	Post course evaluation of an INSET programme for Japanese secondary school teachers of English	One-year INSET programme for Japanese secondary school teachers of English (the participants on this course are junior or senior high school EFL teachers with at least five years teaching practice)
AL-Balushi (2009)	Impact of an INSET on teachers views and their reported practices in teaching stories to young learners	6 English teachers and 1 teacher trainer
AL-Rasbiah (2007)	In-service training needs of EFL teachers in Oman	338 grade 5-12 EFL teachers (males and females-Omanis and non-Omanis) 80 supervisors and 17 teacher trainers
AL-Ghatrifi (2006)	An investigation into English teachers perceptions of the INSET PRIT course in Oman	35 EFL teachers from Muscat region in Oman.
AL-Yafae (2004)	Omani teachers attitudes to INSET courses	50 EFL teachers (25 male and 25 female) from different regions in Oman

**Table 3.5 Local research studies investigated the role of SETs in Oman**

<b><u>Source</u></b>	<b><u>Focus</u></b>	<b><u>Context</u></b>
Al-Suleimi (2009)	The characteristics of post-lesson discussions	Four pairs of SETs and English teachers (8 participants)
Al-Abrawi (2009)	Senior English teachers' views of the benefits of post-lesson discussions.	Seven SETs from Muscat Governorate in Oman.
AL-Bahri (2009)	First-year Omani English teachers: Expectations, development and support	4 first year Omani teachers of English.
AL-Blooshi (2009)	Beginning teachers' perceptions of their first year's teaching experience	All beginning English teachers at Batinah North Governorate who were appointed in the academic year 2006/7 in lower secondary schools. 65 questionnaires were distributed and 32 were returned making a response rate of 49%.
AL-Sinani (2009)	Promoting reflection through post-observation discussions	3 Senior English teachers and 3 English teachers
AL-Kharboushi (2005)	Senior English teachers feedback skills during post lesson discussions in Omani schools	8 participants (3 teachers, 3 SETs, 2 supervisors)
AL-Shizawi (2005)	English teachers attitudes towards post lesson discussion in Oman	100 teachers (50 male and 50 female) from North Batinah Governorate in Oman
AL-Zedjali (2004)	Fostering professional development in post lesson discussions: perceptions of teachers and supervisors	27 out of 45 questionnaires from English teachers and 4 interviews
AL-Bedwawy (2002)	Promoting teachers' professional development: New roles and challenges for SETs	19 SETs from North Batinah Governorate in Oman.

**Table 3.6 International studies evaluating CPD programmes**

<u>Source</u>	<u>Focus</u>	<u>Context</u>
Muijs & Lindsay (2008)	Levels and methods of evaluating continuing professional development	223 CPD coordinators and 416 teachers from a randomly selected sample of 1000 schools in England
Hustler et al., (2003)	Investigating the CPD strategy ` Learning and Teaching	Over 2500 teachers in 22 schools in England.
Powell et al., (2003)	Impact of CPD at individual, classroom and organizational levels	Teachers who participated in the B.A or M.A in education programmes at Anglia Polytechnic university.
Edmonds & Lee (2002)	Evaluating teachers' feelings about continuing professional development	81 staff from 18 case study schools (primary, secondary and special schools).

**Table 3.7: Five levels of CPD evaluation**

<u>Evaluation Level</u>	<u>What questions are addressed?</u>	<u>How will information be gathered?</u>	<u>What is measured or assessed?</u>	<u>How will Information be used?</u>
1. Participants' Reactions	<input type="checkbox"/> Did they like it? <input type="checkbox"/> Was their time well spent? <input type="checkbox"/> Did the material make sense? <input type="checkbox"/> Will it be useful? <input type="checkbox"/> Was the leader knowledgeable and helpful? <input type="checkbox"/> Were the refreshments fresh and tasty? <input type="checkbox"/> Was the room the right temperature? <input type="checkbox"/> Were the chairs comfortable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Questionnaires administered at the end of the session.	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial satisfaction with the experience	<input type="checkbox"/> To improve program design and delivery
2. Participants' Learning	<input type="checkbox"/> Did participants acquire the intended knowledge and skills?	<input type="checkbox"/> Paper-and-pencil instruments <input type="checkbox"/> Simulations <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstrations <input type="checkbox"/> Participant reflections (oral and/or written) <input type="checkbox"/> Participant portfolios	<input type="checkbox"/> New knowledge and skills of participants	<input type="checkbox"/> To improve program content, format, and organization

<p>3. Organization Support &amp; Change</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What was the impact on the organization?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Did it affect organizational climate and procedures?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Was implementation advocated, facilitated, and supported?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Was the support public and overt?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Were problems addressed quickly and efficiently?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Were sufficient resources made available?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Were successes recognized and shared?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> District and school records</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Minutes from follow-up meetings.</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Questionnaires</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Structured interviews with participants and district or school administrators</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Participant portfolios</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> The organization's advocacy, support, accommodation, facilitation, and recognition.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To document and improve organizational support</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To inform future change efforts</li> </ul>
<p>4. Participants' Use of New Knowledge and Skills</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Did participants effectively apply the new knowledge and skills?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> (How are participants using what they learned?)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> (What challenge are participants encountering?)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Questionnaires</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Structures interviews with participants and their supervisors</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Participant reflections (oral and/or written)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Participant portfolios</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Direct observations</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Video or audio tapes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Degree and quality of implementation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To document and improve the implementation of program content</li> </ul>
<p>5. Student Learning Outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> What was the impact on students?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Did it affect student performance or achievement?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Did it influence students' physical or emotional well-being?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Are students more confident as learners?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Is student attendance improving?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Are dropouts decreasing?</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> (How does the new learning affect other aspects of the organization?)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student records</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> School records</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Questionnaires</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Structured interviews with students, parents, teachers, and/or administrators</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Participant portfolios</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Student learning outcomes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Cognitive (Performance &amp; Achievement)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Affective (Attitudes &amp; Dispositions)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Psychomotor (Skills &amp; Behaviors)</li> </ul> </li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> (Student Work Samples)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> State/Local Assessments)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> (Performance Assessments)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To focus and improve all aspects of program design, implementation, and follow-up</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> To demonstrate the overall impact of professional development</li> </ul>

Source: Guskey, T. R. (2000).

## Appendix 2: The online questionnaire

### Survey: Teachers Continuing Professional Development

#### Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Questionnaire for Teachers

Dear Colleague,

My name is Khadija Al Balushi and I am a doctorate student at the University of Exeter/UK. I am investigating the continuous professional development of in-service English teachers in the Sultanate of Oman as part of my P.h.D thesis. I appreciate your time and effort in answering this questionnaire.

The questionnaire consists of five parts:

- \* Part A includes questions about your views about teaching as a profession.
- \* Part B includes questions about your views regarding continuing professional development.
- \* Part C includes questions about your continuing professional development experience.
- \* Part D includes questions about the factors affecting your continuing professional development.
- \* Part E includes questions about participating in your professional development and some additional information.

Your cooperation as English teachers/senior English teachers in completing this would be highly appreciated.

All your responses to questions will be treated with strictest confidence, your personal details will not be disclosed to any party, and your responses will be used only for research purposes. I would like to emphasize that participation is entirely voluntary and you can withdraw from the study later for a good reason.

If you have any questions or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at [kdaa201@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:kdaa201@exeter.ac.uk)

Thank you in advance for your valuable insights!

<mailto:kdaa201@exeter.ac.uk>

I Agree

**Part A: Views about Teaching as a Profession**

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements by ticking the appropriate box (Tick one box only)

	Strongly agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1. The task of teaching has been exactly what I expected before I became a teacher. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2. I feel that working closely with students is the most fascinating aspect of my work. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3. My status as an EFL teacher in my school is satisfying to me. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4. My opportunities for promotion are satisfying to me. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5. I feel my workload (teaching and administrative work) is heavy. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6. My students' motivation levels for learning create great stress to me. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7. Teaching is a challenging job. *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

8. What are your main reasons for entering the teaching profession? Tick the appropriate box (Tick all that apply) \*

- Status of the profession
- Salary
- To serve my country
- Good working conditions
- Long holidays
- The desire to work with students
- It is a stimulating job
- Job security
- To learn new skills and knowledge
- Teaching fits in with my lifestyle/family situation
- The only option I have according to my marks in high school

Others (Please specify)



9. Why did you choose to become an English teacher? (Tick one answer only) \*

- I have always had good grades in English subject at school
- I can have better chances if I want to change to another job
- To contribute to the improvement of English language teaching in Oman
- Others (Please specify)

10. Having worked as a teacher for some time, how satisfied are you about this job? \*

- Very satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Dissatisfied
- Very Dissatisfied

**Part B: Views about Continuing Professional Development**

Please tick one box to say how important you feel these activities are in helping English teachers' to develop professionally.

	Very important	Important	Unsure	Not important	Not important at all
11. Participating in Conferences and Symposia *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12. Reading professional materials (e.g books & articles) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13. Attending training courses/workshops (e.g in methodology) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14. Peer observation *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15. Coaching/Mentoring by a senior English teacher, supervisor, teacher trainer (e.g through observation, pre-post observation discussions...etc) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16. Doing action research (e.g researching a problematic issue in your own classroom) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17. Participating in communities of practice (e.g online discussions) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18. Higher academic study (e.g M.A, Doctorate) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Are there any other activities which English teachers can participate in and help their continuous professional development? \*

Yes

No

If yes, what are these activities?

20. Please tick the appropriate box to say how you feel professional development initiatives (e.g conferences, courses...etc) can help English language teachers (Tick all that apply) \*

Increase teachers' subject knowledge

Teachers develop certain teaching skills that are crucial for their work

Teachers teach more effectively

Teachers manage their classrooms more effectively

Teachers develop self-confidence

Teachers develop other professional skills (e.g communication skills...)

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Teachers get better employment opportunities

Teachers get better promotion opportunities

Improve the standard of pupils' learning/outcomes in schools

Improve the standard of teaching in schools

Others (Please specify)

**Part C: Continuing Professional Development Experience**

Please tick **one box** to say how often you have experienced the following types of continuing professional development either within or outside your organization (Ministry of Education) since you started your job.

	Always	Often	Sometimes	Seldom	Never
21. Participating in Conferences and Symposia *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22. Reading professional materials (e.g books, articles & online materials) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23. Attending training courses/workshops (language, methodology, research....etc) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24. Peer observation *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
25. Coaching/Mentoring by a senior English teacher, supervisor, teacher trainer (e.g through observation, pre-post lesson observation discussions... etc) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26. Doing action research *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27. Participating in communities of practice (e.g study groups, online discussions) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28. Higher academic study (e.g M.A, Doctorate) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

29. Are there any other continuing professional development activities you participated in since you started your job? \*

Yes

No

(Please specify)

30. Which of the following has encouraged you to take a continuing professional development initiative? (Tick **all that apply**) \*

My School/other schools (e.g senior English teachers)

The Ministry of Education

Other Agencies (e.g British Council)

Myself (I chose the activity and paid for it)

Others (Please specify)

31. Continuing professional development activities organized by the Ministry of Education meet English teachers' needs. \*

- Agree
- Disagree

32. In what ways, has the continuing professional development activities available to you failed to meet your professional needs? \*

33. Over the next few years, what do you see as your key continuing professional development needs and what specific type of activities would be necessary to meet them effectively?(State at least one of these needs) Need..... Met By..... \*

**Part D: Factors Affecting Continuing Professional Development**

34. Which of the following programmes/activities organized by the Ministry of Education you participated in and noticed it did have an impact on your professional practice (Tick all that apply) \*

- C1 Course
- C2 Course
- Post Basic Course
- Curriculum support workshops
- Senior English Teachers' Course
- Research for Professional Development Course
- Regional ELT conferences
- NET Course (New English Teachers' course)
- Language course (intermediate, upper intermediate...etc)
- TKT online course
- Others (Please specify)

35. In what ways, did the professional development activities you experienced have had an impact on your professional practice? (Tick all that apply) \*

- Inspired me as a teacher
- Changes in my attitudes/views about teaching
- Changes in my teaching practice
- Improved my subject knowledge
- Self-confidence
- Increased collaboration with my colleagues
- Improved the standard of my pupils' learning/outcomes
- Improved my school performance generally
- Others (Please specify)

36. How have the continuing professional development activities over the last 5 years impacted upon your motivation to teach? \*

- Very positively
- Positively
- No impact
- Negatively
- Very negatively

\*Please tick one box to indicate to what extent have the following factors affected your access to continuing professional development.

	Facilitated a lot	Facilitated a little	Neither Facilitated Nor Inhibited	Inhibited a little	Inhibited a lot
37. work load *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
38. Location of CPD activity *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
39. Timing of CPD activity *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40. Suitability of activity (e.g relevant content) *	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

---

41. Personal circumstances \*

<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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42. Are there any other factors which affected your access to continuing professional development? \*

- Yes
- No
- (Please specify)

43. In your experience, what factors contribute to successful continuing professional development? \*

44. In your experience, what factors result in unsuccessful continuing professional development? \*

Part E: Participating in Continuing Professional Development

45. Please tick the appropriate box to say who has been involved in making decisions about your participation in professional development activities. (Tick all that apply) \*

- Myself
- My Senior English Teacher
- My English Supervisor
- My Head Teacher
- The English Teacher trainer
- Officials from the MOE
- Others (Please specify)

46. Do you think English teachers should be involved in their continuing professional development process (e.g deciding the content of training courses...)? \*

- Yes
- No
- If Yes, in what capacity/roles? if No, give main reasons?

47. One of aims of this study is to understand what 'Continuing professional development' means for English teachers. What does the term Continuing Professional Development mean to you? \*

48. Are there any other comments you wish to make about Continuing Professional Development? \*

**Additional Information:** For the following questions, please tick one answer only

49. Your gender: \*

- Male  
 Female

50. Your job title: \*

- Teacher  
 Senior English teacher

51. Your age: \*

- 22-26 years  
 27-31 years  
 32-36 years  
 37-41 years  
 42 years or over

52. Your experience in teaching English: \*

- 1-5 years  
 6-10 years  
 11-15 years  
 16-20 years  
 21 years or over

53. Educational phase you are teaching in: \*

- Primary (C1)  
 Preparatory (C2)  
 Secondary (PB)

54. Your highest Educational Level: \*

- Diploma in English Teaching  
 Bachelor Degree  
 Masters Degree  
 Doctorate Degree

55. Educational Governorate you are working in: \*

\* I would also like to interview teachers to discuss the issues covered here in more detail. Would you be interested in being interviewed? \*

- Yes  
 No




If YES , please provide your details below:


First Name:

Last Name:

Phone:

Email Address:

Share This Survey:   

Survey Software Powered by  QuestionPro

### Appendix 3: Semi structured interview (1)

<b>Interview Date:</b>	<b>Venue:</b>	<b>Interviewee (Code):</b>	<b>Gender: M / F</b>
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*Thank you for being willing to take part in this interview. Can I assure you that you will remain completely anonymous and no record of the interview will be kept with your names on them.*

	<b>The main question</b>	<b>Follow up Qs and prompts if necessary</b>
1.Views about the job	A. Can I first ask you about your experience of working as an English language teacher?	Anything you would like to share with me regarding this job?
	B. What does teaching as a profession means to you?	In what ways is this job different from other jobs?
	C. Are you happy with this profession?	If yes, why? If no, why not?
	D. Do you have moments of doubt about your ability to continue in teaching?	If yes, why? If no, what is special about this job that you like to continue with it?
2. Views about CPD	A. What does the term CPD means to you?	Can you give me examples of CPD activities to explain the term for me?
	B. Do you think there is a relationship between teaching as a job and CPD?	If yes, in what ways? If no, give main reasons?
	C. Do you think English teachers should participate in CPD initiatives e.g. courses/conferences...?	If yes, how often? If no, why not?
	D. In your view, who is responsible for teachers' CPD?	e.g. the MOE, the teacher, the SET...
3.CPD Experiences	A. Can you share with me all the CPD activities that you have participated in since you started your job?	e.g. courses, team teaching ...etc. Out of these, which activity was the most beneficial for you? Why?
	B. Do you think the CPD activities you joined in met your needs?	If yes, in what ways? If no, why not?
	C. Have you acquired any knowledge and skills as a result of participating in CPD activities?	If yes, can you give me some examples?
	D. Have you used any of these in your classroom?	If yes, in what ways? If no, why not?
4. About the future	A. In your view, what is the role of the MOE in English teachers' CPD?	What do you think should be done to improve teachers CPD?
	B. What is the role of teachers themselves in their CPD?	Should they be involved in their CPD process?
	C. Should they take responsibility and initiative for their PD?	If yes, in what ways? If no, why not?
	D. Thank you very much for helping me and giving up your time. Can I finally ask you if you think there is any aspect of your experience of teaching as a profession or PD that has not been covered in this interview?	If yes, can you tell me about it?



## Appendix 4: First focus group interview transcript

### Focus Group Interview (1) Transcript

Researcher: Thank you for being willing to take part in this interview, can I assure again that your original names will not be included in the study and the data will be used for research purposes only.

Badriya: Thanks Miss

Researcher: It is a group interview, so I will ask the question to the three of you and you are free to manage the discussion the way you like.

Badriya: Better one by one

Researcher: In these questions we are focussing on your view your views I mean as a SET, first of all, how do you feel about the reaction of the English staff you are working with towards the teaching profession, do they like the job?

Karima: Some of them, I mean some of them they like the job, try to do their best try even to search for new things in the job and in education and update themselves, while others not, and the problem is that those who don't like the job they try to affect the others

Badriya: Yes that it is true, they do effect on each other and some are easily affected in a negative way

Karima: For example, this year, some new teachers who have been recently transferred to our school, we gave them grade 1 to try to teach it with the jolly phonics because they like it and like younger kids, and the teachers who taught them last year liked grade 1 and jolly phonics teaching, however, they tell those new teachers some negative ideas and that it is hard to work with grade 1 and children do cry a lot in class, I don't know how you can continue with those children and such kinds of things. I told her don't try to give those teachers bad impressions about it, you liked and enjoyed teaching the same grade last year...

Laila: Yes, children are different and classes are different, they shouldn't tell this to any new teacher

Badriya: Yes they are different

Karima: I don't know, the way they think is like that

Badriya: It is a problem of a generation

Karima: Yes they are negative people those new generations

Researcher: Negative

Badriya: The problem is those negative teachers who always say negative ideas to their colleagues and affect the way they look at the job

Laila: Yes, in every school there are the two types, the type who are very positive and love their job and the type who are very negative and hate the job, for example, I have some teachers who are overloaded but they take extra lessons to help their students, they teach more than 21 lessons a day and take extra lessons while others only have 14 lessons but never take extra lessons

Badriya: Hhhhha those kinds even distribute their own lessons to other teachers...

Laila: That is right.. sometimes I walk around to see how my teachers are working not a classroom visit but only looking at what those teachers are doing I see some teachers till the end of lesson and when the lesson is over are still teaching while others are not, they are sitting on their chairs and playing with their smart phones...

Researcher: Ok, now you the SET is a mentor at school and every day you are with those teachers, no supervisor or trainer is coming every day, so what is your role in such cases?

Laila: My role is to follow up those teachers, for instance, in the meetings I ensured that through my moving around classes some teachers are working really hard while others are not, they are giving tasks to students and they are playing with their phones

Karima: Yes it is a language lesson, how is it taught in 15 minutes out of the 40 minutes lesson time, we do have teachers doing this...

Laila: Yes, I told them the lesson is 40 minutes and you should be teaching for 40 minutes, and when you give tasks to students you should facilitate, guide and support them not play with your phones...I told them you are taking salary for this...

Karima: Sometimes they have only 3 lessons a day out of 8 lessons per day but they are taking their salary for the whole day

Researcher: Even for the weekend the salary is there, isn't it?

Karima: Yes they do, it is a problem of ethics miss

Researcher: Ethics... are missing you mean?

Karima: Yes they do for new teachers, but not for old ones, I mean that is why the old teachers are very attached to the job, they work so hard in their job...

Laila: and they are so enthusiastic

Badriya: Yes, you feel they have energetic in teaching, always work hard and their outcomes are really very good

Researcher: Ok, what can we do to encourage the new generation be like the old ones, what are your roles as SETs?

Badriya: I personally always concentrate on being positive and encourage my teachers to be positive and think positively towards things, I tell them you will hear many discouraging things but try not to give these a hearing ear or even don't pay attention to these... my group are 5 teachers + me and I always encourage them, we became like sisters I motivate them, they told me that some teachers in their previous schools were telling them not to work hard, it always doesn't work, I told them no this is not right, I suggested the idea of each teacher teach the same class next year I mean move a level with their own students, and I see that this worked really good and the outcomes in our school became better, teachers have very good relationships with their children, and some of those teachers are even from other regions but they disagreed to transfer to their regions because they liked the school the team they are working with, their students and everything like teacher Amna you saw her miss.

Researcher: Yes, she told me that she liked the school a lot and does not want to change to another school in her home region

Laila: Conversely I have a teacher who is always taught in C2 school since she graduated and this year she was transferred to my school but she hates the school, the students she even does not accept the idea of teaching in C1 schools, she feels that good teachers should teach C2 and post basic and the bad teachers are teaching C1

Researcher: Really?

Badriya: Yes, true, look miss I taught C2 and secondary and then C1 and I love teaching C1 and feel that it is more challenging than C2 and secondary teaching but I still like it a lot

Laila: Yes true the best teachers should be teaching C1

Badriya: Yes because in C2 most of the work is on students and they depend on themselves a lot while in C1 the majority of the work is on the teacher because he/she is starting with those students giving them the very basics

Karima: Yes because if you teach students well in C1 the English language they will be ready and less work are on C2 and secondary teachers

Laila: Yes I tried both Cycles, I taught C2 then C1 but really there is more work on C1 teachers more effort in trying to teach those students, so the best teachers should be teaching C1 schools not the worst and the problem is even the ministry sometimes they punish some teachers who are not disciplined or have healthy problems by transferring them to C1 schools, how it comes?

Badriya: Yes true, for example, now we have a teacher who was teaching in a secondary school and she is transferred to my school, when she went to ask the educational governorate, they said to her that she had the worst report written on her assessment last year and because of that she is transferred to a C1 school

Laila: She has been transferred for healthy reasons...

Researcher: So do you think such a negative view towards C1 teaching and those teachers who have negative ideas towards the job can be changed through professional development?

Badriya: Yes, this should be the attitude from the ministry and they should work for that... they need some programmes to change teachers attitudes towards the job and towards everything

Researcher: Do you think the professional development programmes that are currently run for teachers either from the ministry or inside your schools are effective?

Badriya: Yes I feel the ones at schools are effective in my view

Karima: In the last few years supervisors started contacting SETs to either nominate teacher for workshops or suggest the idea and see who is willing, the problem is that sometimes 4 teachers in your school need to join a specific professional development programme but due to the numbers they either choose one from the school or sometimes even no one because there are many other teachers in the waiting list from other schools

Laila: In fact professional development programmes and activities run by the ministry currently are not enough, they are very few each year and teachers need more, some teachers wait for 5 years to get a chance of professional development from the ministry

Karima: There should be more chances

Researcher: Is it done rotationally for teachers?

Karima: Yes, but miss some teachers want more than one chance, in fact some teachers fight for all the available chances, any work shop, and course, any visit to other schools, personally I always try to give each one a chance at least

Researcher: Does this work? Are teachers happy with this way of giving professional development opportunities?

Karima: Yes miss but the problem one teacher is only allowed from each school and if you have 8 teachers like in my case sometimes it is really difficult, a teacher can wait for 8 years to get this chance

Researcher: Don't they get any chances to attend SQU conference?

Karima: They do, 2 teachers in my school they attended

Laila: From their own pocket

Karima: No in the case of my school, they were funded from the ministry

Researcher: May be you mean the professionals course not the conference

Karima: Yes I mean the course in SQU, no I haven't heard about the conference

Laila: In my school, I attended this conference several times and three of my teachers attended from our own budget

Badriya: No one tell us about this conference

Karima: Even we, no one told us

Laila: No they send an email each year to remind us and the email show the way of registering for the conference

Researcher: There is the Abu Dhabi TESOL conference and the Dubai TESOL, they are close to where you live, you haven't been there?

Karima: Yes we heard about it but sometimes also we cannot because we have other family responsibilities... I think there should be like a circular from the educational governorate to make some teachers free to attend such conferences even we will pay for it

Laila: There are few chances for teachers to attend professional development programmes or activities

Karima: Very few chances

Badriya: Yes I totally agree,

Karima: Sometimes they ask us to nominate only one teacher, and its difficult

Laila: Look miss, we SETS each year do a professional development plan at school and we try to do many activities to help teachers with their PD, these plans we set according to the previous years assessment and teachers needs and so on

Badriya: Peer observation, many peer observation we do at school

Researcher: How do you decide on which programmes/activities do teachers need?

Badriya: Miss, in the system each teachers report are there, it includes their needs, so we collect these needs and plan our activities accordingly.

Researcher: Ok, by the way I need a copy of these PD plans

Badriya: Ok miss

Researcher: Ok, what about the PD activities you carry out at school like peer observation, do they benefit from these?

Laila: Yes, there are many peer observation chances and other PD activities carried out at school, and teachers' benefit a lot from these especially the peer observation and model lessons, demonstration lessons, and the workshops

Badriya: Yes they do

Karima: Yes a lot especially the peer observation

Badriya: We also do it according to teachers' weaknesses, for example, this teacher is weak in teaching this skill and this teacher needs something on the other skill, so we plan our workshops according to these and based on the needs of teachers and the skills they are weak in.

Researcher: Ok, you don't arrange exchange school visits and other activities between you as SETs?

Badriya: Yes we do

Karima: It depends on supervisors to make also plans between schools, we cannot go out at any time, and also head teachers

Researcher: Head teachers must agree?

Karima: We cannot go out any time or our teachers go out of school at any time, it needs lots of pre-arrangements

Laila: Yes, we did last year a day called professional day, 2 model lessons and one workshop and we invited schools

Researcher: Don't you feel if you work in groups it will be better?

Badriya: But this can be done only half of a day, you cannot take all your teachers for a whole day, we also do open days, now in our region we do a willayah open day, many schools participate together in this event which is all about professional development

Karima: Yes it will, last year we did a students' open day, it will be a good idea also to do a teachers' open day

Researcher: In such events, do you discuss issues teachers need like the teaching ethics we just talked about?

Karima: Honestly no, we didn't do that before

Badriya: The professional development also face the problem of making teachers free to join such events

Researcher: Can such events be done online, since teachers now are very good at technology? E.g. via the whats-app?

Laila: Yes, that is true

Badriya: I agree, I even suggested that this jolly phonics and shared reading workshop to be done online, so teachers can refer to it later on when they need it if they teach after some times, they can refer to the workshop whenever it is needed

Laila: Yes I agree, I have a teacher who loves technology, so she joined many courses online

Badriya: The technology is now in every body's life, so it should be utilized in teachers professional development

Researcher: Ok, do you think teachers can pay for their professional development?

Laila: Yes, for some of them ok

Karima: Yes

Badriya: Yes, for example, I have teacher (...the name of the teacher was mentioned) who loves to attend many PD programmes, she even did her masters and paid for it

Researcher: Do you encourage teachers to pay for their professional development, such as attending international conferences (like TESOL Arabia)? or encourage them to write proposals for conferences and participate in them?

Laila: Yes we talk to them and it depends on them

Researcher: Ok, what about you as SETS, are you attending PD activities?

Laila: Yes

Badriya: Yes

Researcher: Ok, have you benefitted from these activities?

Badriya: Yes, I attended the SET course and it was so beneficial for me, it was so practical and I did a research, action research, it was a whole year course and we learnt many skills about coaching and mentoring teachers, conducting post lesson discussions, writing reports, even I carried out an action research, in general it was a very useful course.

Laila: For me it wasn't that long, it was a short course and no action research was there but I benefited from it

Karima: For me it was only 3 days

Laila: I also did the C1 course and it was very beneficial but the SET course was not that much beneficial because it was very short

Karima: Yes I agree, the longer the course the better, short courses are not that much useful

Researcher: Ok, the last question, what do you think the Ministry should do to improve English language teaching in Oman and the PD of English teachers and SETs?

Karima: SETs should be released only for their coaching and mentoring roles, how to support their teachers

Badriya: Yes, they should not teach and should be released to contribute to teachers' professional development

Laila: Yes, SETs should be released from teaching and given more roles for supporting teachers

Karima: I think it should be given to supervisors to cascade training instead of teachers

Researcher: Ok what else do you need as SETs?

Badriya: How to motivate teachers, how to manage workload? How to deal with difficult teachers?

Laila: How to build a team, how to work with negative teachers...

Badriya: Our teachers also need some workshops on how to control work stress, how to be positive...etc

Karima: How to appreciate the job, teaching Ethics...how to control your time

Laila: How we can make a real team, team building

Badriya: In my school, we do PD at the beginning of the year and at the end of the year according to teachers' needs and the head teacher sits with us as senior teachers of different subjects and ask us what we can do for teachers' PD and we suggest some ideas, these topics are done generally for all teachers not only English teachers e.g how to control students...etc

Researcher: Ok, I have heard that each school get a budget from the Ministry for teachers PD, how do they spend this money?

Laila: Yes, in the last years

Karima: Not in all schools

Laila: In my school, the head teacher brings some professionals in the field from the universities and they do presentations and workshops for teachers, last year three professional came to our school and did such workshops

Karima: In my school, no, only teachers are asked to prepare some topics and do them

Badriya: Even in my school the head teacher brought a professional from outside the country to do a session for teachers of all subjects not only English teachers

Laila: Once the head teachers sent us some topics to choose from, it was a professional person who did this workshop and we choose the topic of how to be a positive person in life

Badriya: Even our head teacher always bring experts to sessions for us at school on different topics

Researcher: Ok, do you have anything else you want to add?

Badriya: No thanks

Karima: No

Laila: I think we covered everything, Thanks

Researcher: Thank you all.

## **Appendix 5: Second focus group interview transcript**

### **Focus Group Interview (2) Transcript**

Researcher: Thank you for being willing to take part in this interview, may I assure you again that you will remain completely anonymous and no record of the interview will be kept with your names on them, I will only use the data for research purposes. The first thing I want to ask you about is actually the cascading you did for the jolly phonics and shared reading workshops, how was the process of doing it, I want to know the whole story about it?

Karima: At the beginning I did for grade 3 and 4 teachers the reading time because at the beginning I wasn't able to release except those teachers and then I decided to do the rest of things like jolly phonics and shared reading after some days

Researcher: Ok, how did you do the reading time and where did you get the reading time package or materials from?

Karima: Laila contacted me to do a joint workshop because her supervisor did this workshop with another SET at another school, so the supervisor suggested that they can do the cascading together more than 1 school, it was a good idea, I tried to release my teachers and arrange their timetables so they can join these cascading, I released grade 1 and 2 teachers, we did it in 2 days in Laila's school and a third SET attended with us to help us in this cascading, we were co-training the jolly phonics and shared reading workshops together, I mean the three of us, Laila's supervisor was present, so she was sharing us in the discussions, the next training day also my supervisor attended with us... the reading time package we got from our trainers when they did the workshops for us as well as the package for the jolly phonics and shared reading, they talked to us about cascading this training and they gave us a cascading package including the instructions and the handouts, also we have clear instructions in the teachers' guide book about how to teach these tasks (the reading time, the shared reading and the jolly phonics) the reading time has tasks for grades 3 and 4 that are clearly introduced in the teachers' guide book... in fact my teachers were feeling that doing the reading time is a challenging task no they were thinking that it is not useful and a waste of time and they were thinking that the reading time will affect their scheme of work and that they will be late in the syllabus but after I talked to them and encouraged them of the importance of this and I told them that we are teaching a language so our learners can acquire the language through such reading tasks I told them that as for the syllabus we can create things and delete unnecessary or repeated things and in this way we can do all our teaching duties

Researcher: Ok Karima, how was teachers' reaction to the reading time training?

Karima: As I told, I felt after I explained the ideas and tasks to my teachers they liked the ideas and they were happy with the new methods that I presented to them in the cascade workshop and the ideas we discussed about reading time during training and I told them it is a relaxed time not just for students but also for teachers, she sits with her students and reads her own books that she has interest in just like her students, you just follow up if students are reading there is no lesson and teaching steps, explanations and so on... my teachers notices were as usual, the syllabus is so crowded and that they cannot finish the syllabus on time, and that sometimes teachers teach the 1 lesson in 2 lessons and sometimes it differs from a class to another according to students levels but they liked it and they started applying it at least once because the reading time should be done at least once in each unit.

Researcher: What about the jolly phonics and shared reading?

Karima: For the jolly phonics workshops and the shared reading which was done in cooperation with Laila and the supervisor, in my school the teachers who taught grade 1 last year they were teaching grade 2 this year and one of the grade 1 teachers is not new she did the course last year but 2 grade 1 teachers are new, I mean the first year they teach grade 1 but they are really very good teachers and I wanted them to try grade 1 but they were not feeling confidence to teach grade 1 and how to deal with kids.

Researcher: What about you Laila?



Laila: For me, the cascade was done well, the trainers gave us the cascade pack with all the power point slides and the detailed instructions for doing each task, and then we organised me Karima and my supervisor three days for the cascade

Badriya: For me it was easy, I have done it for my teachers, of course the trainers gave us the materials ( I mean the cascading package) in a flash disk , once I went back to my school I printed out the materials, the jolly phonics for grades 1 and 2, the shared reading and the reading time, at the beginning I released grade 1 teachers the first three lessons of the school day, I made copied of the handouts for them and I started doing the cascading step by step according to the instructions in the cascade package and how we did it with our trainers in the training room, I only omitted the game because there was no time for it

Researcher: Have you done all the workshops for all teachers?

Badriya: Yes but each according to the grades they are teaching, I mean each grade was done in a day, For example, the first day grade 1 and I have 2 teachers I did the work shop for jolly phonics and shared reading for them, I did micro-teaching of the letter and sound 's' and I asked each teacher to plan and micro-teach a different sound. Second day grade 2 and I also have two teachers and what helped me was that one of those grade 2 teachers taught the syllabus last year in grade 1 so she was aware of the steps of teaching, third day I released grade 3 and 4 teachers two lessons only and did the cascade and the micro-teaching of the reading time for them.

Reseracher: Ok Karima and Laila, how did you find the cooperation in cascading between you, the supervisors, was it useful?

Laila: Yes, it was fruitful, we helped each other and teachers have the chance to do micro-teaching

Karima: For me as well, we met at Lailas' school and we agreed who will do what, for example, I will cover this part of the workshop, Laila the other part and so on and because we attended these workshops with our trainers so we faced no challenges in doing it

Researcher: What was the role of supervisors?

Karima: They were only watching and supporting us, yes in the first day Mrs Aneesa the supervisor was there and explained a bit about developing reading but then the supervisors were just sharing ideas and in discussions with us and the teachers

Researcher: What was the role of each one of you; can you specify that for me?

Karima: In some stages we were doing things together, it wasn't that each one was doing a different stage each one was talking about a point in that step but in the jolly phonics grade 2 workshop the third SET who was present with us presented the first lesson in teaching jolly phonics to grade 2 learners when teachers should start teaching two sounds together then I did the micro-teaching for lesson 2, I mean she showed participants how to teach lesson 1 in grade 1 and I showed them how to teach lesson 2, Laila did the micro-teaching of lesson 1 for the shared reading

Laila: Yes that is true, each one of us was responsible for cascading a specific part of the workshop but we were all working together and cooperating in delivering the different parts of each workshop, and if there was any point that the presenter forgets to talk about the rest two reminds her and talk about it together

Karima: Then, we asked the participants teachers to plan and do micro-teaching of some tasks for example, lessons 2 and 3 in the shared reading because Laila did the micro-teaching of lesson 1. I didn't feel that three SETs were presenting, I was feeling that one was doing the job, we were working smoothly together and everything was organised and went in a coherent way

Researcher: Ok, I will go back to the training you did with your trainers, did it help you in doing the cascade and how about the cascade package given to you?

Karima: Yes of course, attending the training with experienced trainers and then the package they gave us that have the instructions and all handouts helped us a lot, it helped us in a way that everything was ready even the lesson or the cascade plan, only we have had to photocopy the hand outs for participants and we distributed the hand out and followed the steps suggested in the cascade lesson plan and the way delivered by the trainers in the training room

Laila: Yes it helped a lot because they gave us all the materials needed for doing the cascade and honestly it was very clear

Karima: I felt that our teachers were enthusiastic as they are joining a session with trainers in the training centre because it wasn't one SET who was presenting the ideas to them, it was a multiple presentation by three SETs also the supervisors shared the discussion with us

Badriya: Yes it helped a lot, everything was ready like spoon feeding

Researcher: Really, you felt it was spoon feeding?

Badriya: I mean everything was ok and ready, we only faced the problem of timing

Researcher: What about your touches to the materials you got from trainers, any things you added Badriya?

Badriya: Honestly I felt that because the flash desk was including everything, I also could say that our schools' positions in teaching the jolly phonics might be better than other schools' because we applied this project in our school three years back so we were from the first schools and the majority of my teachers have good background about teaching jolly phonics

Researcher: Ok, I know that the three of you are SETs and have lots of experience, tell me the role of your experience in this cascade event and even your teachers' experience, have it added anything to the cascade?

Laila: For the teachers, they were actively engaged with the majority of the tasks and activities and they taught some lessons, but some teachers said that they felt they don't need to do shared reading because they are used to it and they know how to apply it properly in class room, we told them that this workshop in shared reading adds to them the new updates in teaching shared reading and how to add jolly phonics to the shared reading lessons

Karima: I felt the thing that I have added as an experienced SET to my teachers is that after I attended the training in the training centre with my trainers is that I became convinced that these project like shared reading and jolly phonics and reading time are really important in helping our children acquire the language and that we shouldn't look at such ideas as burdens on us because at the end they are for the benefit of our teachers, so at the end I was able to convince my teachers of this idea. It wasn't only by talking to them because when I told them at the beginning they were feeling that it is not easy to do these things and apply these ideas properly and they felt it will be more work on them, but when they attended with us in the cascade event they came back to school feeling enthusiastic and that they loved these ideas and working on it

Badriya: I also felt that I added my experience to the cascade package, also my teachers' experience for example, I had two teachers who taught grade 1 before so they shared their experience with us in this regard, and when we discussed the challenges that they faced last year, experienced teachers and myself were able to provide some suggestions and solutions to these challenges according to their experience, also one teacher taught grade 2 before so her experience was really an addition and enriched the cascade

Laila: Yes of course the experience helped us a lot in the way of convincing teachers about these new ideas, everyone became aware of the new ideas and they also have an idea about how I will follow them up and the paper work they have to do in this respect, everything was well organised, but we couldn't do what the trainers did exactly in the training room, I mean we missed some little parts or we compressed the 5 days training into three days only, but we concentrated a lot on the changes and updates within the syllabus in relation to the discussed issues and gave them more time, how to teach jolly phonics, the new projects in general

Researcher: Ok, after the cascade, do you feel that teachers benefited from the ideas discussed in the cascade, do they take any ideas and apply them in their own classes?

Karima: Last Thursday I attended a jolly phonics grade 2 lesson, it was a story, the first story that we presented in the cascade through micro-teaching it, the teacher honestly did a great job, of course this teacher did the jolly phonics grade 1 workshop last year, and she taught her students jolly phonics last year and now she is teaching them grade 2, she did the steps in exactly the same way done in the cascade session

Badriya: I also visited teacher Amna if you remember her, and because she didn't teach grade 1 before I was thinking how she will do the lesson, but her jolly phonics lesson was great and the students were actively engaged in the lesson and I felt she followed the steps that we discussed in the cascade session smoothly and intelligently.

Laila: I also attended two lessons with my teachers, one in shared reading and another one in jolly phonics, and because she attended the cascade session with us, I felt that they followed the steps as exactly shown in the cascade session, the shared reading also was done in a good way and the teacher was confident in doing the tasks of the lesson

Researcher: Ok, my last question, what did the cascade add to you as a SET and a mentor and coach in your school, was it useful or any challenges associated with it?

Karima: The cascade made me feel more confident, the confidence in that we are doing training to a large number of teachers, we always do workshops for our teachers at school but doing it with other SETs and in another school and facing a large number of teachers, in the presence of our supervisors, I feel more confident now in doing such things more publicly and I felt that it is an easy job it is not a big deal to do training

Researcher: Ok Karima, any challenges associated with this cascade?

Karima: The challenges that I faced personally and may be all of us was arranging the timetables and releasing teachers, I have 5 teachers who needed training and also myself, so how can 6 teachers leave the school together, who will do their lessons, releasing them for 4 lessons was not an easy job, so we have to teach the first 4 lessons and then go to Laila's school to join the workshop, it was really stressful. This is a real challenge with professional development generally, so releasing teachers is one of the great challenges associated with professional development even when I want to do a workshop at school or any other teacher at school sometimes we have to postpone it every day because teachers say this week we are not free, they tell me that Miss we want professional development and we to learn new ideas but with all this workload at school and how to work with students and finish our syllabuses and three lessons we feel we cannot do it, we feel fed up.

Badriya: For me, I felt the jolly phonics is ok and we are used to it but the new ways of teaching shared reading was different and we benefited from it a lot

Laila: For me as Karima said, this cascade added to me the confidence in myself I also felt that teachers were actively engaged with us in the sessions and they were discussing seriously on the ways of applying these ideas in their own classrooms. The challenges that I faced were also releasing our teachers with all the workload we have at school

Researcher: Ok, thank you very much for helping me and giving up your time, it is very much appreciated

Badriya: Thanks miss and we hope that we added something to your study

Researcher: Sure you did, thanks again dear Badriya

Karima: Thanks miss

Laila: Thank you miss

## Appendix 6: 3rd focus group/individual semi-structured interview schedule

Title: The participatory model of CPD

Interview Date:	Venue:	Interviewees:	Gender: M/F
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Thank you for being willing to take part in this interview. Can I again assure you that you will remain completely anonymous and no record of the interview will be kept with your name on it.

	The main question	Follow up Qs and prompts if necessary
1. About the workshop	A. Can I first ask you about your experience of participating in the three workshops about the participatory model of CPD?	Anything you would like to share with me regarding this experience.
	B. What was your role in each workshop?	Did you like this role?
	C. What do you think/feel you have learnt from these workshops?	If yes, what?
	D. Do you think the workshops achieved their aims which generally were 1) Participating in different forms of the participatory model of CPD and 2) Using the participatory model of CPD to continue your own PD	If yes, in what ways? If no, why not?
2. About the online discussion group	A. Now can you tell me about your experience of the online discussion group?	How would you describe this experience?
	B. What was your role in this group?	Did you like this role?
	C. Do you think the discussions in this group were fruitful?	If yes, in what ways? If no, why not?
	D. Did your colleagues' ideas in the online discussion group add anything to you?	If yes, what? If no, why not?
3. The participatory model of CPD	A. After being introduced to this model and having participated in it practically, what are your views about the participatory model of CPD?	Any pros and/or cons for this model. Did you like this model?
	B. In your view, how can English teachers in Oman become more active participants in their CPD process?	Can you give me some examples? Can they participate in and/or make/establish similar learning communities themselves?
	C. Do you think the participatory model of CPD should be added to English teachers' CPD system in Oman?	If yes, how? If no, why not?
	D. Thank you very much for helping me and giving up your time. Can I finally ask you if you think there is any aspect of your experience of the participatory model of CPD that has not been covered in this interview?	If yes, can you tell me about it?

### Appendix 7: Observation schedule (in the training room)

Observation Date:

Venue:

Observee (Code):

Gender: M /F

Task Components		Observations
<b>Session Focus</b>	=Topic/s covered in the session (skills and knowledge participants are expected to gain from the session)	
<b>Session Aims/Goals</b>	=Intended outcomes	
<b>Session Input</b>	=What input the trainer used to achieve the session aims (e.g a reading article...)	
<b>Activity(ies)</b>	=What the participants are asked to do with the input (asking & answering questions...etc)	
<b>Trainer's role Participants' role</b>	= The parts played in carrying out the task (e.g trainer facilitator, participants conversational partners)	
<b>Setting</b>	= The social arrangements in which the task is carried out (e.g pairwork, grpwork...)	

**\*Trainer's Reflection on the session**

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## Appendix 8/a: First workshop design & materials

### Workshop Focus: *The Participatory Model of CPD (1) [OCT-2015]*

**Workshop objectives: By the end of this workshop, teachers will be better able to:**

- 1- Talk about the importance of the participatory model of CPD in teachers' professional learning and growth
- 2- Discuss with other colleagues how this model can be used
- 3- Participate in different forms of the participatory model of CPD (e.g. intellectual debates...)
- 4- Use an online discussion group to suggest ideas for designing and delivering the coming workshops
- 5- Use the participatory model of CPD to continue their own professional development

Activity	Description	Organization	Materials	Time
1. Starter activity	<p>* Do the starter activity "<b>cross the river</b>" where participants stand in 2 lines facing each other. I say a sentence, if applies to the participants they cross the river to the other side if not they don't move. e.g. "Cross the river if you joined a conference this year" "Cross the river if you read a book, article... recently"...etc</p> <p>* Introduce the session and give out HO 1.</p>	Whole class	HO 1	5 min
2. Professional development	<p>* Write on the white board the term '<b>professional development</b>'.</p> <p>* Ask participants to write a definition for the term individually. Get them to share their definitions with their group members and discuss similarities and differences between their definitions.</p> <p>* Show them on OHT Day's (1999) definition of PD, ask them to compare it to their own definitions and find any similarities/differences between their definitions and this one.</p> <p>* Give out HO2 Day's definition of PD and tell them "<b>I am not giving you this handout to say that this is the best definition for professional development, I am just giving it to you to read and see how different people think about professional development and from that you can come out with your own definition of the term</b>".</p>	Individuals, Group Work	OHT, HO2	20 min
3. Participatory model of CPD	<p>* Elicit examples of PD activities and conditions for PD? i.e. what makes a PD event useful/ inspiring to them, write their ideas on the board.</p> <p>* Show PowerPoint 4 slides about <b>the participatory model of CPD</b>; go through the slides in a discussion based manner. The first slide discusses what the participatory model of CPD is, slides 2, 3 and 4 focus on why using this model of CPD/its importance, and how to use it/ways of applying it.</p> <p>* Show participants the first slide, ask them to read it silently and discuss in pairs what do they understand from it. Get pairs to discuss in their grps. Plenary to elicit ideas from whole class about the first slide. Do the same for the rest 4 slides. Hand out Darling-Hammond and McLaughlin's (1995) article for follow up reading.</p>	Pair Work, Group Work, Whole Class Discussion	Power Point, reading article	30 min

4. Practical part	<p>* Divide the participants into 5 different groups (4-5 teachers per group) according to the <b>5 participatory forms of CPD</b> selected for this workshop, write these 5 titles on the board and ask each group to discuss each title and then choose one of them: (1) '<u>Practitioner-based activities</u>', (2) '<u>Communities of practice</u>', (3) '<u>Creating an intellectual atmosphere for intellectual debate</u>', (4) '<u>The centrality of reading as a culture (motivating students to read)</u>', and (5) '<u>The centrality of reading as a culture (encouraging teachers to read)</u>'.</p>	Group Work	5 reading articles	35 min
5. closing & reflection	<p>* <b>(If Time)</b>: Once each group chooses a title for them, I give them the reading article(s) about the selected topic; ask them to divide the article between them and do a jigsaw reading. Each one in the group chooses part of the article(s), skim reading it and summarize it. Then they share the whole article in their group 'each one tells her group members what was her bit about'. The group writes a summary of the article, and discusses whether this idea e.g '<u>The centrality of reading as a culture</u>' is activated by English teachers in Oman, how can they use it, its benefits..etc. All 5 groups will do the same process with their selected topic and article (Can compress this part/H.W).</p> <p>*Tell participants that they will present to the whole group about their topic next session (in workshop 2). So, in the meantime, each member of the group will scan reading their part of the article to gain more details of the topic, the group members will discuss about their topic in the coming days in an online group, and together they plan how they will present it to whole class.</p> <p>* Ask participants to discuss the idea of applying the participatory model of CPD practically in this group. Suggest the use of an online discussion group. Ask participants 'who will volunteer establishing an online discussion group now'.</p> <p>*Once the group is established ask participants to think of today's session and write a reflection about it now in the training room (or later on if running out of time). Hand out workshop evaluation form, which may help participants in writing their reflection. Each one including myself will write the reflection and post it to the group.</p> <p>*Tell participants that we will meet next week for workshop 2 about the participatory model of CPD and ask them to discuss about their topics with their group members and how they are going to present it to us next week. They can also think of anything else they feel should be added to the content of next session and post it to the group during this week. Each one should contribute his/her ideas and suggestions to the group, so together we can design the next workshop based on your needs and ideas.</p>	Group Work, whole class, individuals	Phones, tablets..etc workshop evaluation sheet	30 min

**N.B:** In order to train teachers on the participatory model of professional development, the three workshop design and delivery will be as follows:

- Workshop (1) is totally lead by me so I will design it, prepare the materials and deliver it
- In workshop (2) both of us will contribute (me and the participants); it will be designed and delivered by the participants based on the materials I will give them in workshop (1), and the advice and support I can offer in the online discussion group through answering their questions and queries.
- Workshop (3) will be totally lead by the participants, they will think of its content, prepare the materials, plan the session and deliver it, I will be just watching their ideas and discussions in the group without contributing to it.
- Each workshop will be 2 hours long



### Work Shop (1) Handouts

Workshop (1)

HO 1

#### Workshop Summary

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this workshop, you will be better able to:

- 1- Talk about the importance of the participatory model of CPD in teachers' professional learning and growth
- 2- Discuss with other colleagues how this model can be used
- 3- Participate in different forms of the participatory model of CPD (e.g. intellectual debates...)
- 4- Use an online discussion group to suggest ideas for designing and delivering the coming workshops
- 5- Use the participatory model of CPD to continue your own professional development



I have learnt

**Homework:** discuss about your topics with your group members and how you are going to present it to whole class next session. Also, based on your needs you can think of anything else that you feel should be added to the content of next session and post your ideas in the online discussion group during this week.

### Professional Development for Teachers

*professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute through these to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purpose of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives" (Day, 1999:4)*

#### Reference:

1. Day, C. (1999). *Developing Teachers: The challenges of lifelong learning*, London: Falmer.

## Professional Development for Teachers

*'professional development consists of all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute through these to the quality of education in the classroom. It is the process by which, alone and with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purpose of teaching; and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues through each phase of their teaching lives' (Day, 1999:4)*

**The Participatory Model of CPD  
Workshop evaluation sheet**

<i>Do you now feel better able to:</i>	Yes	Not sure	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Talk about the importance of the participatory model of CPD in teachers' professional learning and growth</li> <li>• Discuss with other colleagues how to use this model</li> <li>• Participate in different forms of the participatory model of CPD (e.g. intellectual debates ...)</li> <li>• Use an online discussion group to suggest ideas for designing and delivering the coming workshops</li> <li>• Use the participatory model of CPD to continue your own professional development</li> </ul>			
Did the workshop meet your own expectations?			
Did the workshop meet your needs?			
Do you feel that there were enough opportunities for interaction and discussion?			
Do you feel that there was enough opportunity to explore the materials?			

What were the <b>most interesting</b> aspects of this workshop for you?
What were the <b>most useful</b> aspects of this workshop for your CPD?
What were the <b>least useful</b> aspects of this workshop for your CPD?
Any other comments or suggestions?

*Thank you*

### Work Shop (1) Power points

#### The ir **Participatory models/forms of CPD:**

A participatory learning environment gives learners – in a classroom or elsewhere – an opportunity to become **part of a community** where they can explore abstract concepts in a non-threatening social context, and **then apply** them in situations that hold **personal relevance**. Learners in a participatory learning system include all members of the learning space – students, teachers, teacher educators (e.g. supervisors, trainers), and administrators. Learning becomes a **"negotiation and collaboration"** between these participants (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996, p. 197), so that different perspectives are valued and respected.

#### The ir

*The values that shape the design of participatory PD are:*

##### **1. Participation, not indoctrination**

There is a critical need, in the field of education, to **transition from professional development for teachers to professional development with teachers or even professional development by teachers**.

##### **2. Exploration, not prescription**

PD initiatives must allow ample room for personal and professional exploration. Attention must also be paid to **what teachers want from a professional development experience**, rather than just what is **required** of them.

##### **3. Contextualization, not abstraction**

PD should be tailored to **the specific questions and particular career goals** of the **participants**.

#### The ir

##### **Exploring new designs for professional development**

- ✓ School culture must be conducive to critical enquiry, and provide opportunities for professional dialogue. Such opportunities may exist already, but may not be used effectively (Teachers are not currently exposed in intellectual debates).
- ✓ Teachers need to integrate theory with classroom practice. They need time and opportunities for exploring knowledge about the nature of (new) learning and how it might be implemented in different domains.
- ✓ There should also be:
  - Strategies to reflect teachers' questions and concerns
  - Opportunities for intellectual debate between teachers
  - Opportunities for teacher enquiry and collaboration
  - Access to successful models of (new) practice

#### The ir

##### **How? Ways of applying the participatory models/forms of CPD:**

- 1) Practitioner-based activities:
  - Team teaching
  - Peer observation
  - Critical friends (English staff meetings)
  - .....
- 2) Communities of practice
- 3) Participating in intellectual debates through online discussions and/or face-to-face meetings/discussions
- 4) Creating a reading culture in schools
- 5)..... (and many other ways)

## Appendix 8/b: Reading articles for the workshops

### Article (1)

## CHAPTER 1

# PROFESSIONAL LEARNING AND THE REFLECTIVE PRACTITIONER

Jennifer Harrison

By the end of this chapter you will have

- developed your understanding of reflection and critical thinking
- gained an overview of the relationship between the reflective practitioner and professional learning
- been introduced to the core competences and skills of the reflective practitioner
- developed your understanding of the role of professional learning conversations and the mentor in deepening reflection on practice

### **An introduction to the reflective practitioner**

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Perhaps, by the time you open this book, you have already come across ideas such as *reflective writing* or *evaluation of teaching and learning* or *problem-based learning*. You may have discovered how reflective practice can widen your understanding of teaching in educational settings or, indeed, in other work places where you have been

able to consider and evaluate an aspect of your work. Some of us, as keen promoters of reflective practice, can point to its particular role in professional activities and value how reflective practice contributes to professional learning and development (Harrison, 2004). All the authors of the chapters in this book anticipate that it will help you to make sense of what you do and to help place value on the knowledge and experiences that you already have, and will gain, during your early professional years.

Some other professionals you meet may be rather more critical of the reflective process and may think that engaging in reflective practice can be a somewhat superficial activity – just another hurdle to jump across in the training process, or to be seen as a bit of a chore. If it does seem to have become a somewhat repetitive exercise in your training programme, then we hope that, by reading this chapter and engaging in some of the activities, you will be helped to re-focus on its benefits.

### What is a reflective practitioner; what is reflective practice?

These appear to be simple questions and, initially, any answers might appear to be rather obvious to the reader. Surely all professionals think about what they do and adapt their ways of working as a result of such thinking? Certainly reflective practice is talked about in teacher education, as well as in other professional settings such as nursing and social work, so it has gained credibility as well as criticism as a much over-worked expression.

To support reflective practices, various strategies have been designed within many professional programmes, such as storytelling, learning journals, using metaphors, conducting analyses using videos of teaching sequences, modelling and using reflective frameworks. Thinking about *reflective practice* as a concept is crucial since we do need to be clear about what it means. Whether we are beginning teachers, university education tutors or school mentors involved in school-based training, it is important to have a chance to clarify what we understand by it and what we expect it to entail. The starting point in this chapter is that it is much more than simply *thinking about teaching*.

#### Asking questions

Reflective practice can be thought about in terms of asking searching questions about an experience. Most questions you are already asking do not form out of thin air. They come from the contexts in which you are working, or in response to situations in which you find yourself. Pause here and jot down some questions that have already occurred to you as a result of your work, or of your experience, in an educational setting. Here are some examples:

- For teachers (me) and for students (Year 9), what are the different ideas of what is fun or exciting in a science lesson on *climate change*?
- How can I make clear my expectations and guidelines for students to know how to act and learn?

- What are the different ways that I can plan for a (practical) lesson that takes account of the fact that some students have particular skills, and others do not?

Alternatively, many education headlines in the media lend themselves to the formation of questions. Look at some of the following taken from *The Times Educational Supplement* and identify a question for each headline:

- 'Diverse classes "can be less tolerant"' (15 April 2011) [www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6077929](http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6077929) (accessed 3 November 2011)
- 'Ofsted brands careers advice for girls "weak"' (15 April 2011) [www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6077927](http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6077927) (accessed 3 November 2011)
- "'Stretch and challenge" A levels "too easy"' (8 April 2011) [www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6076715](http://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6076715) (accessed 3 November 2011)

### *Investigating*

John Loughran (2002) describes reflective practice as 'a lens into the world of practice' (p. 33), recognizing that it offers a chance for questioning of often taken-for-granted, assumptions. In other words it provides a chance to see one's own practice through the eyes of others. It is through both questioning and investigating that reflection has the potential to lead to a developing understanding of professional practice. Brookfield (1995) talks about our 'assumption hunting' (p. 218) as we learn about and experiment with, different approaches to our teaching practices.

Being a reflective practitioner at any stage of teacher development involves a constant, critical look at teaching and learning and at the work of you, the teacher. Some of this investigation might be done through your reading of the relevant literature (for example, when you are asked to produce a review of the professional or academic literature in a chosen area, resulting in a written critical summary). This activity can help highlight important gaps in your professional knowledge. Some investigation might be done through your talk with expert teachers and so comparing different sorts of evidence of practice (for example, you might be expected to present your learning orally to your peer group in a small group seminar on the chosen issue). Some investigation might be done individually through your private framing and reframing of episodes of teaching (learning journals/diaries can assist with this process), or more publicly by inviting someone into the classroom to view the experiences using another set of eyes (professional conversations which enable further analysis to take place are important part of this way of working).



## Developing the skills and attributes of a reflective practitioner

The five core competences thought necessary for good practice as a reflective practitioner are presented in turn: observation, communication, judgement, decision-making and team working. All are important professional competences and are applicable to *all* stages of teacher learning, including initial teacher education.

### Observation

The skills of observation take account of noticing your own feelings and behaviours (see also the section 'Self-awareness' in this chapter), and include *noticing*, *marking* and *recording* in order to distinguish some *thing* from its surroundings. You can find

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numerous practical exercises for developing these skills, designed for both individual and small group work, in Chapter 2 of John Mason's book (2002) *Researching Your Own Practice*.

Noticing involves recording brief but vivid details which allow you to recognize the situation for itself. There are various ways in which you might do this: through writing, drawing, or video- and audio-recording, and even photographing an artefact or product of your teaching. As Mason writes,

... so all that is needed at first is a few words, literally two or three, enough to enable re-entry, to trigger recollection. Then the incident can be described to others *from* that memory, together with any significant further detail that may be needed. Brevity and vividness are what make descriptions of incidents recognisable to others. (2002: 51)

In learning how to teach, the noticing and recording of *critical moments* can be helpful in relation to developing the skills of reflective practice. Some practical suggestions are given in Activity 1.4 for you to try. One method may be more appealing to you than another. Try a few ways and then stick to ones that you enjoy and find useful.

### Communication

Your communication skills in relation to reflective practice can be developed in a variety of ways: through the keeping of a personal learning journal or diary, or through a more formal professional portfolio, supported by a system of formal tutorials with a mentor.

#### *Learning journal, diary or professional portfolio*

Since critical reflection on practice is an active and conscious process (see Schön, 1983, 1987, 1991), you can start by asking yourself a series of open questions about a particular teaching episode or a critical incident within that episode, and jotting down your impressions using one of these ways of recording:

- What have I been doing/What am I doing?
- What has happened/What is happening?
- What led up to this?
- And why?

By doing this regularly you will be helped to reflect on and learn more about your practice. By sharing some of your reflections with others, you will learn more about yourself and your practice, your strengths and your limitations.

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As we have noted already reflection can also be a *critical activity*. If you ask yourself 'How do I improve my practice?' you are actually questioning what you do, how you currently do things and the value of what you are doing. Asking a fundamental question like this will assist you in thinking more critically about why a particular practice of yours is a success (or a failure, or something in between). Remember that *being critical* is not a negative activity. It is about trying to see things differently and doing alternative things.

### ***Formal tutorials with a mentor or university tutor***

A key issue for a mentor, working in ITE, is how they can develop the beginning teacher's expertise in engaging in *reflective conversations* in more structured ways. In the past the **General Teaching Council of England (GTCE)** has referred more broadly to the role of the *Learning Conversation* in bringing about teacher development, claiming that it can 'encourage access to a diverse range of opportunities and activities ... It is designed so that all teachers through performance management review and in other ways, may choose a route that matches their professional needs' (2004: 8).

We have seen that, through engaging with Activities 1.4 and 1.5, there is the opportunity for a follow-up dialogue to assist reflection on practice. Activity 1.4, with its focus on critical moments or critical incidents, provides a route in which professional development can be supported through a reflective conversation with a teacher, or mentor, who has a good working knowledge of the contexts or situations in which the described event has taken place. For Activities 1.5a and 1.5b, the dialogues might be more general and based on more open-ended questions such as 'How far are these observations ... about what actually happened? ... about your personal feelings? ... about your personal and professional identities?'

A reflective conversation is therefore a process of bringing improvement forward. Crucially, it is the *quality of the conversation* that is important and so you and your mentor might need some structure for the best use of this conversation time. A 30-minute review meeting might be arranged along the following lines.

### ***Guidelines for a structured reflective conversation with a mentor***

- Looking back and reviewing significant features in a recent critical moment or event
- Sharing some of your remarks in your own records of practice such as your learning journal, or diary
- Celebrating some recent success
- Identifying one thing that you could still improve whatever your level of **achievement**
- Deciding together how best to bring the further improvement forward
- Agreeing more precisely your next step
- Ending by setting a date for your next review meeting
- Aiming to keep your own brief record of the conversation and the main agreed targets

### **Judgement**

In order to analyse a classroom event or situation, we should try to be absolutely clear what that event or situation consists of. If we, too, are involved in that event or situation then this view of the event needs to be impartial. This is a difficult process – to see ourselves as others see us. Remember also that we often see in others what we dislike in ourselves.

Just describing what happens during the event can be problematic as well. We might, rather skilfully, combine details of the event with our judgement, or with additional explanations and theories. It would then be difficult for another person to begin to discuss our analysis and say whether they agree with the analysis, or not. Mason (2002: 40) has helpfully distinguished between an account *of* a situation and an account *for* it. Thus, if we wish to *account for* an occurrence, and particularly if we expect another teacher to agree with our analysis, we must first explain the thing precisely that we are trying to analyse (the *account of*). By doing this we can begin to recognize that when we give an *account for*, we are also giving a justification, a value judgement, a criticism, or an attempt at an explanation.

*Accounting for* means, first, asking 'why' and, second, providing an interpretation. Mason draws on an example from Tripp (1993: 18) and this note from Tripp's reflective diary, kept as a practising teacher, is useful to include here: 'John didn't finish his work today. Must see he learns to complete what he has begun.' What are the possible answers if we begin to ask why John is apparently not finishing his work today? That first sentence might have to be rewritten: 'John finished work on parts one and three

whereas most others worked on parts one through seven; John was still working on part three when I stopped them working' (Mason, 2002: 42).

The crucial issue in the account above is about what constitutes 'finishing work'. Mason argues that, by asking further questions about how students see classroom tasks, and by thinking about the student experience of engaging in the given task (as opposed to the teacher's perceptions), then we are more likely to find out about the personal circumstances for a student such as John before we label him as a 'non-finisher'. Tripp (1993: 19) suggests asking the following line of questions,

## Skills of decision-making

It is important to think about how you make sense of your learners and classroom events. From a constructivist point of view, Uhlenbeck et al. described teacher learning as 'organizing and reorganizing, structuring and restructuring a teacher's understanding of practice. Teachers are viewed as learners who actively construct knowledge by interpreting events on the basis of existing knowledge, beliefs and dispositions' (2002: 243).

There are, as we have noted already, several types of activities that can encourage reflective practice: reflective writing assignments form one of these. Another involves the writing and analysis of a *teaching case* (see earlier in Chapter 1). This, as we have discussed, has the potential to exert tremendous influence on your perceptions of teaching and learning. The following analysis is taken from a research study (Alger, 2006) in which the author classified six types of classroom-based *case* presented by her beginning teachers, and concerned with **behaviour management** in the classroom. The 56 solutions which the beginning teachers described in their cases were categorized as follows: 'teacher behaviours for seeking compliance' (28); 'curricular and pedagogical solutions for gaining student compliance' (15); 'help-seeking strategies to gain student compliance' (eight); and one 'other'.

Alger followed up her analyses by conducting interviews with these beginning teachers at the end of the year, in order to track the development of their reflection over time. The beginning teachers were asked to re-frame, or re-state, the original

behaviour management problem they had described, and re-evaluate the strategies they had tried in order to solve the problem. She found that these beginning teachers' understanding of the solutions to the problems (that is, the way they made their decisions) had changed substantially, as did their nuances of the dilemmas. There were shifts:

- away from *behaviourist* approaches
- towards greater *relationship building*
- involving greater use of *effective classroom strategies* to manage behaviour.

### Team working

We know, increasingly, that schools as institutions and the individuals within them have to be flexible to respond to rapid changes of pace. Etienne Wenger, a socio-cultural theorist, focused on notions of networking in the workplace and developed a key concept with Jean Lave: **communities of practice** (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998). As we have noted in an earlier section of this chapter on workplace learning we can no longer think about a teacher or a school existing in isolation.

It is now recognized that professional expertise has to be networked, integrated or joined up. As is explored in Chapters 3 and 6, you will find yourself working in a number of teams from the start of your teaching career: your subject or curriculum team, your pastoral team and cross-curricular groups working on particular issues such

as **personalized learning** and aspects of assessment, and so on. The following subsections introduce you briefly to some collaborative ways of working in schools.

### Co-teaching

This way of working provides experiences which revolve around collaboration and the sharing of ideas and perspectives on practice to help in the re-framing of earlier ideas (Schön, 1985). Co-teaching provides two teachers (mentor and beginning teacher; two beginning teachers) with access to possibilities for learning that are not so likely when working alone. This can have the advantage of providing a safer haven for more risk-taking and experimentation, such as introducing new types of practical activities into a science lesson; managing a role-play; taking students for out-of-classroom activities. As Loughran has written, 'collaboration and teaming in ways that provide professional support for one another leads to improvements in practice as the sharing with, and learning from, one another offers meaningful ways of framing and reframing existing practice' (2006: 57). In other words all partners, experienced and inexperienced, can benefit. Co-teaching offers the opportunity to ask much of your partner:

- What is the purpose of this teaching session?
- How does what we do today link with last week's lesson?
- Why are you choosing to use that teaching strategy with this class?

### **Collaborative practitioner enquiry**

*Enquiry* is the response we make to a desire to find something out. Kelly (2006) has argued that teachers who identify closely with instrumental practices are likely to have cognitivist views of expertise and learning. In contrast, teachers with more reflective and discursive identities may, through an on-going conversation with their practice, adopt stances which respond to their learners' difficulties, and seek to collaborate with learners and colleagues. They *look for ways forward* in professional guidance and through research, using their learners and colleagues as starting points in their enquiry, and adopting complex measures of success.

There are some parallels here with the ways of conducting *academic research*. These also require systematic enquiry but are done less for oneself and more for reporting to other people so that conclusions can be criticized, challenged or taken up by others. This is a form of constructivism. For any research to be convincing the research

questions have to be well formulated (these may be the hypotheses to be tested), and the chosen methodology (types of observations, other types of data collection and methods of analyses) has to conform to accepted standards.

### **Action research**

This way of working tends to fall between 'academic researcher' researching other people and 'teacher practitioner' researching their own actions. *Action research* is an approach that has become widely used in research into education and schooling. It takes several different forms, one of which is systematic enquiry. Often beginning teachers, regular teachers and support staff work together and the enquiry is designed to produce practical results which can improve an aspect of, say, learning and teaching. It is a well recognized form of social science research.

Your choice of research topic with colleagues can be affected by your combined interests, values, any funding you have available, and so on. Using descriptive approaches, you might support, observe and study the effects of other people. In some cases you may be the *actor-researchers* using a more analytical approach to make a strategic change in your collective practices. You might start by asking, 'What can we do to improve our practice?' You could then pursue one of the action research routes illustrated in Figures 1.3a and 1.3b.

When you begin to research classrooms and schools in these ways, and small action research activities may start in your training year, you will probably need to read more widely about some of the concepts associated with these ways of researching classrooms. The *Handbook of Action Research* (Reason and Bradbury, 2005), *Learning*

### **Conclusion: being a reflective practitioner**

The notion of the reflective practitioner is an enticing one. It starts with messy, unpredictable practices, unpicks what is going on, generates **inductive hypotheses**, asks for analysis and attempts to reveal more about the nature of expertise within the professional setting and the judgements upon that. It provides an important counterbalance to current emphases in policy making on evidence-based practice, in which certainty and technical rationality are the ideals.

Reflective practice asks us all to weigh up the scientific evidence base against competing versions of events. Thus it can take account of the richness and creativity of

our practice and lead to new notions of professionalism based on diversity and flexibility. At its heart is the unsettling of hierarchies (for example, the gendered nature of teaching) and traditional working practices. Loughran refers to this phenomenon as *disturbing practice* and argues persuasively that 'it does not divorce feelings from the actions associated with confrontation or challenge; it creates powerful learning episodes ... Working with colleagues ... [provides the opportunity] of gaining advice and feedback on such episodes and of continuing to push to make the tacit explicit' (2006: 57).

Reflection implies that you can see one thing in another – the external world in your mind and, as such, it provides a powerful metaphor which also deserves a word of caution. It describes and is performative, since the act of reflection can give back some improvement in professional practice (Biggs, 1999) – it may be expected that it leads to action and change. This is a persuasive feature of reflective practice. In addition, professional portfolios can be used as vehicles for the assessment process in professional training and you can position yourself to present your material to make a convincing claim that you (as a professional) are competent. Reflection in this situation might become a self-measurement and provide for self-evaluation against standards or other appropriate performance measures.

# Community of Practice Design Guide

*A Step-by-Step Guide for Designing & Cultivating Communities of Practice in Higher Education*

## Acknowledgments

This guide was developed based on the shared experiences of several organizations working together in ways that embody the spirit of collaboration. These included the National Learning Infrastructure Initiative at EDUCAUSE (<http://www.educause.edu/nlii>) and a community it sponsored, the Bridging VCOP; the American Association for Higher Education (<http://www.aahe.org>); and iCohere (<http://www.icohere.com>). We would also like to specifically acknowledge the NLII VCOP Facilitators Team and four generations of NLII Fellows for their ongoing contribution to and successful demonstration of many of the processes and tools presented in this guide.

## How to Use This Community Design Guide

This guide provides a practical approach to creating communities of practice (CoPs) based on experiences working with corporations, nonprofits, associations, government organizations, and educational institutions. While it is important to recognize that every organization and community is different, this guide provides a structure to help clarify the most important design elements that go into defining, designing, launching, and growing CoPs—both online and face-to-face. The first three pages of the guide are designed for those who are considering the strategic use of CoPs to facilitate collaboration, learning, or knowledge generation and want to know more. The subsequent pages of the guide are designed to help CoP designers and facilitators understand the questions, issues, and options involved in planning and cultivating communities.

## What Is a Community of Practice?

A community of practice is a group of people who share a common concern, a set of problems, or interest in a topic and who come together to fulfil both individual and group goals.<sup>1</sup> CoPs often focus on sharing best practices and creating new knowledge to advance a domain of professional practice. Interaction on an ongoing basis is an important part of this. A community's specific purpose and goals inform the appropriate activities and technologies that should support it. Many *virtual* communities of practice rely on face-to-face meetings as well as Web-based collaborative environments to communicate, connect, and conduct community activities.

## Why Are Communities Important?

Today, organizations, workgroups, teams, and individuals must work together in new ways. Inter-organizational collaboration is increasingly important. Communities of practice provide a new model for connecting people in the spirit of learning, knowledge sharing, and collaboration as well as individual, group, and organizational development.

Communities of practice are important because they:

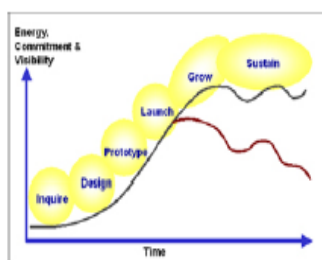
- ▶ Connect people who might not otherwise have the opportunity to interact, either as frequently or at all.
- ▶ Provide a shared context for people to communicate and share information, stories, and personal experiences in a way that builds understanding and insight.
- ▶ Enable dialogue between people who come together to explore new possibilities, solve challenging problems, and create new, mutually beneficial opportunities.
- ▶ Stimulate learning by serving as a vehicle for authentic communication, mentoring, coaching, and self-reflection.
- ▶ Capture and diffuse existing knowledge to help people improve their practice by providing a forum to identify solutions to common problems and a process to collect and evaluate best practices.
- ▶ Introduce collaborative processes to groups and organizations as well as between organizations to encourage the free flow of ideas and exchange of information.
- ▶ Help people organize around purposeful actions that deliver tangible results.
- ▶ Generate new knowledge to help people transform their practice to accommodate changes in needs and technologies.

## How Do You Build CoPs?

Communities of practice are dynamic social structures that require "cultivation" so that they can emerge and grow.<sup>2</sup> Organizations can sponsor CoPs, and through a series of steps, individuals can design a community environment, foster the formalization of the community, and plan activities to help grow and sustain the community. But ultimately, the members of the community will define and sustain it over time.

## How Do Communities Grow?

Communities have lifecycles—they emerge, they grow, and they have life spans. For each lifecycle phase, specific design, facilitation, and support strategies exist that help achieve the goals of the community and lead it into its next stage of development. If the community is successful, over time the energy, commitment to, and visibility of the community will grow until the community becomes institutionalized as a core value-added capability of the sponsoring organization. The following model<sup>3</sup> outlines the lifecycle phases of communities.



(adapted from McDermott, 2002)

The lifecycle phases include:

- ▶ **Inquire:** Through a process of exploration and inquiry, identify the audience, purpose, goals, and vision for the community.
- ▶ **Design:** Define the activities, technologies, group processes, and roles that will support the community's goals.
- ▶ **Prototype:** Pilot the community with a select group of key stakeholders to gain commitment, test assumptions, refine the strategy, and establish a success story.
- ▶ **Launch:** Roll out the community to a broader audience over a period of time in ways that engage newcomers and deliver immediate benefits.
- ▶ **Grow:** Engage members in collaborative learning and knowledge sharing activities, group projects, and networking events that meet individual, group, and organizational goals while creating an increasing cycle of participation and contribution.
- ▶ **Sustain:** Cultivate and assess the knowledge and "products" created by the community to inform new strategies, goals, activities, roles, technologies, and business models for the future.

Successfully facilitating a CoP involves understanding these lifecycle phases and ensuring that the expectations, plans, communications, collaborative activities, technologies, and measures of success map to the current phase of the community's development. Without conscious facilitation, momentum may be lost during the launch phase and the CoP may not achieve the critical mass needed to evolve into a sustainable entity.

## How Do Online Communities Become Places?

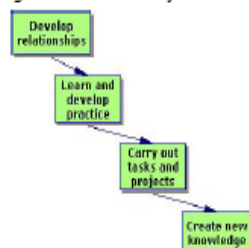
Facilitating community is not a static, one-time event related to "turning on" a software platform or technology. While technology—the *technical architecture*—can assist greatly in providing a platform for communication and collaboration, even more important is the *social architecture* of the community. The technical architecture supports the community, while the social architecture enlivens it. The roles, processes, and approaches that engage people—whether face-to-face or online—are essential in relationship building, collaborative learning, knowledge sharing, and action. Together, technical and social architectures create the container for the community.

An effective approach to community facilitation involves creating a predictable "rhythm" that sets an expectation around how and when to participate in the community. A "sense of place" is created in the minds of community members through an integrated, thoughtful combination of *face-to-face meetings*, *live online events*, and collaboration over time within a *persistent Web environment*.



## Purpose Is Paramount

While almost every community evolves along a lifecycle, every community is indeed unique, with distinct goals, member characteristics and needs, and purpose. All design choices (for technical or social architecture) must be driven by purpose, so community purpose is paramount. Successful and sustainable communities have focused, well-defined purposes that are directly tied to the sponsoring organization's mission. Purposes should be defined in terms of the benefits to the community's stakeholders and the specific needs that the community will be organized to meet. Purposes can be categorized into the following four areas of activity:



## Culture of Inquiry and Evidence and Community Activities

Once purpose has been defined, the next important planning activity is to frame the assessment infrastructure and the language of inquiry and evidence that the community and its stakeholders will use to understand and document success in achieving the purpose, meeting organization goals, responding to needs, and making decisions about future actions. Rubrics for assessment of the effectiveness of community activities have not yet been fully developed; however, the following are general questions to explore in assessing the quality of community design, development, and support in relation to community activities.

1. Foundation: Build Relationships		
Develop relationships of trust, mutual respect, reciprocity, and commitment necessary for strong communities.		
Interaction with and development of a wider network of peers is sufficient reason to belong to a community for some. Even if the community purpose is broader, other community activities are dependent on an environment of mutual respect and trust, which "encourages a willingness to share ideas, expose one's ignorance, ask difficult questions, and listen carefully." <sup>4</sup> For virtual communities of practice especially, relationships are fostered by frequent synchronous and asynchronous interaction, and this sense of presence of other community members is important to keep members engaged with the community.		
Key Questions: <i>How regularly are members interacting? To what extent do interactions have continuity and depth? Are members "opportunistic" about chances to interact in other settings (conferences, etc.)? Are members taking on new leadership roles? How much and what kind of reciprocity is occurring? To what extent is a shared understanding of the community's domain and approach to practice beginning to emerge?</i>		
2. Learn and Develop the Practice	Community/Practice/Domain	4. Create Knowledge in the Domain
Learn and develop a shared practice, based on an existing body of knowledge.		Generate and discover new knowledge.
Practice evolves with the community as a collective product, becomes integrated into members' work, and organizes knowledge in a way that reflects practitioners' perspectives. Successful practice development depends on a balance between "the production of 'things' like documents or tools" <sup>5</sup> and deep learning experiences for community members.		Members go beyond current practice to explore the cutting edge of the domain, to innovate. Community may redefine its boundaries and membership and foster boundary-crossing, possibly working with people from other communities to explore emerging technologies, practices, and ideas.
Key Questions: <i>How rich and accessible are the community's knowledge representations for existing practice? To what extent does community design support deeper learning for community members<sup>6</sup>?</i>		Key Questions: <i>How open is the community to new ideas and leadership? To what extent is the community influential in its domain? Are community members being invited, as community members, to present on leading-edge ideas?</i>
3. Take Action as a Community		
Take purposeful action to carry out tasks and projects		
Small group projects, sponsored by the community, help members create personal relationships and also provide a way to produce the resources for developing the practice: cases, effective practices, tools, methods, articles, lessons learned, databases, heuristics, models, Web sites.		
Key Questions: <i>Are collaborative efforts beginning to emerge naturally? Are there community structures to support collaborative efforts and coordination with others? Are members organized and engaged for their activities?</i>		

The next two sections outline specific issues related to defining the appropriate "social and technical architectures" for a given community. By providing questions that need to be answered at the beginning of each lifecycle stage, community facilitators can apply best practices in community development to their own CoPs. In addition to these key questions, a number of prescriptive activities are described that lead to specific work products. These include documents and presentations that can be used for communication, planning, and the facilitation of the community itself.

<b>1. Inquire</b> Identify the audience, purpose, goals, and vision for the community.	
Key Questions to Explore	Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Audience:</b> who is this community for? Who are the community's important stakeholders?</li> <li>▶ <b>Domain:</b> Given the intended audience, what are the key issues and the nature of the learning, knowledge, and tasks that the community will steward?</li> <li>▶ <b>Purpose, Goals, and Outcomes:</b> Given the audience and domain, what is this community's primary purpose? What are the benefits to the stakeholders? What specific needs will the community be organized to meet?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Conduct a needs assessment through informal discussions, formal interviews, surveys, and/or focus groups.</li> <li>2. Define the benefits of the community for all stakeholders, including individual sponsors, individual community members, defined subgroups, the community as a whole, and the sponsoring organization.</li> <li>3. Create a mission and vision statement for the community, tying these into the sponsoring organization's mission and vision if appropriate.</li> <li>4. Identify the major topic areas for community content and exploration.</li> <li>5. Create an estimate of the cost for community technology, special technical development, facilitation, and support.</li> <li>6. Begin the recruitment of a core team of individuals who represent the community audience.</li> </ol>
<b>2. Design</b> Define the activities, technologies, group processes, and roles that will support the community's goals.	
Key Questions to Explore	Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ <b>Activities:</b> What kinds of activities will generate energy and support the emergence of community presence? What will the community's rhythm be?</li> <li>▶ <b>Communication:</b> How will members communicate on an ongoing basis to accomplish the community's primary purpose?</li> <li>▶ <b>Interactions:</b> What kinds of interactions (with each other and with the content of the community) will generate energy and engagement?</li> <li>▶ <b>Learning:</b> What are the learning goals of the community, and how can collaborative learning be supported?</li> <li>▶ <b>Knowledge Sharing:</b> What are the external resources (people, publications, reports, etc.) that will support the community during its initial development? How will members share these resources and gain access to them?</li> <li>▶ <b>Collaboration:</b> How will community members collaborate with each other to achieve shared goals?</li> <li>▶ <b>Roles and Social Structures:</b> How will community roles be defined (individuals, groups, group leaders, community administrators, etc.) and who will take them on?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Identify tasks that community members are likely to want to carry out in the community.</li> <li>2. Develop a series of scenarios that describe various synchronous and asynchronous experiences of the different personas (identified in the first phase) that would be necessary to carry out the tasks and that demonstrate the potential benefits defined in the first phase.</li> <li>3. Identify any face-to-face meeting opportunities for community members and define how these will be incorporated into the community experience (conferences, etc.).</li> <li>4. Lay out a tentative schedule for the community (weekly, monthly, quarterly, and/or annually).</li> <li>5. Create a timeline for the community's development.</li> <li>6. Create a directory or folder structure for organizing discussions, documents, and resources.</li> <li>7. Determine facilitator roles and recruit the first community facilitator(s).</li> </ol>
<b>3. Prototype</b> Pilot the community with a select group of key stakeholders to gain commitment, test assumptions, refine the strategy, and establish a success story.	
Key Questions to Explore	Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ What short-term pilot goals will help establish the community as a viable and valuable entity?</li> <li>▶ What community-oriented technologies will be used to support the pilot community's social structures and core activities?</li> <li>▶ What sort of brand image does the community want to project, given its audience, domain, purpose, and mode of operation?</li> <li>▶ What are the meaningful metaphors to use with the community's audience?</li> <li>▶ What is the tone of interactions and activities that facilitators want to model?</li> <li>▶ How will community identity be formed and shared?</li> <li>▶ How will success be measured and communicated to the broader stakeholder groups?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Select the most appropriate community-oriented technology features to support the goals of the pilot.</li> <li>2. Design the community environment and have a group test the functionality through case scenarios.</li> <li>3. Decide on the community metaphor and how it will be represented in the community's organization and appearance.</li> <li>4. Implement the community prototype and give access to the core team and pilot audience.</li> <li>5. Seed the community with content.</li> <li>6. Facilitate events and activities to exercise the prototype, focusing on achieving short-term value-added goals.</li> <li>7. Ensure that roles are clear and that support structures are in place.</li> <li>8. Measure success and report on the results of the prototype to sponsors and stakeholders.</li> </ol>
<b>4. Launch</b> Roll out the community to a broader audience over a period of time in ways that engage new members and deliver immediate benefits.	
Key Questions to Explore	Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Why should someone join the community? What are the benefits?</li> <li>▶ What is the business model behind the community?</li> <li>▶ How do new members learn about the community?</li> <li>▶ What are the community's norms for behavior?</li> <li>▶ How do new members become oriented to the community environment?</li> <li>▶ Based on insights from the pilot, what kinds of community activities will generate energy and engagement and support the emergence of community "presence" (activities, communication, interaction, learning, knowledge sharing, collaboration, roles and social structures)? What will the community's "rhythm" be?</li> <li>▶ Based on insights from the pilot, how will roles and community social structures be defined and supported over time?</li> <li>▶ How will success be measured?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Using experience and results from the prototype, design and implement the community environment (include graphics that support the community metaphor, predefined content from a variety of sources, prepopulated online discussions, links, databases with best practices and other information, online meeting spaces, etc.).</li> <li>2. Establish the community charter, which includes an articulation of the mission, vision, goals, and member norms and agreements.</li> <li>3. Define various roles available for community members, depending on their desired level of participation, goals, and previous experience.</li> <li>4. Implement communications and marketing plans.</li> <li>5. Determine the member profile/directory structure.</li> <li>6. Recruit new members.</li> <li>7. Set up new member accounts or enable self-joining membership and group affiliations.</li> <li>8. Provide synchronous welcome to new members when they first log in.</li> <li>9. Provide orientation to new members.</li> <li>10. Finalize and publicize a community calendar of events.</li> <li>11. Design and deliver synchronous and asynchronous events and activities.</li> <li>12. Set up communication channels (news, announcements, newsletters, integration with face-to-face meetings, etc.).</li> </ol>



## 5. Grow

Engage members in collaborative learning and knowledge sharing activities, group projects, and networking events that meet individual, group, and organizational goals while creating an increasing cycle of participation and contribution.

Key Questions to Explore	Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ What are the emerging benefits of the community for members, subgroups, the community as a whole, the community's sponsors, and other key stakeholders?</li> <li>▶ What are the emerging roles that one could play within the community? What are the different groups to which one could belong?</li> <li>▶ How do members get recognized and rewarded for their contributions?</li> <li>▶ How do members create their own community identity and presence?</li> <li>▶ What work products can members contribute to support individual and community goals?</li> <li>▶ What are the most important elements of community culture that are emerging that should be recognized and represented in the online environment, as well as in formal policies and procedures?</li> <li>▶ What are the emerging technical needs of the community environment (e.g., the community-oriented technology/platform and the "place" that it creates) to support the evolving purpose, processes, and community culture?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Continue implementation, including facilitation and communication.</li> <li>2. Create and share stories of individual and community successes (e.g., digital stories) to capture best practices and create excitement and momentum.</li> <li>3. Identify emerging community roles and recruit members to fill them.</li> <li>4. Create and assign members to subgroups to support emerging group activities.</li> <li>5. Conduct a resource inventory (freshness, relevance, usefulness, use) then identify and upload additional content to meet the community's needs.</li> <li>6. Create opportunities for sponsored projects (projects with defined work products that may or may not require additional commitments from community members and sponsors).</li> <li>7. Design activities with recognition and awards attached to encourage desired behavior and participation.</li> <li>8. Conduct focus groups, interviews, surveys, and other data collection activities to assess and measure the success of the community.</li> <li>9. Facilitate discussions about the community itself, including the community culture, processes and practices, technology, and individual motivations for participating in the community.</li> </ol>

## 6. Sustain

Cultivate and assess the learning, knowledge, and products created by the community to inform new strategies, goals, activities, roles, technologies, and business models for the future.

Key Questions to Explore	Supporting Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ What are the ongoing community processes and practices that will contribute to the liveliness and dynamism of the community and keep members engaged?</li> <li>▶ How does the community support members across a wide range of roles?</li> <li>▶ How are new potential community leaders (official and unofficial) going to be identified, chosen, developed, and supported by the community?</li> <li>▶ How is persistent community "presence" maintained in the minds of the community members?</li> <li>▶ To what extent is the community serving its intended audience and accomplishing its stated purpose and goals? How might it do a better job?</li> <li>▶ How does the community demonstrate return on investment (ROI) for its sponsor(s)?</li> <li>▶ From the perspective of each individual community member and from that of the community as a whole, what is the perceived return on participation?</li> <li>▶ How should the knowledge and products created by the community be shared beyond the community?</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide opportunities in the community for members to play new roles, experiment with new community activities, and examine new technology features.</li> <li>2. Develop a support infrastructure including documentation, mentoring, and development as well as recognition programs for different roles.</li> <li>3. Ensure that procedures, practices, and the technology support structured data sharing.</li> <li>4. Identify opportunities for capturing new knowledge, including establishing new roles related to harvesting and creating best practices (e.g., "gardeners," summarizers, synthesizers).</li> <li>5. Develop policies and processes for harvesting and sharing knowledge outside the community.</li> <li>6. Encourage publication of articles about the community and its projects.</li> <li>7. Test for "persistence of presence" by evaluating member and group activity reports as well as member focus groups and surveys.</li> <li>8. Review community audience, purpose, goals, and domain; watch for shifts in expectations and needs.</li> </ol>

## Emphasizing the Right Technical Features

The following table summarizes the core technical features found across the four primary areas of activity of most CoPs. Most communities possess a mix of these features as a way to support an integrated approach to relationship building, learning, knowledge sharing, and actionable projects. Consider the table below as a menu. Identify the appropriate combination of features to support your own community's specific goals. In addition, also consider how certain features may be "core" at one phase of your community's lifecycle and how other features may be introduced as your community evolves. For example, in the Prototype and Grow phases, relationship building and learning may be core, while in the Sustain phase, knowledge sharing and project management may become more central.

	Relationships	Learning	Action	Knowledge
Core Technical Features	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Distributed account management</li> <li>▪ Member networking profiles</li> <li>▪ Member directory with relationship-focused data fields</li> <li>▪ Subgroups that are defined by administrators or that allow members to self-join</li> <li>▪ Online meetings/chat</li> <li>▪ Online discussions</li> <li>▪ User-controlled delivery modes for notifications and information</li> <li>▪ Community activity reports</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Narrated PowerPoint presentations</li> <li>▪ E-learning tools</li> <li>▪ Assessments</li> <li>▪ Web conferencing and webcasts</li> <li>▪ Online meetings</li> <li>▪ Online discussions</li> <li>▪ Web-site links</li> <li>▪ Interactive multimedia</li> <li>▪ Variety of community member roles and responsibilities is supported</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project management</li> <li>▪ Task management</li> <li>▪ Document collaboration</li> <li>▪ File version tracking</li> <li>▪ File check-in and check-out</li> <li>▪ Instant messaging</li> <li>▪ Web conferencing and online meetings</li> <li>▪ Online discussions</li> <li>▪ Individual and group calendaring</li> <li>▪ Subgroup working spaces</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keyword and full-text searches (site-wide and by section)</li> <li>▪ Structured databases and database tools</li> <li>▪ Digital stories</li> <li>▪ Idea banks</li> <li>▪ Web conferencing</li> <li>▪ Online meetings</li> <li>▪ Online discussions</li> <li>▪ Announcements</li> <li>▪ Web-site links</li> <li>▪ Multiple modes for knowledge representation</li> <li>▪ Resources directly associated with interaction</li> </ul>

For a detailed set of draft functional requirements for use in evaluating community-oriented technologies, see <http://www.educause.edu/nlii/virtualCommunities/944>.

### For more information

For more information about the NLIJ and the Virtual Communities of Practice Initiative, please see <http://www.educause.edu/VirtualCommunities/576>. For information about VCOP resources, see <http://www.educause.edu/VirtualCommunities/944>.

<http://www.educause.edu/VirtualCommunities/944>

<sup>1</sup> Etienne Wenger, Richard McDermott, & William Snyder, *Cultivating Communities of Practice: A Guide to Managing Knowledge* (Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press, 2002).

<sup>2</sup> Wenger et al

<sup>3</sup> Adapted from McDermott, 2002

<sup>4</sup> Wenger, et al, p. 28

<sup>5</sup> Wenger, et al, p. 39

<sup>6</sup> See NLIJ web site, "Mapping the Learning Space," for more information on deeper learning principles (<http://www.educause.edu/MappingtheLearningSpace/2594>), and a related draft observation tool, "Community

### Article (3)

## Teachers As Transformatory Intellectuals

Henry Giroux

Unlike many past educational reforms movements, the present call for educational change presents both a threat and a challenge to public school teachers that appear unprecedented. The threat comes in the form of a series of educational reforms that display little confidence in the ability of public school teachers to provide intellectual and moral leadership for our youth. For instance, many recommendations that have emerged in the current debate across the world either ignore the role teacher's play in preparing learners to be active and critical citizens or they suggest reforms that ignore the intelligence, judgment and experience that teachers might offer in such a debate. Where teachers do enter the debate, they are object of educational reforms that reduce them to the status of high-level technicians carrying out dictates and objectives decided by experts far removed from the everyday realities of classroom life. The message appears to be that teachers do not count when it comes to critically examining the nature and process of educational reform.

The political and ideological climate does not look favorable for the teachers at the moment. But it does offer them the challenge to join a public debate with their critics as well as the opportunity to engage in a much needed self-critique regarding the nature and purpose of teacher preparation, in-service teacher programs and the dominant forms of classroom teaching. Similarly, the debate provides teachers with the opportunity to organize collectively to improve the conditions under which they work and to demonstrate to the public the central role that teachers must play to any viable attempt to reform the public schools.

In order for teachers and others to

engage in such a debate, it is necessary that theoretical perspective be developed that redefines the nature of the educational crisis across the world while simultaneously providing the basis for an alternative view of teacher training and work. In short, recognizing that the current crisis in education largely has to do with the developing trend towards the disempowerment of teachers at all levels of education is a necessary theoretical precondition for teachers to organize effectively and establish a collective voice in the current debate. Moreover, such a recognition will have to come to grips with a growing loss of power among teachers around the basic conditions of their work, but also with a changing public perception of their role as reflective practitioners.

I want to make a small theoretical contribution to this debate and the challenge it calls forth by examining two major problems that need to be addressed in the interest of improving the quality of 'teacher work', which includes all the clerical tasks and extra assignment as well as classroom instruction. First, I think it is imperative to examine the ideological and material forces that have contributed to what I want to call the proletarianization of teacher work; that is, the tendency to reduce teachers to the status of specialized technicians within the school bureaucracy, whose function then becomes one of the managing and implementing curricular programs rather than developing or critically appropriating curricula to fit specific pedagogical concerns. Second, there is a need to defend schools as institutions essential to maintaining and developing a critical democracy and also to defending teachers as transformative intellectuals who combine scholarly reflection and practice in the service of educating students to be thoughtful, active citizens. In the remainder of this

*It is important not only to view teachers as intellectuals, but also to contextualize in political and normative terms the concrete social functions that teachers have both to their work and to the dominant society.*

essay, I will develop these points and conclude by examining their implications for providing an alternative view of teacher work.

### **Devaluing and Deskillng Teacher Work**

One of the major threats facing prospective and existing teachers within the public schools is the increasing development of instrumental ideologies that emphasize a technocratic approach to both teacher preparation and classroom pedagogy. At the core of the current emphasis on the instrumental and pragmatic factors in school life are a number of important pedagogical assumptions. These include: a call for the separation of conception from execution; the standardization of school knowledge in the interest of managing and controlling it; the increased call for standardized testing, and the devaluation of critical, intellectual work on the part of teachers and students for the primacy of practical considerations. In this view, teaching is reduced to training and concepts are substituted by methods.

Instead of learning to raise questions about the principles underlying different classroom methods, research techniques and theories of education, students are often preoccupied with learning the 'how to', with what works, or with mastering the best way to teach a given body of knowledge. For example the mandatory field-practice seminars often consist of students sharing with each other the techniques they have used in managing and controlling classroom discipline, organizing a day's activities, and learning how to work within specific time tables.

Technocratic and instrumental rationalities are also at work within the teaching field itself, and they play an increasing role in reducing teacher autonomy with respect to the development and planning of curricula and the judging and implementation of classroom instruction. This is most evident in the proliferation of what has been called 'teacher-proof' curriculum packages. The underlying rationale in many of these packages reserves for teachers the role of simply carrying out predetermined content and instructional procedures. The method and aim of such packages is to legitimate what I call management pedagogies. That is knowledge is broken down into discrete parts, standardized for easier management and consumption, and measured through predefined forms of assessment. Curricula approaches of this sort are management pedagogies because the central questions regarding learning are reduced to the problem of management, i.e., "how to allocate resources (teachers, students and materials) to produce the maximum number of certified...students within a designated time.

The underlying theoretical assumption that guides this type of pedagogy is that the behavior of teachers needs to be controlled and made consistent and predictable across different schools and student populations. The deskillng that teachers experience across the world is further exacerbated by World Bank pedagogies that impose on countries forms of privatization and standardized curricula that undermine the potential for critical inquiry and engaged citizenship. Learning in this instance is depoliticized and often reduced to teaching to the test.

What is clear in this approach is that it organizes school life around curricular, instructional, and evaluation express who do the thinking while teachers are reduced to doing the implementing. The effect is not only to deskill teachers, to remove them from the processes of deliberation and reflection, but also to routinize the nature of learning and classroom pedagogy. Needless to say, the principles underlying management pedagogies are at odds with the premise that teachers should be actively involved in producing curricula materials suited to the cultural and social contexts in which they teach. More specifically, the narrowing of curricula choices to a back-to-basics format and the introduction of lock-step, time-on-task pedagogies operate from the theoretically erroneous assumption that all students can learn from the same materials, classroom instructional techniques and modes of evaluation. The notion that students come from different histories and embody different experiences, linguistic practices, cultures, and talents is strategically ignored within the logic and accountability of management pedagogy theory.

### **Teachers as Transformative Intellectuals**

In what follows, I want to argue that one way to rethink and restructure the nature of teacher work is to view teachers as transformative intellectuals. The category of intellectual is helpful in a number of ways. First, it provides a theoretical basis for examining teacher work as a form of intellectual labor, as opposed to defining it in purely instrumental or technical terms. Second, it clarifies the kinds of ideological and practical conditions necessary for teachers to function as intellectuals. Third, it helps to make clear the role teachers play in producing and legitimating various political, economic and social interests through the pedagogies they endorse and utilize.

By viewing teachers as intellectuals, we can illuminate the important idea that all human activity involves some form of thinking. No activity, regardless of how routinized it might become, can be abstracted from the functioning of the mind in some capacity. This is a

crucial issue, because by arguing that the use of the mind is a general part of all human activity we dignify the human capacity for integrating thinking and practice, and in doing so highlight the core of what it means to view teachers as reflective practitioners. Within this discourse, teachers can be seen not merely as "performers professionally equipped to realize effectively any goals that may be set for them. Rather [they should] be viewed as free men and women with a special dedication to the values of the intellect and the enhancement of the critical powers of the young."

Viewing teachers as intellectuals also provides a strong theoretical critique of technocratic and instrumental ideologies underlying an educational theory that separates the conceptualization, planning and design of curricula from the processes of implementation and execution. It is important to stress that teachers must take active responsibility for raising serious questions about what they teach, how they are to teach, and what the larger goals are for which they are striving.

This means that they must take a responsible role in shaping the purposes and conditions of schooling. Such a task is impossible within a division of labor in which teachers have little influence over the ideological and economic conditions of their work. This point has a normative and political dimension that seems especially relevant for teachers. If we believe that the role of teaching cannot be reduced to merely training in the practical skills, but involves, instead, the education of a class of engaged and public intellectuals vital to the development of a free society, then the category of intellectual becomes a way of linking the purpose of teacher education, public schooling and in-service training to the very principles necessary for developing a democratic order and society. Recognizing teachers as engaged and public intellectuals means that educators should never be reduced to technicians just as education should never be reduced to training. Instead, pedagogy should be rooted in the practice of ethical and political formation of both the self and the broader social order.

I have argued that by viewing teachers as intellectuals we can begin to rethink and reform the traditions and conditions that have prevented teachers from assuming their full potential as active, reflective scholars and practitioners. I believe that it is important not only to view teachers as intellectuals, but also to contextualize in political and normative terms the concrete social functions that teachers have both to their work and to the dominant society.

A starting point for interrogating the social function of teachers as intellectuals is to view schools as economic,

cultural and social sites that are inextricably tied to the issues of politics, power and control. This means that schools do more than pass on in an objective fashion a common set of values and knowledge. On the contrary, schools are places that represent forms of knowledge, language practices, social relations and values that are particular selections and exclusions from the wider culture. As such, schools serve to introduce and legitimate particular forms of social life. Rather than being objective institutions removed from the dynamics of politics and power, schools actually are contested spheres that embody and express struggle over what forms of authority, types of knowledge, forms of moral regulation and versions of the past and future should be legitimated and transmitted to students. The struggle is most visible in the demands, for example, of right-wing religious groups currently trying to institute school prayer, remove certain books from school libraries, and include certain forms of religious teachings in the science curricula. Of course, different demands are made by feminists, ecologists, minorities, and other interest groups who believe that the schools should teach women's studies, courses on the environment, or black history. In short, schools are not neutral sites, and teachers cannot assume the posture of being neutral either.

In the broadest sense, teachers as intellectuals have to be seen in terms of the ideological and political interests that structure the nature of the discourse, classroom social relations, and values that they legitimate in their teaching. With this perspective in mind, I want to conclude that teachers should become transformative intellectuals if they are to educate students to be active, critical citizens.

Central to the category of transformative intellectual is the necessity of making the pedagogical more political and the political more pedagogical. Making the pedagogical more political means inserting schooling directly into the political sphere by arguing that schooling represents both a struggle to define meaning and a struggle over power relations. Within this perspective, critical reflection and action become part of a fundamental social project to help students develop a deep and abiding faith in the struggle to overcome economic, political and social injustices, and to further humanize themselves as part of this struggle. In this case, knowledge and power are inextricably linked to the presupposition that to choose life, to recognize the necessity of improving its democratic and qualitative character for all people, is to understand the preconditions necessary to struggle for it. Teaching must be seen as political precisely because it is directive, that is, an intervention that takes up the ethical responsibility

of recognizing, as Paulo Freire points out, that human life is conditioned but not determined.

A critical pedagogical practice does not transfer knowledge but create the possibilities for its production, analysis, and use. Without succumbing to a kind of rigid dogmatism, teachers must provide the conditions for students to bear witness to history, their own actions, and the mechanisms that drive the larger social order so that they can imagine the inseparable connection between the human condition and the ethical basis of our existence. The key here is to recognize that being a transformative intellectual is no excuse for being dogmatic. While it is crucial to recognize that education has a critical function, the teachers task is not to mold students but to encourage human agency, to provide the conditions for students to be self-determining and to struggle for a society that is both autonomous and democratic.

Making the political more pedagogical means utilizing forms of pedagogy that embody political interest that are emancipatory in nature; that is, using forms of pedagogy that treat students as critical agents; make knowledge problematic; utilize critical and affirming dialogue; and make the case for struggling for a qualitatively better world for all people. In part, this suggests that transformative intellectuals take seriously the need to give students an active voice in their learning experiences. It also means developing a critical vernacular that is attentive to problems experienced at the level of everyday life, particularly as they are related to pedagogical experiences connected to classroom practice. As such, the pedagogical starting point for such intellectuals is not the isolated student but individuals and groups in their various cultural, class, racial, historical and gender settings, along with the particularity of their diverse problems, hopes, and dreams.

Transformative intellectuals need to develop a discourse that unites the language of critique with the language of possibility, so that social educators recognize that they can make changes. In doing so, they must speak out against economic, political and social injustices both within and outside of schools. At the same time, they must work to create the conditions that give students the opportunity to become citizens who have the knowledge and courage to struggle in order to make despair unconvincing and hope practical. Hope in this case is not a call to social engineering nor an excuse to overlook the difficult conditions that shape both schools and the larger social order. On the contrary, it is the precondition for offering up those languages and values that can help point the way to a more democratic and just world.

As Judith Butler has argued, there is more hope in the world when we can question common sense assumptions and believe that what we know is directly related to our ability to help change the world around us, though it is far from the only condition necessary for such change. Hope provides the basis for dignifying our labor as intellectuals, offering up critical knowledge linked to democratic social change, and allowing both students and teachers to recognize ambivalence and uncertainty as a fundamental dimension of learning to engage in critique, dialogue, and an open ended struggle for justice. As difficult as this task may seem to social educators, it is a struggle worth waging. To do otherwise is to deny educators the opportunity to assume the role of transformative intellectuals.

Article (4)

# The challenge: active, engaged readers

Motivating students to read and engaging them in reading as a pleasurable activity is the main aim of the Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge.

For many people, the pleasure gained from reading is its own reward. For children and young adults, the rewards of reading widely move far beyond pleasure. Being an active, engaged reader is a powerful support to other learning and to the development of literacy skills.

Literacy and numeracy skills provide the foundation for lifelong learning, rewarding and satisfying work, and a fulfilling personal life. Being literate and numerate are critical factors in improving students' ability to learn at all stages of schooling and are essential skills for accessing opportunities beyond school. Research shows that to improve student reading literacy, schools need to increase student engagement with reading as well as develop their cognitive skills.

Developing student engagement with reading is an important aspect of curriculum planning

and provision for literacy. Strategies, events and activities that increase student interest in and engagement with reading are appropriate across all areas of the curriculum. The Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge is one such strategy. It can encourage students in the early years of schooling to make their first attempts at independent reading as well as encourage confident middle years students to branch out and try a new genre.

Schools build active, engaged readers by:

- building a culture of reading,
- exploring the teaching and learning possibilities inherent in print texts, and
- building an extensive and accessible collection.



'If children are to become lifetime consumers of books then their own reading preferences must be known and accepted and used as the basis for encouragement. They need reader role models, easy access to books in a wide variety of styles and genres, and recommendations personally tailored to them.' – Claire Senior

## Building a reading culture



Research for the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development has found that 'Students who read well tend to be active readers. They gain in terms of both motivation and experience from reading regularly outside the context of schoolwork...

The results show how important it is not just to teach students to read but to engage them in reading as part of their lives.<sup>1</sup>

These findings have been replicated many times across various studies. The amount of free reading done outside school

has consistently been found to relate to growth in vocabulary, reading comprehension, verbal fluency, and levels of general knowledge. 'In other words, how well children read is related to how much they read.'<sup>2</sup>

Practising reading improves skill levels and improved reading ability assists and extends learning in many other areas. To ensure that reading becomes a regular activity in students' lives, schools need to find ways to increase the level of engagement experienced by students. Schools can do this by offering students:

- a wide and varied choice of reading materials,
- time to read for pleasure,
- welcoming, student-centred reading spaces,
- assistance in finding the right book at the right time, and
- opportunities to talk and think about what they have read.

## Building a resource collection

To facilitate a reading-centred curriculum, classrooms, school libraries and shared spaces need to be full of texts of all kinds. Text and 'print-rich environments lead to more reading'<sup>3</sup>; 'children with more access to books read more'<sup>4</sup>; and better classroom collections and better school libraries result in more reading amongst students.

To create a text-rich classroom that recognises the varied interests, strengths and abilities of a diverse range of students, schools must provide a variety of genres and formats.

Surrounding students with quality texts, involving them in exploration of what these texts mean to them and supporting their efforts to learn about themselves and the world around them are basic activities of a school classroom or





## A varied and comprehensive resource collection

When purchasing resources to build a varied and comprehensive collection schools should consider the following areas, amongst others:

### Reading to find out, reading for information

Some readers find that make-believe stories are not for them, they prefer something factual, something they know is true. This may be true of even very young readers. Keying into their particular interests – the topics creating interest in class and in the playground, and the tried and true subjects that always capture student imagination, such as sport, animals and heroes – will support these students.

'Information books are most often used for finding out about a subject under study...but less often are they promoted, or valued, as pleasurable, recreational reading. But for many readers, including children, books that present information about actual events, lives, voyages, discoveries, science, sport, dinosaurs, space or the past are what motivates their interest in reading.' – Susan La Marca and Pam Macintyre

### Reading pictures

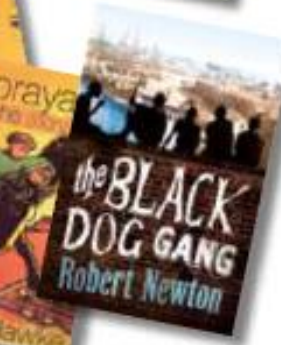
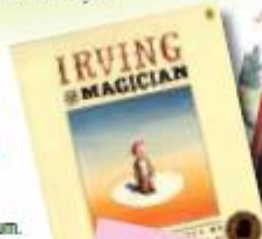
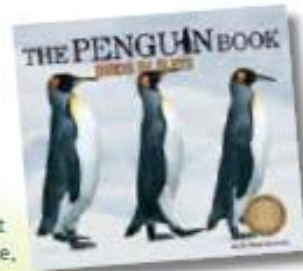
Visual texts come in many forms and are appropriate for all ages. Picture books and illustrated stories have a place in every school library or resource collection. Much of the information we encounter every day is visual. Encouraging students to read images critically, and to explore and examine images to enable them to create meaning is an important aspect of their overall literacy development and an essential part of a thinking curriculum.

### Reading about ourselves

During the years children attend school they experience physical and emotional changes that can be both rapid and confusing. Older students are moving from childhood through adolescence to adulthood. Students are working out who they are and who they may want to be. Reading can offer examples: experiences and options that help them discover who they are in relation to a wider world. Reading offers puzzles, ideas and new ways of looking at the world that encourage critical thought about the big questions of life.

### Other times, other places, other cultures

Understanding the way we see the world is an important part of the thinking processes described in the Interdisciplinary Learning strand of the VELS. Both fact and fiction offer a window into the experiences of others that can help to make abstract ideas and concepts more easily understood. Our view of history and other parts of our world can come alive when we empathise with characters we come to know through the experience of reading.



## Other realities

The worlds of fantasy, myth and legend offer us escape and imaginative interaction with worlds unlike our own. As well as offering us magic, imaginary creatures and incredible places, these reading experiences can delve into important questions about good and evil, power and love and the very meaning of existence.

'Great fiction proceeds by making the familiar and the ordinary strange again. It offers alternative worlds that put the actual one in a new light...It explores human plights through the prism of imagination.' – Jerome Bruner

## Off the wall: alternative styles

Alternative styles of text are often cutting edge in format and content. Consequently, they can offer edgy, interesting approaches that work to engage young people in reading. Graphic novels, illustrated texts and books that play with language and form can be both creative and thought provoking. They can offer readers opportunities to critically analyse form and structure as well as content.

## Rhyme and verse

The wonderful way that words sound as they roll off the tongue in memorable rhyme can increase enjoyment of reading as well as teaching about sounds and rhythm. A good verse, well read, can have great impact and encourage children to pick up a book and experiment with sound and language. Verse texts for older students offer a fast and engaging way into a story through fewer, but carefully chosen and arranged, words on a page.

'I hope they fall in love with the sound of words the way I did at school with Shakespeare and Gerard Manley Hopkins. That they feel the danger and playfulness of words, how they can thrill you and stab you, and make you laugh all at the same time.' – Paul Kelly

## Our heritage: old and new classics

'Classics' are books that have remained popular over a long period of time. They are often stories that deserve to be read by countless generations and which deal with timeless or universal themes or experiences. Reading them helps students understand references in everyday life and popular culture. Fairytales, nursery rhymes, creation stories and other classics are all part of our reading history and our reading culture.

## Laugh out loud

Humour is one of the most effective genres in engaging students in a world of story. We all love to laugh. Humour crosses boundaries and helps the reader empathise with characters. It entices readers into a text – they read on looking for the next big laugh.





## Building a curriculum that promotes reading

‘The experience of literature is fundamental to the wellbeing of all people, not a luxury item to be sampled by a select few. It sustains and nourishes us while educating us for life and about life. It enables us to explore who and what we are, our strengths and our flaws, our past and our future.’ – Susan Clancy

A reading curriculum is one which explores the teaching and learning possibilities inherent in written and visual texts. Schools can plan to incorporate the Premier's Reading Challenge and other activities promoting reading for enjoyment into the curriculum and other classroom activities. Engaging students in reading as a lifelong, pleasurable activity supports efforts in the classroom to improve literacy and learning standards.

The Victorian Essential Learning Standards encourage active engagement with a variety of texts.

‘Our world and the world of the future demand that all students are supported to become effective and skilful thinkers. Thinking validates existing knowledge and enables individuals to create new knowledge and to build ideas and make connections between them; it entails reasoning and inquiry together with processing and evaluating information.’ (Thinking Processes, Interdisciplinary Learning, Level 6).

Schools can meet the requirements of the Interdisciplinary Learning strand through engaging students with a range of quality texts. Supported by good classroom practice, texts of all kinds encourage reasoning and inquiry as they pose questions about who we are in the world, how we behave,

what has come before and what the future may be like.

The reading dimension of the English strand of VELS involves students understanding, interpreting, critically analysing, reflecting upon, and enjoying written and visual, print and non-print texts.

Encouraging students to work with a wide range of texts is a crucial part of how teachers fulfil the role of assisting students to interpret, critically analyse and reflect.

The Premier's Reading Challenge encourages students to enjoy texts of all kinds. Through promoting student engagement with text it provides opportunities for teachers to involve students in deeper, more analytical reflection.

Creating a classroom that enables quality interaction between students and well-chosen texts impacts upon all areas of learning. At the same time, supported explorations can add to students' enjoyment of a particular text and help stimulate interest and engagement in reading.



### The following websites are useful resources for teachers:

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development  
Victoria learning and teaching resources:

- English Domain page <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/default.htm>
- English Developmental Continuum P-10 <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/englishcontinuum/default.htm>
- Literacy Professional Learning resource <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/teachingresources/english/literacy/default.htm>
- Digilearn Digital Learning Resources <https://www.eduweb.vic.gov.au/dlr/Pages/default.aspx>
- Victorian Education Channel <http://www.education.vic.gov.au/teacher/>

Victorian Essential Learning Standards

- English Standards and progression points <http://vels.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/ppoint/eng/index.html>

Strategies for supporting reading in the middle years:

- Department of Education, Science and Training <http://www.myread.org/>

Teaching strategies

- Department of Education, Tasmania <http://www.education.tas.gov.au/english/strategy.htm>

Classroom activities and experiences related to Nodelman and Reimer's book *The Resources of Children's Literature*

- <http://o.uwinnipeg.ca/~nodelman/resources/class.htm>

Three previously published booklets for parents, 'Books for Kids', and 'Books for middle years kids (Years 5-8)' have now been made available at [www.education.vic.gov.au/pro/parents](http://www.education.vic.gov.au/pro/parents).

These booklets include lists of texts arranged thematically by age group to assist parents who are looking for the next great book for their child.

## Resources – books for children and young adults

### Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge

The Victorian Premier's Reading Challenge booklists provide a diverse selection of books across genres for students in Prep to Year 10.

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/prc/books/default.htm>

### Education Network Australia (EDNA)

This site offers an extensive collection of online resources for teachers in schools and across the Key Learning Areas. The English area includes links to teaching units, strategies for reading and viewing texts and a section on Australian literature.

[http://www.edna.edu.au/edna/go/schooled/schools\\_kla/](http://www.edna.edu.au/edna/go/schooled/schools_kla/)

### Children's Book Council of Australia (CBCA)

The CBCA runs Book Week in August each year and presents the Australian CBCA Book of the Year Awards. [www.cbc.org.au](http://www.cbc.org.au)

### Young Australians' Best Book Award (YABBA)

YABBA was established in 1985 to promote Australian children's fiction. Students can nominate and vote for the best book of the year.

<http://home.vicnet.net.au/~yabba/>

### Centre for Youth Literature (CYL)

CYL runs a year-long program of events aimed at promoting youth literature. It is also the home of the 'Inside a dog' website which offers young adults a forum for all things about teenage reading.

<http://www.slv.vic.gov.au/about/centreforyouthliterature/youthlit.html>

<http://www.insideadog.com.au/>

### Dromkeen Children's Literature Collection

Dromkeen houses a collection of contemporary and historical illustrations from Australian children's books and provides workshops and structured school programs.

[www.scholastic.com.au/dromkeen](http://www.scholastic.com.au/dromkeen)

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#### Endnotes:

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## Article (5)

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# Does Johnny's Reading Teacher Love to Read? How Teachers' Personal Reading Habits Affect Instructional Practices

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*This article investigates the relationship between teachers' personal reading habits and their instructional practices. Teachers responded to a questionnaire that revealed their attitudes toward reading, the amount of time they spent reading per day and the kind of literacy practices that they used in their classrooms. Results indicate: (1) while most teachers value reading as a leisure time activity, only about half read for pleasure on a daily basis, (2) teachers who read more than 30 minutes per day use a greater number of best practice strategies, (3) teachers who value reading the most tend to share insights from their own personal reading, and (4) teachers who read for pleasure use both intrinsic and extrinsic types of motivation.*

**Keywords** pleasure reading, reading attitudes, reading instruction, teachers' reading habits

We believe that after parents, teachers have the greatest opportunity to influence our children's reading habits. If teachers serve as role models, then modeling or demonstrating their own reading preferences, passions, and puzzlements most likely will affect how their students respond to reading. But, do teachers only have to say that they love reading in order for this demonstration to be effective or do they actually have to show children through their behaviors that they have a genuine love of reading? This is the question that guided our study.

We were interested in looking at teachers' own personal reading habits and the manner in which these habits influenced their instructional practices. Gray and Troy (1986) found that children begin their introduction to literature by initially observing their parents at home and then extending their observations to their teachers at school. Because these observations of good reading habits play a critical role in their developing reading habits, it seems important for both teachers and parents to have the interest and desire to partake in reading.

In an earlier study, Mour (1977) concluded that teachers should "practice what they preach." In other words, teachers need to value reading in order to convey this value to children. Similarly, Dreher (2002) and Dillingofski (1993) both suggested that a concentrated effort be placed on actively taking steps to motivate teachers to read more frequently and hopefully to impart that value to their students.

To investigate the relationships between teachers who read personally and their instructional practices, Morrison, Jacobs, and Swinyard (1999) surveyed elementary teachers. They reported that teachers who read personally used a greater number of classroom instructional strategies associated with best practice. Morrison et al. examined teachers' use of recommended instructional practices by identifying the behavior such as

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reading aloud, staying with children in the library, recommending books, using time in class for children to read independently, and talking with both teachers and peers about reading (p. 11). They concluded that teachers who are enthusiastic readers are more likely to use instructional activities that promote engagement.

Cambourne (2002), in his model of conditions of learning, emphasized that in order to learn, the learner must not only be a witness to the demonstration but in addition be engaged with the demonstration. He gives the example of someone watching sky diving so they are viewing the demonstration but unless they are engaged to the point of wanting to do it themselves, the demonstration is meaningless. Smith (1983) has for many years proclaimed that engagement is a necessary component of becoming a good reader.

More recently, the explicit teaching of reading strategies has made its way into the forefront of policy makers and curriculum developers. While explicit teaching of skills and strategies is useful and necessary as a component of reading instruction, this explicit teaching without allowing for sufficient practice through independent reading is counterproductive. Allington (2007) reminds us of the need for practice in reading, especially for low-performing readers. He reveals the discrepancy between good and poor readers in school in relation to instructional practice. He has found that good readers are often afforded daily opportunities for self-selected reading while poor readers get more skill instruction and fewer opportunities to read for extended periods of time. Atwell (2007) asserts that the relentless focus on reading strategies detracts from keeping in what she calls the student's "reading zone," a place where students are fully engaged in reading.

Manna and Misheff (1987) investigated self-reports of teachers' reading habits and came up with two categories, the transactional reader and the reduced reader. Transactional readers approach reading in a way that meaning is essential and produces pleasure or other gratification whereas reduced readers are reluctant and see reading as an arduous and painful act that yields little gratification or pleasure. When a teacher's attitude toward reading is reduced, it is unlikely that children will see modeled the kind of behaviors that are conducive to developing lifelong readers.

Braithwaite (1999) found that teachers' literacy beliefs do directly affect their literacy practices. He concludes, "It apparently does matter what teachers think. The evidence is that teaching is a complex and cognitively and attitudinally demanding task and that beliefs affect implementation processes and to some degree, student outcomes" (p. 20).

Both teachers' personal reading habits and their beliefs about the importance of reading do affect the instructional decisions that teachers make. This study seeks to further our understanding of this relationship.

#### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the relationship between teachers' personal reading habits and their instructional practices. The exploratory questions that guided this study were:

1. Do reading teachers engage in reading as a leisure time activity?
2. Do teachers who read for pleasure use more instructional strategies associated with best practice than teachers who do not read for pleasure?
3. Is there a difference between the instructional practices used by teachers who value reading in their own lives and those who do not?
4. Is there a difference between teachers who read for pleasure and those who do not in terms of how they motivate students to read?

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#### Method

##### Participants

Sixty-five elementary school teachers (23 fourth-, 26 fifth-, and 16 sixth-grade teachers) from schools in three states (New Jersey, Florida, and Texas) were surveyed. These three states were selected only because we knew individuals in each of these states who were willing to distribute and collect the surveys. All of the teachers surveyed were classroom teachers who taught reading as one of several subjects taught during the school day. The average age of the teachers was 38 years with 10 years of experience. All of the participants were female and 23% held master's degrees.

##### Procedure

We developed a questionnaire that was designed to investigate how teachers' reading habits related to the instructional practices they used in their reading classes. A total of 105 surveys were distributed and 65 were collected, which established a collection rate of 62%. Surveys were distributed by a contact teacher in each school and placed in the school mailboxes of all fourth-, fifth-, and sixth-grade teachers in each school. A cover letter was included with the surveys that gave a rationale for the study, human subject consent, and the date that the surveys needed to be returned to the office. To encourage participation, the letter also stated that a \$25 gift card would be awarded randomly to one of the teachers in each school who returned their survey by the designated date.

Each teacher was asked to complete a fairly lengthy questionnaire (see the Appendix) adapted from Morrison et al. (1999) with embedded questions related to leisure time reading. We wanted to find out how much time teachers spent reading for pleasure without revealing the primary purpose of the study. The first set of questions required the teacher to report descriptive data about themselves including age, years of experience, level of education, and current grade taught. They were then asked to complete six sets of questions that required a total of 65 responses. This questionnaire was piloted with a group of 10 teachers from an elementary school in New Jersey. Analysis of the piloted questionnaire resulted in a reconfiguration of the questionnaire and an additional set of questions about weekend reading.

The second set of questions asked teachers to identify activities they engaged in after school and to record how much time they spent on each activity per day. Some of the activities included were television viewing, exercising, computer usage, planning for teaching, and reading.

The third set of questions pertained to instructional practices. First, teachers were asked to list the three literacy instructional strategies that they valued and used regularly in their classrooms. Then they were asked to identify, from a list of instructional strategies, the strategies related to reading that they used in their classrooms and how often they used them. These strategies included "best practice" methods such as independent reading, book clubs or literature circles, guided reading, read alouds, and reader response journals, as well as other commonly used practices such as round robin reading and answering written comprehension questions (Zemelman, Daniels, & Hyde, 2005). These data were used to examine the relationship between how much time teachers spent reading for pleasure and the instructional practices they used in their classrooms.

Next, teachers answered questions pertaining to their own personal reading habits and attitudes toward reading. They were asked to read six statements and determine the extent

to which they agreed or disagreed with the statement. An example of one of these questions was, "I think I am a devoted reader." These questions helped to explain the relationship between the extent to which teachers value reading and their own instructional practices.

Teachers were also asked to complete a three-day after school activity log. Three days, including a Sunday, were decided on as a result of the pilot study. After interviewing a few teachers it was discovered that some teachers read for pleasure on the weekends, but not during their busy school week. Therefore, we chose Sunday, Monday, and Tuesday so that routines of both weekdays and weekends could be included. The purpose of this log was to see how these teachers spent their time outside of school and to substantiate the data from the second set of questions.

Lastly, teachers were asked to respond to the question: How do you motivate your students to read? Teachers answered this question with a short written response.

#### Data Analysis

The data from the survey were analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data sources were analyzed through descriptive analysis methods, while grounded-theory methods were used to analyze the short written responses (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). These written responses were examined by both authors and then categorized using the technique of "constant-comparative analysis" in which pieces of information were compared against other pieces of information across all subjects. Through this methodology, the concepts and relationships among the pieces of information were not only generated but they were also provisionally tested.

### Results

#### Teachers as Readers

Teachers were asked to record, on an activity log using 15-minute time intervals, how they spent their time after school for a three-day period. Various activities were reported. We wanted to discover how much time teachers were spending reading for pleasure per day compared to other leisure time activities. The teachers reported on average that they spent 24 minutes a day reading for pleasure (see Table 1). However, 41% (27) of the 65 teachers

Table 1  
How teachers spend their time

Activity	Minutes per day
Watching television	58
Chores and cooking	58
Family activities	55
Planning for teaching	52
Computer	32
Grading	31
Reading for pleasure	24
Exercising	22

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Table 2  
Time teachers spend reading for pleasure

	Minutes per day	Number of teachers
45 or more	7	(11%)
30-45	12	(18%)
11-30	19	(29%)
less than 10	10	(15%)
0	17	(26%)

reported less than 10 minutes of reading a day, and 63% (17) of those reported no reading for pleasure at all. Only 7 teachers (11%) reported spending more than 45 minutes of pleasure reading per day (see Table 2).

Teachers reported that they spent the majority of their free time planning and grading materials for work (83 minutes a day), watching television (58 minutes a day), completing household chores including cooking (58 minutes a day), and engaging in family activities (55 minutes per day). Reading, as a leisure time activity, only ranked higher than exercising (22 minutes) in terms of minutes spent per day.

#### The Value of Reading in Teachers' Lives

As a whole, teachers reported that they valued themselves as readers. On a 1 to 5 scale with 1 being extremely committed and 5 being not at all committed, 10% of the teachers reported that they were extremely committed readers and 69% reported that they were very committed readers. However, 20% of the teachers (or 1 in 5) admitted that they were only somewhat committed or slightly committed readers. No one reported that they were not at all committed.

#### Teachers' Motivational Techniques

Teachers were asked on the survey how they attempted to motivate students to read for pleasure. Fifty-three percent of the teachers reported using instructional practices more associated with intrinsic motivation (discussing and recommending good books), while 47% reported using instructional practices more associated with extrinsic motivation (i.e., rewards). There was very little difference between the teachers who read more than 30 minutes a day and the teachers who read less than 10 minutes a day in terms of motivational techniques. However, all of the teachers who read more than 45 minutes a day used instructional practices associated with intrinsic motivation such as discussing and recommending books in class and choice in the materials that their students read.

#### Teachers' Use of Instructional Strategies

According to the research literature, there are instructional strategies more associated with best practice in literacy than others (Zemelman et al., 2005). The teachers in this study were asked to look at a list of literacy instructional strategies and record how often they used each practice. The list was comprised from both research-based instructional strategies and commonly used, less effective practices. In order of frequency of use, it was reported that, on average, teachers in this study engaged in periods of sustained silent

reading and asked oral comprehension questions almost every day. They read aloud from picture books at least twice a week. They held guided reading lessons, modeled specific reading strategies, had students complete written comprehension questions, and held group oral reading once or twice a week. Instructional practices used less than once a week included literature circles, oral discussion on SSR books, reader response journals, and opportunities to share insights from personal reading. Teachers reported that they only recommended good books for students to read once or twice a month.

Teachers were also asked to name the three literacy instructional strategies that they valued and used regularly in their classrooms; a variety of strategies were reported. Forty-eight percent of the teachers reported that they valued teaching comprehension strategies, 37% valued guided reading groups, and 28% valued reading aloud to their students. Only 15% of the teachers reported valuing literature circles as an instructional practice and only 8% of the teachers valued as a top three literacy instructional strategy the use of a period of sustained silent reading, in spite of reporting earlier in the survey that they used SSR almost every day.

#### *Relationship Between Value and Instructional Practice*

When the relationship between value of reading and instructional practice was examined, several interesting findings were discovered (see Table 3). The teachers who valued reading in their own lives the most were more likely to use literacy practices associated with best practice. Ninety percent of the teachers who valued reading the most gave students an opportunity to read silently daily and had discussions about those books, whereas only 50% of the teachers who valued reading the least engaged students in periods of sustained silent reading plus discussion. Teachers who valued reading the most also engaged in literature circles more often (78% versus 67%). And importantly, teachers who valued reading the most shared insights from their own personal reading (89%) and recommended specific book titles to their classes (100%) far more often than teachers who valued reading the least (50% and 33%).

#### *Relationship Between Time Spent Reading and Instructional Practice*

The relationship between time spent reading and instructional practice was also examined (see Table 4). For the purpose of examining this relationship, the teachers were divided

**Table 3**  
The literacy instructional practices used by teachers who value reading the most and the least

Instructional practice	Percent of teachers who value reading the most	Percent of teachers who value reading the least
Sustained Silent Reading plus discussion	90	50
Literature Circles	78	67
Shared insights from your own personal reading	89	50
Recommend specific book titles to the class	100	33

**Table 4**  
The literacy instructional practices used by teachers who read for pleasure outside of school and those who do not

	Percent of teachers reading less than 10 minutes per day		Percent of teachers reading more than 30 minutes per day	
	Number of times per week	Number of times per week	Number of times per week	Number of times per week
Oral comprehension questions	88	5	100	5
Written Comprehension questions	20	5	11	5
Large group oral reading	23	5	53	5
Sustained Silent Reading	88	5	100	5
Discussion of SSR	17	5	17	5
Teacher read aloud of picture book	33	5	38	5
Teacher read aloud of informational book	7	5	12	5
Teacher read aloud of novel	35	5	53	5
Guided Reading	57	5	37	5
Literature Circles	35	5	5	5
Reader Response Journals	40	5	21	5
Modeling of specific reading strategies	72	5	53	5
Shared insights from your personal reading	29	5	42	5
Recommended books	12	5	22	5

into two groups: those who read for pleasure less than 10 minutes per day and those who read more than 30 minutes per day. Several important findings were discovered. Teachers who read more than 30 minutes a day held periods of sustained silent reading every day and 71% of those teachers held post-reading discussions of the reading one to two times



per week. Teachers who read more than 30 minutes per day also asked oral comprehension questions every day. Ninety percent of teachers who read more than 30 minutes per day also conducted guided reading lessons and 66% of those held literature circles at least once per week. Seventy-eight percent of the teachers who read more than 30 minutes per day also shared insights from their personal reading and 59% recommended books to their students at least once per week.

Teachers who read less than 10 minutes per day showed less commitment to sustained silent reading (88% everyday), discussion of SSR (59% at least once per week), guided reading (70% at least once a week), literature circles (58% at least once a week), and shared insights from personal reading (54% at least once a week). However, there appears to be little difference between the two groups in terms of teacher read alouds of picture books or novels, modeling of specific reading strategies, and reader response journals.

### Discussion

1. Do reading teachers engage in reading as a leisure time activity? This study reveals that while most teachers value reading as a leisure time activity, only a little more than half of the teachers surveyed actually read for more than 10 minutes a day in their free time. Therefore, while most teachers do some reading as a leisure time activity, more time is spent planning and grading for work, watching television, completing household chores, and engaging in family activities than reading for pleasure. Because a relationship does exist between student achievement and amount of reading done by teachers (Lundberg & Linnakyla, 1993), teachers do need to engage in reading themselves if they are to have a positive effect on whether or not their students are motivated and engaged readers.
2. Do teachers who read for pleasure use more instructional practices associated with best practice than teachers who do not read for pleasure? Teachers who read more than 30 minutes per day for pleasure did use a greater number of instructional practices associated with best practice than teachers who read less than 10 minutes per day or did no reading at all. Teachers who read the most for pleasure outside of school were more likely to hold guided reading lessons, use literature circles, hold oral comprehension discussions, let students participate in periods of sustained silent reading, share insights from their own personal reading, and recommend books to students. These teachers realize that reading is a socially constructed activity and plan opportunities for students to talk about the books that they are reading in a variety of ways.
3. Is there a difference between the instructional practices used by teachers who value reading in their own lives and those who do not? There does appear to be a difference in the instructional practices used by teachers who value reading in their own lives and those who do not. While most teachers reported that they held periods of sustained silent reading almost every day, it is interesting to note that only the teachers who valued reading the most in their own lives reported that they also valued having students participate in daily periods of sustained silent reading at school. This could indicate that while many teachers are required to conduct periods of sustained silent reading, not all teachers value this practice. This may help to explain why the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (2000) could not verify the significance of periods of sustained silent reading. While we did not observe the instructional practices used by teachers in this study, sustained silent reading is only effective when certain conditions exist: time is reserved in the daily schedule for SSR (this is not a "when time

permits" practice), the teacher also reads, the students are reading self-selected texts that are on an independent reading level, and there is time to discuss books that both students and teachers are reading (Allington, 1975; McCracken & McCracken, 1978; Smith, 1980). When teachers do not value this practice, typically one or more of these conditions do not exist, resulting in an ineffective practice. Another interesting finding is that teachers who value reading the most in their own lives use instructional strategies in their classrooms that share a common thread. These teachers used sustained silent reading plus discussion, literature circles, shared insights from their own personal reading, and recommended specific book titles to their classes more often than teachers who valued reading the least. These four instructional practices all involve talking about books. It appears that not only do teachers who value reading the most let students read self-selected materials for extended periods of time more often, but they also allow, encourage, and plan time for students to talk about the books that they are reading.

4. Is there a difference between teachers who read for pleasure and those who do not in terms of how they motivate students to read? Surprisingly, there was not a difference between teachers who read for pleasure and those who did not in terms of how they attempted to motivate students to read. Almost half of the teachers surveyed in this study, regardless of personal reading habits, reported that they primarily used extrinsic rewards to motivate students to read. These extrinsic rewards included candy or other prizes or programs such as Book It or Accelerated Reader. Interestingly, when looking only at teachers who read more than 45 minutes a day, those teachers did exclusively rely on instructional practices associated with intrinsic motivation such as discussing and recommending books in class and choice in the materials that their students read. These teachers never reported using extrinsic types of motivation in their reading instruction. There is little evidence that the common practice of rewarding students for reading is effective in leading students toward voluntary reading. In fact, these extrinsic rewards have produced negative effects on children who were already intrinsically motivated to read. When a student is already interested in reading, the reward is often seen as a "bribe" and is not seen by the learner as a motivational force (Lepper & Hodell, 1989). Harter (1981) reported that as students move from third through ninth grade they become less intrinsically motivated and increasingly more and more extrinsically motivated. The issue of intrinsic versus extrinsic rewards remains controversial in many aspects of instruction. The good news from this study is that half of the teachers relied on motivational techniques more related to intrinsic motivation, such as discussing and recommending good books. This is an area of literacy instruction that deserves more attention.

### Limitations of the Study

We are aware of several limitations of this study. First, the sample size was relatively small. We chose to use only fourth- through sixth-grade teachers because the schools that we used were all intermediate grade schools which included fourth and fifth grades or fourth through sixth grades. We do realize that it is inappropriate to make sweeping generalizations from only a sample of 65 teachers. A second limitation is that the data that were collected were self-reported by the teachers. We are aware that teachers may have been reporting what they thought we wanted to hear instead of the precise reality. Names, therefore, were kept anonymous, in the hope that teachers' self-reports would be accurate. Due

to these limitations, these data and the findings should be viewed as exploratory rather than research findings that could be generalized.

### Recommendations

This study asserts that teachers' own personal reading habits do influence their instructional practices. If teachers are to influence their students' reading behaviors and attitudes in positive ways, then they, themselves, must value and engage in the act of reading. In order to accomplish this, we recommend the following:

1. Teacher preparation programs should encourage future teachers to read widely and frequently, not only professional materials, but also texts that they find personally interesting and compelling. We cannot assume that students who are preparing to be teachers love to read.
2. School administrators should consider hiring new teachers who love to read. Principals might begin to ask questions during the interview process that reveal a prospective teacher's attitude toward reading. Questions such as, "What is the last good book you read and why did you like it?" could be asked to discover a teacher's attitude toward reading.
3. As a community of learners, teachers in a school should be encouraged to meet regularly and discuss books they have read, both in professional study groups and in "Oprah-like" book clubs.

### Conclusions

Previous research has suggested that role models are important in developing lifetime readers. The results of this study indicate that teachers who are readers themselves are more likely to engage in instructional practices that model their own passions for reading. Teachers who are readers read aloud to their students, engage in conversations about books, model specific reading strategies, give students greater choice in reading materials, and give students frequent time to read during the school day more than teachers who report that they do not read for pleasure regularly. It is important to understand that our own personal reading attitudes and beliefs do influence our instructional practices in the classroom. Knowing this, teachers must make a greater effort to establish their own connection to and passion for reading.

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## Follow Up Reading Article



# Policies that Support Professional Development in an Era of Reform

Darling-Hammond, L and McLaughlin, M W

*Phi Delta Kappan*, 1995, 76(8) pp 597–604

Understanding the conditions through which teachers' acquisition and use of new knowledge and skills are enhanced informs our understanding of effective models of professional development. In this article the authors examine some design principles to guide policy-makers and school reformers who seek to promote learner-centred professional development which involves teachers as active and reflective participants in the change process. They aimed to explore:

- the role of teachers as learners and teachers
- new designs for professional development
- school culture and how it relates to critical enquiry
- elements of effective curriculum frameworks
- messages emerging for policy-makers and administrators concerned with professional development for teachers

### Key findings

Traditional notions of in-service training or dissemination need to be replaced by opportunities for 'knowledge sharing' based in real situations. Teachers need opportunities to:

- share what they know
- discuss what they want to learn
- connect new concepts and strategies to their own unique contexts

This can be done either through professional organisations or informal 'critical friend' relationships.

Systems need to be in place allowing:

- blocks of time for teachers to work and learn collaboratively
- strategies for team planning, sharing, learning and evaluating
- cross-role participation (teachers, administrators, parents, psychologists)

District (or local authority) leadership must encourage and sustain schools as reflective communities and provide the necessary resources.

This requires rethinking ways in which staff development is funded and managed. The success of new policies depends on effective local responses to specific teacher and learner needs.

## Involving teachers as both learners and teachers

The authors argue that in today's climate of reform, teachers need to rethink their own practice and teach in ways they have never contemplated before. Success, according to this study, depends on how teachers are able to learn the new skills and un-learn previous beliefs and practices. Teachers must be in a position to see the new methods from the pupils' perspectives and therefore pre-packaged training is not always effective.

Professional development today is not solely concerned with supporting teaching and knowledge. Support is also needed for teachers to reflect on their current practice and adapt new knowledge and beliefs to their own teaching contexts. The authors suggest that effective professional development must:

- engage teachers in practical tasks and provide opportunities to observe, assess and reflect on the new practices
- be participant driven and grounded in enquiry, reflection and experimentation
- be collaborative and involve the sharing of knowledge
- directly connect to the work of teachers and their students
- be sustained, on-going and intensive
- provide support through modelling, coaching and the collective solving of problems
- be connected to other aspects of school change

## Exploring new designs for professional development

The study suggests that teachers need to integrate theory with classroom practice. They need time and opportunities for exploring knowledge about the nature of (new) learning and how it might be implemented in different domains. There should also be:

- opportunities for teacher enquiry and collaboration
- strategies to reflect teachers' questions and concerns
- access to successful models of (new) practice

Professional Development Schools (PDS) aim to bring together these learning strands. Since the late 1980s PDS have set out to design programmes in the USA which involve:

- novices working alongside experts
- professional development for experts in the form of new roles as mentors, HE liaison or leaders
- teachers, researchers, and educators working collaboratively in practical sessions
- teachers with dual roles as colleagues and learners
- a learner-centred foundation

Sustaining these attitudes, roles and practices in classrooms requires both internal and external support. The authors argue that PDS schools could be future training grounds for 'internship' but would need funding.

## How can new knowledge relating to pupil achievement be accessed and debated?

The authors suggest the following forums as fruitful breeding grounds for new knowledge:

- school/university partnerships which can create new and powerful knowledge. In particular they can produce more practical, contextual grounded theory and more theoretically grounded broadly informed practice
- teacher to teacher and school to school 'critical friend' systems: collaborative work on real issues and the opportunity to work with colleagues from other schools and open up to new ideas
- youth organisations, for insight into home-school culture and students' own interests
- district and national organisations, to provide a formal platform for examining practice

## Strategies for encouraging professional development within schools

School culture must be conducive to critical enquiry, and provide opportunities for professional dialogue. According to the authors such opportunities do exist already, but may not be used effectively. For example department meetings may be viewed as 'an administrative bore'. Professional development of teachers should be integral to school policy. Giving teachers a new role, for example teacher-researcher, can stimulate professional growth.

Peer reviews can foster critical examination of practice, as can peer coaching. Teacher-driven assessments of learning and teaching have been found to be effective in generating discussions about new practices. These systems of self or peer reflection, examining the effectiveness of teaching and student learning, enable teachers to change their view of effective models of practice, creating a process of transformational learning for teachers.

Systems need to be in place allowing:

- blocks of time for teachers to work and learn collaboratively
- strategies for team planning, sharing, learning and evaluating
- cross-role participation (teachers, administrators, parents, psychologists)

Externally, local authority leadership can encourage and sustain schools as reflective communities.

## Reforming curriculum policy

There are two cornerstones of the USA reform agenda:

- a learner centred view of teaching
- a career-long conception of teachers' learning

Those responsible for new curriculum frameworks need to address questions about:

- developing an active role for teachers in the new curriculum design
- the need to assess students' understanding of theories as well as recall of facts
- the need for students to be active learners
- involving school leaders as active participants
- whether new methods are conducive to teaching for understanding
- giving teachers a rationale for adopting the new curriculum

## Teacher training and evaluation

The authors draw out a number of messages for those involved in teacher education in the US. In particular, they suggest that:

- teacher education institutions need guidance on the demands implicit in teaching for understanding
- licensing, testing and evaluation of teachers must reflect new understanding about student learning and effective teaching
- ongoing evaluation of practice must value honest reflection of practice
- the evaluation process should not focus exclusively on measuring transmission skills
- training should emphasise the 'appropriateness' of teaching decisions
- evaluation of leadership must take account of whether administrators have been effective in establishing and supporting a culture of learning and enquiry
- administrators and leaders needed opportunities to rethink practice and learn new skills

## Making it happen – support from policy-makers

The authors argue that all these objectives require time for teachers to undertake professional development. This means that policy-makers need to rethink ways in which schools are staffed, funded and managed. They suggest that:

- existing resources could be redistributed through incentives, grants or changed formulae allocations to provide time for collegial work and professional learning
- policies must move away from 'credit for seat time' staff development, towards professional development that involves teachers in networks, working collaboratively to explore practice
- tight boundaries and narrow accounting lines discourage teachers from reflecting on school wide goals or the needs of individual children. The success of new policies and initiatives will depend on local responses to specific teacher and learner needs
- proposed and existing policies can be filtered through the following criteria to examine how well they correspond to teachers' learning and change. For example, does the policy:
  - reduce the isolation of teachers
  - encourage teachers to assume the role of learner
  - provide a rich menu of opportunities
  - establish an environment of professional trust and encourage problem solving
  - provide opportunities for everyone in the school to understand the new concepts and practices
  - permit the restructuring of time, space and scale
  - focus on learner centred outcomes that address the how and why aspects of learning?

## Implications for leadership

Whether formal or informal, all systems of professional development must be flexible and able to respond to changing needs of teachers and professionals. Teachers must be at the centre of change. The authors argue that policy-makers must be mindful that:

- structures that are effective in one school may not be transferable to a different context
- systems may work well for a period but then need revising as contexts change
- networks may be managed through "systematic ad-hocism", moving forward towards shared goals with flexibility in strategy
- supporting teachers' learning communities may involve allowing structures and arrangements to evolve rather than relying on permanent plans and promises
- the 'web' providing ongoing and multiple opportunities for debate and critical reflection needs to be core to any policy for change

Support from all types of organisations from professional associations, national boards, networks of schools must ensure that:

- teachers have real and valued input in curriculum development, assessment, and evaluation of practice
- funding must support active teacher participation in design as well as implementation of new practices
- opportunities are created for networking, seminars, focus groups to provide a platform for debate
- policy should support the 'environment' for learning rather than rigid systems and programmes which can lead to "meaningless activities and out of date structures"

## Appendix 9: An example of a workshop (2) designed by participants

Workshop (2) by Group (4) Karima, Amna, Lulwa (Reading)

Objective: Creating a reading culture in our schools through encouraging our students to read

Step (1)	Activity
<p><b>Introduction &amp; 1.Motivating students to Read through building a Reading culture (By karima)</b></p>	<p>*Hello everybody, Reading is very important for everyone, and we believe that if any-body needs food to live and get healthy bodies then they need to read to feed their minds, so reading is important for a healthier mental development. BUT we all know that although we are all Muslims and our students are all Muslims and our religion encourages us to read via our holy book the “Quran kareem”, we and our students are hardly ever reading.</p> <p>*The Reading article we choose to read about last week in our first workshop with Miss Khadija was about “Motivating our students to read” because we need to activate reading at our schools in Oman and encourage our Omani students to become readers. This is so important for them because being an active, engaged reader is a powerful support to their learning and to the development of their literacy skills. Research shows that to improve student reading literacy, schools need to increase student engagement with reading as well as develop their cognitive skills. <b>(Show OHT 1)</b> The article suggested that schools can build active, engaged readers by three ways:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Building a culture of reading,</li> <li>2. Exploring the teaching and learning possibilities inherent in print texts, and</li> <li>3. Building an extensive and accessible collection.</li> </ol> <p>So, I will start talking about the first point which is building a culture of reading in schools, and my colleague Amna will talk about the second part and lulwa about the third part.</p> <p>*<b>(Show OHT 2)</b>This article suggests that to ensure that reading becomes a regular activity in students’ lives, schools need to find ways to increase the level of engagement experienced by students. Schools can do this by offering students:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A wide and varied choice of reading materials,</li> <li>• Time to read for pleasure,</li> <li>• Welcoming, student-centred reading spaces,</li> <li>• Assistance in finding the right book at the right time, and</li> <li>• Opportunities to talk and think about what they have read.</li> </ul> <p>Now Amna will talk about building a resources collection</p>



<p><b>2. Building a resource collection (By Amna)</b></p>	<p>* The article also suggests that to facilitate a reading-centred curriculum, classrooms, school libraries and shared spaces need to be full of texts of all kinds. Surrounding students with quality texts, involving them in exploration of what these texts mean to them and supporting their efforts to learn about themselves and the world around them are basic activities of a school classroom or library. <b>(Show pictures on OHT 3)</b>The schools should have a variety of reading resources available for children such as information books about animals or any other information, fiction and non-fiction books, other places and cultures, rhymes and rhythms as well as different kinds of reading. We think that schools should be provided with different genres and types of resources like these, so students can choose the books they like and as Karima said a time should be specified for students to read for pleasure of any kind of resources they like to read and I think that this should be daily, so reading can become a habit for our students. Now it is Lulwa's turn</p>
<p><b>3. Building a curriculum that promotes reading (By Lulwa)</b></p>	<p>*Thank you Amna, engaging students in reading as a lifelong, pleasurable activity supports efforts in the classroom to improve literacy and learning standards as the article suggests. If all the different types of reading genres and text types are available at schools and if students have access to all these materials that Amna just talked about, then teachers can even make use of these resources to build a curriculum that supports reading in English language. Encouraging students to work with a wide range of texts is a crucial part of how teachers fulfil the role of assisting students to interpret, critically analyse and reflect. I mean that teachers can make use of the different types of reading resources available to students inside the classroom as well to support literacy lessons. They can even make use of what children read for pleasure to write about it. The article proposes that creating a classroom that enables quality interaction between students and well-chosen texts impacts upon all areas of learning. At the same time, supported explorations can add to students' enjoyment of a particular text and help stimulate interest and engagement in reading.</p>
<p><b>4. Questions</b></p>	<p>If you have any questions and comments please feel free to ask us</p>

#### OHT 1

The article suggested that schools can build active, engaged readers by three ways:

1. Building a culture of reading,
2. Exploring the teaching and learning possibilities inherent in print texts, and
3. Building an extensive and accessible collection.

#### OHT 2

- . A wide and varied choice of reading materials,
- . Time to read for pleasure,
- . Welcoming, student-centred reading spaces,
- . Assistance in finding the right book at the right time, and
- . Opportunities to talk and think about what they have read.

#### OHT 3



### An example of a workshop (3) designed by participants

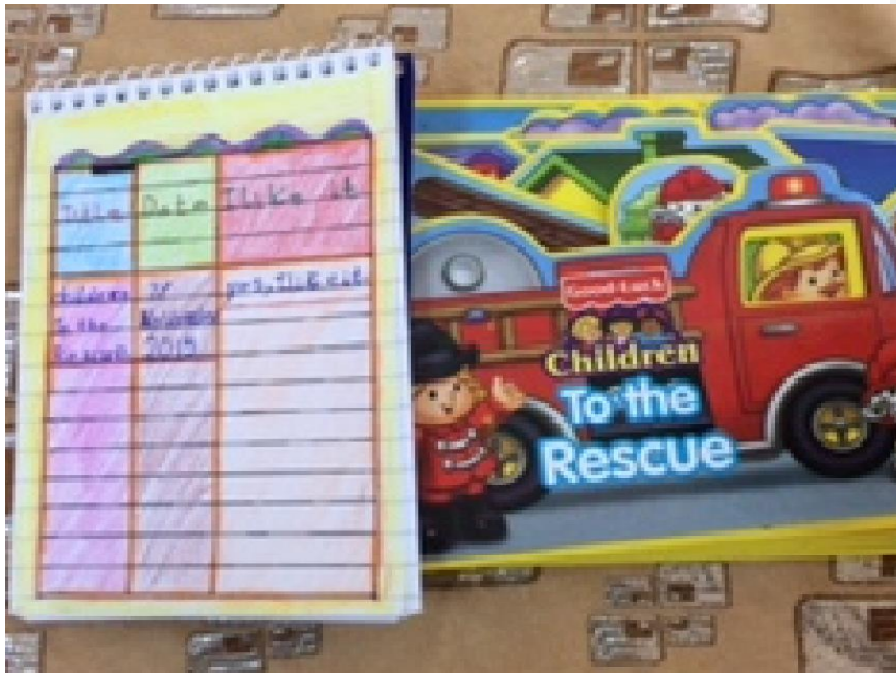
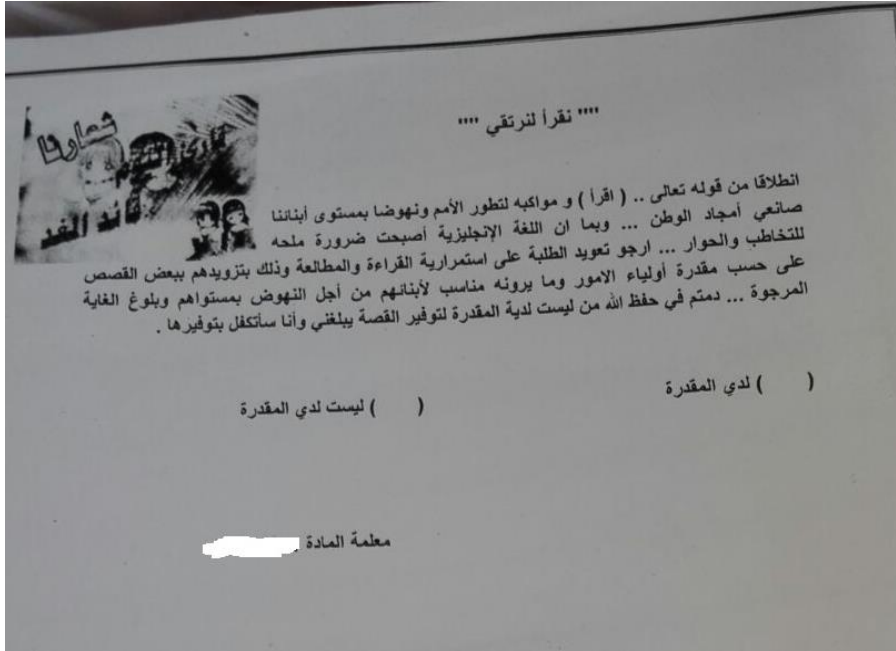
Workshop (3) by Group (4) Karima, Amna, Lulwa (Reading)

Objective: Applying the idea of encouraging our students to read at school

Step (1)	Activity
<p><b>Talk about Reading (By karima)</b></p>	<p>*Hello everybody, as you know in our last workshop we talked about creating a reading culture in our schools through motivating our students to read, we discussed the points that we read in the reading article provided by miss Khadija, after that workshop we read more about this topic and how can we apply such an idea in our schools. There are three important things that me, Amna and Lulwa came across when we were co-planning this workshop which were talking about reading, providing the materials and involving the parents or home in this project. The first thing that we need to do to create a reading culture at our schools is to talk to our children about reading, and the importance of reading and that at school we are thinking to use a reading project to encourage everyone to read. We can explain to them the idea of the reading project and that in every class we will have a book shelf which will be supported with different reading books (mainly stories at the beginning). BUT where and how we can get the reading books from. This is what Lulwa will explain now.</p>
<p><b>2. Providing the materials (By Lulwa)</b></p>	<p>* There are two suggestions here to provide lots of reading books for each school and at different levels (I mean books for grade 1 students, books for grade 2 and so on). The first thing is that we can ask each child to buy just one story book (if he/she can) and write his/her name on the book and to bring his/her book to class and put it in the book shelf once he/she finishes reading it. The children who cannot buy books, the teacher or school can do that for them. Then, we will have a number of books in the book shelf brought by different children (at least 30 books if there are 30 students in the class). Then we can ask each child to choose another story not his previous one to take home to read and then bring it back when he/she finishes from it. In this way, if during the semester each child can at least read 30 stories. Once they read all stories in their bookshelf, we can rotationally exchange books with other classes from the same year group (as you know in each school we have at least 4 classes of grade 1, 4 of grade 2 and so on). In this way during the year, the child can read over a hundred of books. Another idea is instead of asking students to buy books, we can make use of the budgets that are given to schools each year from the Ministry, and take some money from the head teacher to buy different sets of story books and different levels. Then, we can exchange these between schools monthly. Such sets are available in the big libraries and book shops like Dubai bookshop, Al Manahil, Muscat and so on.</p>

<p><b>3. Activating the idea (By Amna)</b></p>	<p>* Now how we can activate the reading project in our schools after we have the materials (reading books) ready in every school. The first thing is what Miss Karima talked about which is talking to children and explain the idea and the importance of reading to them. After that, every child will be given a letter for home that explains what our project is about and how we want them to help us with this project (look at examples of letters for parents and recording reading = to be distributed as an example one for each group). The first 5 minutes of every English lesson are for the children to choose a book that they would love to read and to return the previous books they have. It should be done once a week at the beginning but then when children are used to the idea they can return and take books even daily if they would love to. Once the child takes the story home, his parents should help him/her to read the story and record in their record book about the story they read. In order to encourage children to read we can reward the children who read more books at the end of every month. However, when we discussed this idea ( I mean the three of us) we thought of other challenges that we might face not only providing the materials like encouraging parents to read stories with their children at home especially the young ones like grade 1 and 2 students who cannot read well by themselves. For this, we suggest that at the beginning we should hold a parents' meeting at school in which we can explain to parents the role and importance of reading in their children's literacy and other skills development, and that each child will bring a story book for a whole week, they can just spent 10 minutes a day with their child to help him/her read the story and to encourage them to return back the book once he/she finishes reading it and take another one.</p>
<p><b>4. Questions</b></p>	<p>If you have any questions and comments please feel free to ask us</p>

## Examples of letters for parents and student's record of reading



## Appendix 10: A clip from an online discussion post

Online discussion Group  
Clip on Intellectual debate

I: Hi ladies, I hope everything is fine with you, 'teachers should be allowed to physically punish the students whose parents give their consent to such punishment', what do you think?

Anisa: Hello all, I disagree, punishment because it is shaking from the student's personality and does not encourage him to learn and acquire the psychological insecurity and instability

I: What do you mean, can you give me an example?

Anisa: For example, if a student with me is very shy and does not participate in the class and his parents agreed to punish him, will the student try to participate after punishment? Of course not, but will increase his fear of providing answers and possibly he will say a wrong answer because of the punishment

I: Yes but some people say that punishment is good for controlling students' behaviour, what do you think?

Anisa: There are several ways to avoid punishment for behaviour, for example, give him the role of leadership in the class room or let him be a young teachers...etc

L: Salam, let's be realistic, I think there is no one in this group who does not punish her students especially boys because they are the group who increase the teacher's blood pressure because of their behaviours and honestly we tries all the techniques with them but they didn't work, we don't punish except for behavioural problems but for the homework or slow learners we don't punish, in my view punishment is good sometimes and when we were students we were punished if we deserved it or not and that didn't affect us psychologically not it affected our levels and there are many pupils in class if you punish one of them for a behaviour the rest will be ok

Amna: I use both according to the situation because now students do not care with encouragement, its ok with them if you encourage or not my way of punishment is not hitting the students instead using other ways like asking them to do an activity...etc

N: in fact the teachers who hit more, their students are more controlled therefore we used this method, and at the same time we laugh with them, play with them and so on but ensure them that hitting and punishing students is for bad behaviours

Maryam: In my view, encouragement is better especially with grades 1 and 2, if you just let one of them wear a hero crown all would love to be like him

Huda: 😊 😊

Maryam: And when I hit a student everyone is afraid of me

L: So you don't punish students now Maryam?

Maryam: No I punish on behaviour as you said...

L: Yes so we encourage sometimes and other times hit and punish them, and everyone knows her/his students and what is the best for them and the most suitable

Maryam: And sometimes we punish when they are so difficult , I like it Lulwa to hit them 🟢 , sometimes you find a student who wants to learn but he has difficulties in understanding the teacher, so this type encouragement can work well with him, but if the student is naughty and does not want to learn and even does not let other students learn by distracting them, so this one must be punished and even hit

Ameera: As Lulwa said those teachers who punish students, their students are more controlled , I personally does not like to hit my students and I do blame myself a lot when I do hit or punish anyone but sometimes the student lets the teacher use this way but we never hit them too much only little just to control them

Muna: Good evening, I am against hitting students, the teacher can use many other methods like I praise and praise and say that I didn't expect this from this student like this, I am shocked from what you did, I used this strategy and noticed that I helped a lot in changing naughty and careless students behaviours, sometimes I do little punishment just to show the students that I am not happy with him and what he did but of course rarely, the slow learner I started encouraging him a lot even simply and thank him, smile for him... and noticed that his level changed, the teacher must be in the students shoes , does he like anyone to hit his children or even say a bad word for them of course not

Lulwa: We are all against hitting students but sometimes we do use it , also encouragement and praise is there and every day we have a lecture for students in behaviour and ethics

## Appendix 11: 3rd focus group interview transcript

Researcher: Thank you for being willing to take part in this interview, can I assure again that your original names will not be included in the study and the data will be used for research purposes only.

Huda: Ok Miss

Laila: Ok let's start

Muna: Ok

Researcher: Can I first ask you about your experience of participating in the three workshops about the participatory model of CPD? Anything you would like to share with me regarding this experience.

Muna: Surely we benefitted a lot

Salima: We did

Amal: Ya I benefitted a lot from some workshops like the jolly phonics

Researcher: No Amal I meant the workshops we did together in October when we talked about the participatory model of CPD for example when we talked about creating a reading culture, participating in communities of practice...and so on

Muna: For me the good thing from these workshops was how to create a reading culture and how to help our children love reading, very new ideas for me and very beneficial

Amal: Ok miss, for me, participating in these workshops helped me get new ideas, read in some topics and remind myself of the information I already have about Action research especially and how can we do action research in reality, for example, I thought of doing an action research about the challenges teachers face in shared writing lessons

Researcher: Ok and did you do that action research or at least a plan of the action research about shared writing or is it still just ideas, and are thinking to do it alone dear or with your colleagues/SET...?

Amal: No it is at this stage just an idea and I hope to start by the beginning of next semester, I am still discussing the issue with my colleagues and hope we can do a co-action research with my other English colleagues

Researcher: Good on you, what about the rest?

Farida: The workshops that we participated in gave us new ideas that we discussed and read about ourselves, also we presented some of these ideas for our colleagues, for me the ideas were really new and helpful I mean the majority of the ideas not all but they were good ideas to apply them to us as teachers develop professionally also to help our students' learning

Noora: Yes I agree, today one of my students was very happy she showed me her reading record notes and told me that miss look I already read 7 stories

Huda: For me, I have now 9 years of experience in teaching, during these 9 years I have attended many workshops and honestly I benefitted a lot from them all because always when I attend a workshop I take into consideration what is that this workshop is offering me, what can I learn from it and Alhamdulillah I usually learn a lot from these workshops, and our workshops about the participatory model were the same example, I benefitted a lot from them personally

Shamsa: Ya, especially the reading we talked about in the workshops was a very good idea, my students are now encouraged to read

Halima: I also benefitted from the reading, I myself started to read now after talking about it in the workshops, and I started loving to read



Alya: Ya, the reading idea for students was great and I am aiming to try this with my students next semester because I searched for stories and could not find so those of you who tried this idea where did you get the stories from, can you help me?

Researcher: Can you tell Alya where you got the stories from?

Huda: I bought them from the United Arab Emirates, I bought a whole SET for my students and it includes many stories and are at the right level for students, they are 88 stories per package, it is from Dubai library and Aldirhamin markets?

Alya: How about their price?

Huda: Very cheap only 250 baizs

Researcher: Wow very good

Laila: Honestly, we benefitted a lot for ourselves and our students, for ourselves now at least we specified a time for reading

Researcher: What was your role in each workshop?

Huda: Our roles in the workshops was discussing issues with colleagues, reading about the topics we wanted to present and we benefitted a lot of course from this

Laila: I liked my role in these workshops

Muna: I too

Salima: Ya, I was good to discuss issues with others

Researcher: What do you feel you have learnt from these workshops?

Huda: Yes Alhamdulillah, it added a lot to me and I applied many ideas especially reading myself and encouraging my students to read, it was so beneficial and so far I feel it is successful, but of courses it added a lot of work to me

Researcher: In what ways it added work to you?

Huda: Following up the students reading record books

Researcher: are you doing this every day?

Huda: No but also children come to us and want us to look at their reading record books to see how many books they read and to reward them

Anisa: Ya, we got many ideas from these workshops that we applied in reality, such as encouraging students to read, and to keep a reading record, students benefitted a lot from this and I noticed that my students now are more eager to read and show me what they have read which is a good idea I got from the workshops and the discussion in the online group

Farida: The idea of communities of practice that we discussed in the workshops was a great idea, it showed me how easy it can be that when we face any problem we can find solutions for it by discussing and communicating with others, asking colleagues for their experiences and so on

Researcher: Do you think the workshops achieved their aims which generally were 1) Participating in different forms of the participatory model of CPD and 2) Using the participatory model of CPD to continue your own PD?

Huda: I feel yes because I applied some ideas from the workshops as told you before the reading idea for myself and my students and I feel that these workshops added a lot to me

Lulwa: I became aware of the importance of developing myself to improve my teaching

Halima: Also when I participated in the workshops I felt that professional development is really important and we should think seriously about it

Muna: Yes in fact these workshops added a lot to us, the idea of a parent reading with their children and the teacher encouraging this habit was a great idea, I personally never thought that my students one day will love the reading and books and I was wrong my students now are eager to change their reading books daily not weekly, for me also I was always complaining that I have no time to read but when I started applying it I changed my idea and now I read daily or at least day after a day. My son is in grade 2 and he hated reading, after the workshops I started challenging him of the importance of reading and that we are the people of read because the first word that came to our prophet from the God was read, my son's attitude towards reading changed and he started to read a little for example, when we go outside he started reading the signs and the shop logos and so on which he never used to do although I was always encouraging him. All these ideas and my way of thinking is changed because we discussed all these issues in the workshops

Reseracher: Good, now can you tell me about your experience of the online discussion group, how would you describe this experience?

Huda: I like it but unfortunately not everyone participated in it

Farida: I did participate in such group before and I was encouraged and motivated to join this group because I knew from participating in the previous group that such groups can be really helpful, for example, when I teach a lesson and notice that my students are facing specific difficulties in achieving the aims of that lesson we ask our colleagues about the methods they use and we share experiences in such groups so others experiences can help us in finding solutions to problems we are facing

Halima: For me, it wasn't the first time I participate in such a group, we do have our university colleagues group and I used to discuss issues with them so when I have a question I post it in the group and find answers to it, it was the same for this group but I hopes that the majority were participating in this group so the discussion would have been more fruitful, some were participating a little and others we never shown up but the rest were contributing greatly and their ideas were really much appreciated because they were from their experience

Lulwa: For me, it was the first time I participated with colleagues from other schools and this experience was really beneficial I got to know how others are dealing with similar problems I am facing

Alya: Exchanging experience is very good and it shows us solutions to some problems we are facing where our colleagues in the online discussion group discussed issues that we are concerned about, also we ask them about their experience of some teaching methods they applied and felt were good, also inside the school sometimes we reflect on the ideas we discussed in the online discussion group

Muna: Ya I liked this group and also we have our university group which is similar to this one, in both group we share ideas and experiences

Researcher: Ok, what was your role in this group?

Noora: My role was to discuss some issues that were posted in the group like the debate on the punishment of students and sharing our experience in this regard or any other topic they discussed

Amal: I sometimes posted questions to my colleagues in the group and asked them about their experience and other times I participated when there was a discussion in the group with my ideas about the discussed issues

Muna: It was really a very good and beneficial group but I hoped to see everyone contributing, if everyone participated when we discussed the same issues it was much better

Researcher: I agree with you Muna, do you think the discussions in this group were fruitful?

Noora: They were because we discussed issues of concern for everyone in our group

Huda: Yes they were the ideas that we discussed were concerning all of us, even all teachers I think

Reseracher: Ok, Did your colleagues' ideas in the online discussion group add anything to you?

Lulwa: Yes of course, ya I also agree that if more participation from group members it was better, but may be because of workload at school and our personal responsibilities at home we were not active enough in the group, I personally only participated in my weekends in this online discussion group because of that, but the ideas they discussed were really beneficial especially the ideas about punishing students for me was really beneficial and it added to me how others deal with the same issue

Huda: Ya for me they discussed how they applied creating a reading culture in their schools and I benefitted from their ideas and used some of these ideas

Muna: I love this group because it is very much related to the ideas we discussed in the workshops about developing myself professionally and I really feel that I am benefitting from the ideas discussed by my colleagues and they are benefitting from the ideas I am saying, so we are all learning from each other through this online discussion group I guess

Reseracher: Sure Muna, we also benefitted a lot from your ideas

Salima: Yes, I liked the idea of making a reading record note book for my students, I got the idea from you Muna, thanks for your contribution

Amal: I also liked this idea and applied it

Halima: I liked the debate on punishment and I liked some teachers' ways of being so calm and patient with their students and leave the punishment as a last solution

Alya: I liked the idea Huda presented about the 99 methods of encouraging children to read, the PDF reading file, I even applied one of these ideas with my own kids when I take them to the books shops, I tell them that your reward is to choose a book from the bookshop and they started loving the idea of being rewarded by buying a new book for them.

Reseracher: Ok, now we will move to talk about the participatory model of CPD, after being introduced to this model and participated in it practically, what are your views about this model? Any pros and/or cons for this model. Did you like this model?

Huda: The advantages are that we learnt many new ideas about developing our selves professionally and using some ideas in our classrooms for our students like encouraging them to read, I personally started to build a reading habit and now love to read and my pupils also, the disadvantages are time is a real challenge for us, we cannot find the time and more work, especially when we talk about the students reading project, you have to follow up students and even if you want to let them do it by themselves they come to you teacher I have read this and they need some attention from you and also we have to follow them from time to time which is more work added to us.

Laila: The advantages, benefitting from others experiences, applying some new ways to develop professionally like participating in communities of practice, applying methods for our students' betterment like creating a reading culture at schools, our information are updated through reading more and searching for information in books and the internet, using the new technology to develop professionally like participating in online groups, debating with others, agreeing and disagreeing to convince others and being convinced, it is different from the types of workshops and in-services courses we attended at the training centre or even here at our schools, the disadvantages are no time with all workload and home responsibilities, more burden on teachers especially the reading for students and following them up, some teachers were not present at the same time online when we were discussing issues which could have been more beneficial to exchange more experiences in the online group if all teachers were present at the same time in the discussion

Farida: Same idea like Lulwa, I add that I have learnt new methods for my own development and my students, I learnt the importance of peer observation which I wasn't valuing a lot before

the workshops we did , the disadvantages are no time, and also more work on the teachers for the students reading project because he has to follow up every thing

Reseracher: But is it the responsibility of the teacher to do it always? What about training students?

Farida: But miss children keep nagging on us miss I read my story yesterday, they want our attention towards what they do

Huda: Miss nowadays I feel the student is not given lots of care and attention because the many projects the Ministry is applying even the teacher just more work for him or her but honestly the ideas we discussed in the workshop and the online discussion group were very good for both of us the student and the development of the teacher but again time is a real challenge for us with all the workload and responsibilities we have as teachers

Reseracher: In your view, how can English teachers in Oman become more active participants in their CPD process?

Huda: Miss if the teacher has the time and the desire to develop himself then he will do his best by reading more, by asking others , by participating in communities of practice not necessarily about teaching but others issues of life that can raise teachers' awareness towards other issues in the community and even in the world

Shamsa: Miss also the Ministry has the portal for English teachers where they are expecting English teachers to share their experiences and concerns in this online community of practice but again only some teachers in the whole country are active in this

Farida: Not every teacher knows about this community for English teachers and is following it

Reseracher: Why Farida? Is it because the Ministry did not advertise well for this community or do teacher know about it and do not want to participate in it in your view, what are the challenges facing the application of such ideas?

Farida: I don't know but personally I found this one useful, when I open in my free time I find very nice ideas about teaching English and I downloaded some of these like games and used them in my classes

Alya: I entered this community several times and found some ideas there that I was searching for and not all

Farida: In fact it has very good links and ideas, and I really benefitted from it a lot

Muna: I personally haven't heard about this English teachers' community except from you now

Noora: Same for me

Reseracher: Do you think the participatory model of CPD should be added to English teachers CPD system in Oman?

Huda: Yes I think to help teachers be part of their professional development process and share ideas with others and also learn from their ideas and solutions, participating with the workshops with you miss and in the online discussion group added a lot to us and I became aware of my own responsibility towards my professional development so sure it will add a lot to others I think

Muna: I agree with her and it really added a lot to me so I think it will be good and can add to teachers' professional development in Oman

Noora: Yes miss because I felt that I benefitted from this model and my way of thinking towards developing myself is changed so I think it is really important and can add a lot to teachers

Halima: Yes I totally agree with them

Farida: Yes miss I will add because anybody learns more when he is part of the process and when he experience the things my himself so yes I think it will add a lot

Amal: Yes it will but time and workload can be real challenges in applying such ideas for teachers I feel

Shamsa: Yes that is true, the problem miss is that we are loaded with thousands of work per day and also home responsibilities

Salima: Yes miss it is very good and helps teachers' a lot to develop professionally but before applying such a strategy or others the Ministry should think seriously of reducing the workload on teachers, we want to do lots of things, we want to develop professionally, we want to change but with all the school responsibilities and home it is really difficult, I hope the Ministry will apply this participatory model but after reducing the workload on teachers because at the end we are human beings and we want to work and improve but also we need sometimes to have a rest

Laila: Hello, I will talk about my teachers' role after joining in the participatory model workshops and online discussion groups since I am a SET and a mum at the same time, thanks a lot to Anisa and Huda because they are teaching my kids in grade 4 and 2, honestly my kids benefitted a lot from the reading project they (their teachers Anisa and Huda) applied for them, they now love reading, they are so enthusiastic about the stories they bring home, they want to read more and more, in fact they want to read more than one story per day. For example, my son who is in grade 2 once insisted on me to sit with him till half past 10 p.m just because he wanted to finish reading his story so tomorrow he can take a new one, reading stories, other books, anything, most importantly for him is to read, my other son in grade 4 also is so enthusiastic about reading and even when he plays with his Ipad he searches for stories to read

Reseracher: Wow, good to hear that, thanks dear for your contribution, Thank you very much for helping me and giving up your time. Can I finally ask you if you think there is any aspect of your experience of the participatory model of CPD that has not been covered in this interview?

Huda: Thanks miss

Farida: Thank you miss Khadija, It was our pleasure working with you and hope we helped you in your research

Laila: Thanks miss and all the best with your studies

Shamsa: Thank you

Muna: All the best miss, it was a very good chance to know you

## Appendix 12: Example transcript

Researcher: Thank u for being willing to take part in this interview, may I assure that your name will not be included in the research, only the data will be used for the purpose of my study. Can I first ask you your experience of working as an English language teacher, anything you want to share with me in this regard?

Farida: By the name of Allah, in fact when I got high marks in grade 12, I got 95%, so I decided to go to SQU anything outside Education, I liked science so I was thinking to join a scientific profession or engineering or medicine because I loved science subjects more but if I had to join any of these professions, I should have worked outside my region and because my dad was an educationalist, so he told me that teaching is the best job for you as a female and you will find a job easily here inside your region compared to the other jobs, so becoming a teacher was my father's desire and my family's not mine, so I said ok no problem but I will be a maths teacher but again my dad said that other subject teachers are sometimes appointed outside the region so I prefer that you became an English language teacher, there is a guarantee that you can find a vacancy in your region, so I said ok, I also started thinking of it and I loved entering the English language world, my dad also said we don't have any one in the family who knows English a lot so you will be like a support in English for us in the family, so I said ok to my father, Alhamdulillah I was getting good marks in English at school so I said ok I can do it and enter this profession, they did interviews for us at the college and so many people applied to become English teachers but not all passed the interviews and exams, I Alhamdulillah passed these and started learning to become an English teacher but then I was unhappy because I choose this speciality

Reseracher: Why?

Farida: I didn't like the way they taught us, I have had to learn many things by heart, I lost my interest in this specialty and was disappointed with it

Researcher: How about the micro-teaching and the practicum when you went to schools?

Farida: I loved it and I was excellent in that and I got the highest marks in the micro-teachings, and I remember that even my teacher was encouraging my colleagues to come and observe me in class and my colleagues were asking me what did you do, how and so on and I was telling them, I also liked the micro-teaching and practicum because I was teaching older learners in secondary but then I was appointed in a primary school so again I was disappointed because what I practiced at the college in 4 years was with adult learners not young, yes when I was appointed first I was appointed outside my region in a cycle 2 school, the next year cycle 1 and now I am in my region and teaching cycle 1

Researcher: Ok, how did you see the reality?

Farida: The reality is really so challenging, there are so many students in each class , we are overloaded with lots of work to do, when we were at the college we were given 1 lesson to teach per day and haven't been told of this amount of work we are facing now

Reseracher: Ok, now how do you look at this job teaching?

Farida: You know when I see my students understand what I teach and achieve things I become very happy and when I feel my students are lost and I am lost with them and they don't achieve the outcomes of lessons I feel unhappy, this year I am teaching three grade ones I choose that to challenge myself and my abilities, they gave me grade 4 to teach but I said I am not ready to teach students who cannot read and write, so I want to start with those students from the beginning, yes it is difficult 3 classes but I will do it, I am really tired with that and because also I have to do other duties and activities I cannot balance between all these duties, can you imagine that every day I bring my laptop school to do some activities for students and then take it back home but I cannot open it from the workload, teaching is really a very good job but also it is a difficult and challenging one, too much challenging

Researcher: Ok, are you satisfied with your job?

Farida: My job I am very much satisfied with it, I am satisfied with the effort I put in this job and the amount of work I do

Researcher: Ok, do you have moments that you feel you want to quit this job?

Farida: You know my friend has been to the UK and she completed her post graduate studies and she always advises to leave this job and complete your higher studies, I told her that now I am a mother and I have kids so it is really difficult to work in another job, even my uncle told me to do the CELTA and find a job in a college or university as a lecturer, I see that at this time it is not easy because of my responsibilities towards my husband and my kids, so now I accepted this job and am satisfied with it

Researcher: Ok, I will ask you about professional development, what does it mean to you?

Farida: I feel professional development is very very important especially for teachers you know because there are teaching methods that are updated so the teacher must know these, also some of your colleagues who are more experienced than you might possibly have good ideas, how do you know about these without professional development. Professional development is a way of exchanging experiences, or acquiring new experience and knowledge which you learn through professional development such as courses, for example, the cycle 1 course it teaches you ways and methods

Researcher: Have you done the cycle 1 course?

Farida: No neither cycle 2 although I taught both cycles, they didn't give us these courses because they told us that you will be transferred to your regions so you will join the course there

Researcher: Ok, now after these years of experience in teaching cycle 1, do you still feel that you need this course or not?

Farida: I feel that I still need it, do you know that they always ask me about my training needs and I write that I need the cycle 1 course but I haven't been nominated yet for it, maybe there are some things that I don't know, maybe the course will show me some new ideas that I need to learn, I also love to learn new knowledge, I love to join workshops and to learn from other people and what they do, I do observe my colleagues a lot sometimes even not English teachers so I can learn new ideas and methods and teaching techniques especially the Arabic language have similar teaching methods to English, I joined online courses like the TKT and SEN (Special Education needs) I thought I could join them even from my home through using the internet although both courses were difficult because you have to do many assignments and many activities that you have to do, sometimes even till 2 a.m. midnight I was completing my homework and although I had babies but I loved it so I felt it was, I felt the TKT course was like a revision for the 5 years I studied at the college, I was very good, I think if all teachers are given the chance to join this course it will be very good, they remind themselves with lots of issues, they practice the language, the good thing is that teachers from all educational governorates were in these online groups, so we get to know teachers and SETs from other regions, it was very good, we even created a WhatsApp group to discuss some issues it was a very good way of exchanging experiences.

Researcher: Ok, when the TKT course was over, were you still discussing issues in the same WhatsApp group?

Farida: Yes, we did and I was this group leader but after sometimes the group disappeared because each time 1 or 2 participants were quitting from the group except there is only one teacher from Dhofar governorate who is still in touch with me and she loves reading books a lot and was always encouraging us to read and be updated, so this about the TKT I liked it and I enjoyed it a lot and it was really useful

Researcher: What about the SEN course?

Farida: The SEN no, I didn't enjoy it and benefited from it like the TKT because in the TKT course we have had an online supervisor who was present online every week and was always helping and supporting us, he was telling us what is expected from us and if we have any

questions or queries she told us to email them and they were directly replying to our emails but in the case of the SEN course everything you have to do yourself you have to read yourself and do the tasks, you have to do the case study yourself so it was difficult because we were doing everything with no support, our moderator in this course was only reading our work and giving feedback to us and finally it seems that he felt tired from following us because we were making changes according to his feedback and sending back the work but he was not replying to us, also in this we have had a group so we were discussing these issues, also it wasn't much useful because for example we have those hyper active students in order to deal with them they showed us some methods but in fact these methods do not suit our schools and our students, they showed us lots of ideas that are not applicable. For example, they showed us some activities that you need to photocopy using special machines which have colours and using big font size but these machines are not available in our schools, also they showed us that the SEN pupil need to be given a lot of time and attention and you have to do many activities for him or her but you are teaching 31 or 32 students if you will spend a lot of time with this student doing all the suggested activities with him/her then what about the rest of students at school, yes you can deal with some cases but not all for example if a student has visual impairment then you can help him come to the front chairs and you can write in big font size but if a child has dyslexia, or autism or he is hyper active or... how can you deal with them and leave the rest normal students. I feel that those SEN pupils need a special Education needs teacher that is specified for those students and that is trained well and qualified well to deal with them, the normal teacher cannot help those students with all the duties and workload he or she has got, I hope you can deliver this message to our ministry, there were SEN teachers before at schools but why they cancelled their role and gave their responsibilities to the normal English teachers. The problem English is a language like the Arabic language so why those SEN students have a SEN teacher specialised to teach them Arabic but not one specialized to teach them English, when I joined this school there was a SEN teacher and she was helping me a lot in my job but now they cancelled this and you as a normal teacher have to do everything solution plans and developmental plans for those students. For example, last year I was teaching grade 4 so I was taking those students in my own time and teaching them I mean in my free lessons or at break time. For example, every Thursday I used to work with slow learners and every Sunday the outstanding students and I used to prepare many activities for them come on do this and do this, if I will show you my records you will be amazed but all this was from my time and effort if another teacher, so the Ministry needs to think of this seriously, the Ministry also needs to send teachers' guides for us to deal with those students. At the moment what teachers are doing are just personal efforts so they do things in a systematic and professional way. For example, a student has dyslexia, so the ministry sends a teachers' guide with the steps to teach this child but in the current situation it should be done by personal efforts so teachers may do it others may not and this is not good for those SEN pupils.

Researcher: Do you think that professional development is important?

Farida: Yes very important, why because if a teacher faced a specific difficulty for instance I cannot control my class the professional development will provide me with ways to overcome such challenges, I know some teachers who just give the handout to pupils without any instructions this is wrong he or she needs to give instructions and then to follow up the students, I think all teachers need professional development and training to do their job properly especially if there are updates

Researcher: Ok, how often do you think teachers need to participate in professional development?

Farida: I think at least once in every two months but without putting more pressure on the teacher. For example, now we have the jolly phonics project and I have to start teaching it next week but I haven't done any training for it yet, also last year many teachers started teaching it without training, such issues are important and the Ministry needs to take this into consideration. Also the handwriting, no one told the teachers before to concentrate on the 4 lines and teachers started teaching handwriting each one in his or her own way then the Ministry realised that and they send the guidelines, so they need to teach teachers these things, the ministry shouldn't rely on teacher preparation programmes because each institution does



this in a different way for example we have been trained in the college to teach handwriting for kids using the 4 lines but other institution graduates like Ajman and SQU no, so the Ministry shouldn't rely on that, they need to train teachers

Reseracher: Ok, have you attended any professional development activities that you felt were beneficial and you applied some ideas from these in your own classroom?

Farida: Yes I did, for example, when the SET attended a lesson with me she noticed that I am teaching the children like cycle two pupils and that I need to go down to their level and this really helped me and she told me to use group work and this is something I learnt from peer observation, also from the TKT I have learnt that I have to put everyday an aim in mind and I have to work hard to achieve that aim, for example, today I want to make my students more quiet and work on task , also you can have a long term aim like I will teach my students how to read words that are made up of three letters so this organise the teachers' work, I liked this idea and applied it, also how to display work in class like washing lines and classroom language and so on

Researcher: Ok, whose responsibility is the professional development of English teachers in your view?

Farida: First the Ministry is responsible for teachers' professional development since the ministry is at the base, then the SET has an important role in this even more than the teacher him/herself because the SET should know every teacher he/she has and what does each one miss and their needs even when she enters with teachers she tells a teacher for example you are excellent in class management but you need this and this, this is the responsibility of the SET not the teacher because the SET knows his or her teachers' needs but the teacher does not, yes may be the teacher knows some but not everything because the SET is more experienced that the teacher and more experienced people are more able to identify needs. The teacher is also responsible for that for example, if I forget anything or I am not confident in anything I have to search and develop myself I shouldn't necessary wait for the Ministry to provide me with everything I have to search, now the internet is available everywhere and even the books, you know last time I attended a session for Jermy Harmer because when we were students at the college we learnt about his books and methods, so I hoped to meet this person, and when he came to Muscat I attended a session that he did, I had a baby that time and the session was at night time in Muscat through the British council but I was interested in joining his session and I joined it, I enjoyed his session a lot and even he suggested some books for us to read and I got a present in his session which was a book. This book is very good it has lots of new teaching methods and techniques such as using videos and recordings in class, the book has lots of ideas about using technology in teaching. So the teacher is also responsible for his or her professional development so if he or she heard about a good workshop he can join it, I am not saying that the teacher can do this every month but whenever these is a chance. When I was teaching in Rustaq and in Izki, the English department was giving us many chances to attend the regional and local conferences like SQU conference, so I attended many of these when I was teaching there, they were encouraging us a lot to join such events but here no

Researcher: Ok, do you think English teachers should participate in their professional development process?

Farida: Yes they should and the teacher should say their needs and the topics they want to have in the professional development, I am with the idea that the teacher should be part of the process

Researcher: Ok, thank you very much for helping me and giving your time that was the last question, do you have anything else you want to add?

Farida: I want to be like you one day

Reseracher: InshAllah, that's' why we are talking about professional development dear, you can develop yourself and become even better than me

Farida: I hope so Reseracher: Thanks again

### Appendix 13: Observational data

Day 4 (4)  
shared reading  
second session

#### First Observation schedule (In the training room)

Observation Date: 2/9/2015 Venue: ~~TC~~ TC

Observee (Code): Trainer - (training centre) Gender: M/F (F)

Task Components	Observations
<b>Session Focus</b> =Topic/s covered in the session (skills and knowledge participants are expected to gain from the session)	Teaching shared reading part (2)
<b>Session Aims/Goals</b> =Intended outcomes 1) be aware of the reasons why shared reading is an important part of the curriculum	2) more confident in delivering effective shared reading lesson 3) able to identify suitable materials for use taking share reading with 6-7 +2 children
<b>Session Input</b> =What input the trainer used to achieve the session aims (e.g a reading article...)	*Two SFTs demoed teaching a shared reading lesson 2+3. The same SFTs demoed teaching lesson (1) shared reading the lesson before.
<b>Activity(ies)</b> =What the participants are asked to do with the input (asking & answering questions...etc)	*PTS are given a worksheet from trainer to write their notes/ observations of the lesson shared-reading lesson.
<b>Trainer's role</b> <b>Participants' role</b> = The parts played in carrying out the task (e.g trainer: facilitator, participants: conversational partners)	- Tr demonstrates - pair works then CRP work - PTS in pairs demoed their lesson
<b>Setting</b> = The social arrangements in which the task is carried out (e.g pairwork, grpwork...)	- T → P1 - P1 ↔ P2 - CRP work - Pairs to whole class

#### \*Trainer's Reflection on the session

As we discussed yesterday the session on shared reading (both 1 & 2) to refresh Teachers & explain to them the importance of shared reading and challenge them how to teach shared reading session (1 & 2) for SFTs. Also, because we did this train a very long time ago, so many teachers needed to be refreshed towards teaching shared reading again & how to manage the curriculum scheme of work in page (4) relation to the updates especially jolly phonic.

\* Lesson Demo by SETs: { (3 SETs) & demoed the  
pre reading, 1 the while,  
1 the post }

pre

- \* T. greet class.
- \* Showed B. Book
- \* T. elicited what in pictures (front cover of story)
- \* T. elicited sounds + introduced a new sound 'er'
- \* T. read with class the words one by one (using  
silly phonics then whole word reading)

- \* T. uses some encouragement tech.
- \* T. taught new words using gestures, pics,

\* T. opened B. B

while

- \* T. started demoing how to teach shared reading (em=)
- \* T. read sentences (asks sts to repeat)
- \* T. asked Qs about the pics/elicits m-words.
- \* T. elicited sounds/tricky words ... etc.
- \* elicited from ps 'what is going to happen in predict.'

\* T. showed words on board.

\* T. read them with sts.

post

- \* T. played what is missing
- \* T. showed sentences + read them with ps.
- \* T. played some games with sts.

A normal shared reading lesson takes  
30 minutes to teach but here because  
time was short, participants were told  
by the trainer to use a compressed  
strategy, so they started  
some activities  
then compressed  
them.

page (2)

Trainers' Reflection on 5 days ①  
1) In relation to TS needs: from our school visits to some schools we've noticed that teachers were not doing the steps of jolly phonics properly e.g. they were doing the sounding out + blending but not segmenting and they totally ignored the tricky words. This could be because the previous training was not enough, also because there were not enough follow up to teachers when doing this project from supervisors and coaching and mentoring them. Therefore, it was decided to include Circle 1 training of jolly phonics again this year.

In relation to TS needs for jolly phonics grade 2, of course all teachers teaching grade 2 in our school must be trained on these changes in the grade 2 curriculum, therefore we did this workshop for teaching jolly phonics grade 2 to meet those teachers' methodological needs in this regard.

As for the shared reading needs: from our visits we noticed that teachers ignored the shared reading lessons + excluded them from the curriculum. Also because we trained teachers a very long time ago on this (in 2009) so we decided to do this training to refresh teachers + also to have a scheme of work with

## Appendix 14: The results of thematic analysis of open-ended questions

Qualitative data from questionnaires (3)

Factors contribute to successful CPD	Factors result in unsuccessful CPD	Teachers' involvement in CPD process
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Useful and applicable content</li> <li>* Suitability and relevance of activity</li> <li>* Organisation of activity</li> <li>* Teachers should have less work load</li> <li>* Qualified and experienced trainers</li> <li>* Timing of the activity</li> <li>* Activity should consider teachers' needs and experiences</li> <li>* Location of the activity</li> <li>* Relevance of content/suitable topics</li> <li>* Teachers should not be forced to do it- it must be teachers' choice</li> <li>* Teachers' desire, willingness and motivation</li> <li>* Readiness of the teacher</li> <li>* Encouragement for teachers</li> <li>* Increasing teachers' salaries</li> <li>* CPD activity should have new ideas</li> <li>* Teachers' enthusiasm</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Timing of CPD</li> <li>* Boring subject</li> <li>* Shallow topics</li> <li>* Theoretical activities far-away from classroom reality</li> <li>* CPD done by non-professional</li> <li>* Location of CPD</li> <li>* Repetitive topics</li> <li>* Work load of teachers and heavy curriculum</li> <li>* Badly planned and designed CPD</li> <li>* No follow up of CPD</li> <li>* Family circumstances</li> <li>* Demotivated teachers</li> <li>* Ignorance of teachers' needs</li> <li>* Lots of home work in CPD events</li> <li>* No encouragement by the Ministry-no opportunities for promotion</li> <li>* Not enough CPD activities for all teachers</li> <li>* class size</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* Deciding the title and content of training programmes (especially SETs)</li> <li>* Choose the topics and areas they are interested in</li> <li>* Choose the areas according to their needs</li> <li>* Choosing the time/place of doing it</li> <li>* Choosing the trainer</li> <li>* Choosing the materials</li> <li>* Deciding which skill they need to improve</li> <li>* Deciding on the activities of the CPD event</li> <li>* Choosing the right CPD activity because they know their weaknesses and strengths in teaching</li> <li>* Teachers should be part of their needs assessment</li> <li>* To get experience</li> <li>* Teachers themselves should run some CPD events (e.g. courses, workshops)</li> <li>* No for new teachers because they are still getting new ideas in teaching so others like SETs, supervisors and trainers have more experience and know more than them.</li> </ul>

## Appendix 15: Example of Nvivo codes and a coded interview

### List of Nvivo Nodes (Codes)

The screenshot shows the Nvivo software interface with a list of nodes. The nodes are organized into a hierarchical structure on the left sidebar, including Nodes, Relationships, and Node Matrices. The main window displays a table of nodes with columns for Name, Sources, References, Created On, Created By, Modified On, and Modified By. The nodes are numbered and include descriptions of their content.

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
111 Teaching as a Profession	0	0	16/11/2015 12:09	K D A A L B	03/12/2015 13:13	K D A A L B
1. It was my dream to be a teacher but the reality shocked me	15	23	16/11/2015 12:10	K D A A L B	2011/2015 10:15	K D A A L B
2. Reasons for becoming teachers	7	13	16/11/2015 12:10	K D A A L B	2011/2015 10:16	K D A A L B
3. Job Ethics 'it is the job of prophets'	15	27	16/11/2015 12:10	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B
4. Job Happiness and satisfaction	16	28	16/11/2015 12:11	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B
5. Job Status	8	28	16/11/2015 12:11	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B
6. Job Obstacles	13	33	16/11/2015 12:12	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:16	K D A A L B
222 Teachers' beliefs about CPD	0	0	17/11/2015 11:47	K D A A L B	03/12/2015 13:14	K D A A L B
1. What is CPD	12	14	17/11/2015 11:47	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:17	K D A A L B
2. Importance of CPD	11	17	17/11/2015 11:48	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 11:06	K D A A L B
3. CPD is a load on teachers	2	3	17/11/2015 11:48	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:18	K D A A L B
4. CPD feeds teaching	14	17	17/11/2015 11:49	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B
5. CPD responsibility	17	30	17/11/2015 11:49	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B
6. Teachers' role in their CPD	13	25	17/11/2015 11:49	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:19	K D A A L B
333 Teachers' CPD Experience	0	0	17/11/2015 13:27	K D A A L B	03/12/2015 13:14	K D A A L B
1. Types of CPD	0	0	17/11/2015 13:27	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:20	K D A A L B
2. CPD and teachers' needs	16	25	17/11/2015 13:30	K D A A L B	24/11/2015 14:33	K D A A L B
444 CPD Success	2	2	06/11/2015 11:09	K D A A L B	03/12/2015 13:14	K D A A L B
1. Factors affecting CPD	14	36	06/11/2015 11:11	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
2. Impact of CPD	18	49	06/11/2015 11:10	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
555 Participation in CPD	1	1	06/11/2015 12:20	K D A A L B	03/12/2015 13:14	K D A A L B
1. decision making	5	6	06/11/2015 12:20	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B
2. involvement in CPD process	11	15	06/11/2015 12:21	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:29	K D A A L B
3. Teachers' inactivity in their CPD	11	15	19/11/2015 11:57	K D A A L B	04/12/2015 12:16	K D A A L B
4. Evaluation of the participatory model of CPD	0	0	26/11/2015 13:36	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 14:12	K D A A L B

The screenshot shows the Nvivo software interface with a list of nodes. The nodes are organized into a hierarchical structure on the left sidebar, including Nodes, Relationships, and Node Matrices. The main window displays a table of nodes with columns for Name, Sources, References, Created On, Created By, Modified On, and Modified By. The nodes are numbered and include descriptions of their content.

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
111 Teaching as a Profession	0	0	16/11/2015 12:09	K D A A L B	03/12/2015 13:13	K D A A L B
222 Teachers' beliefs about CPD	0	0	17/11/2015 11:47	K D A A L B	03/12/2015 13:14	K D A A L B
333 Teachers' CPD Experience	0	0	17/11/2015 13:27	K D A A L B	03/12/2015 13:14	K D A A L B
1. Types of CPD	0	0	17/11/2015 13:27	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:20	K D A A L B
1. INSET programmes	22	24	17/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B	24/11/2015 14:42	K D A A L B
2. Coaching Training	7	23	17/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
3. Coaching-mentoring teachers	7	18	17/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
4. CPD activities done at schools	8	27	17/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B
5. Other CPD activities, events and ways	14	18	17/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B
2. CPD and teachers' needs	16	25	17/11/2015 13:30	K D A A L B	24/11/2015 14:33	K D A A L B
1. Meeting teachers' needs through CPD	3	3	20/11/2015 10:32	K D A A L B	24/11/2015 14:41	K D A A L B
2. Current CPD is not enough	12	25	17/11/2015 13:30	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B
3. Future CPD needs	14	26	17/11/2015 13:30	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B
444 CPD Success	2	2	06/11/2015 11:09	K D A A L B	03/12/2015 13:14	K D A A L B
1. Factors affecting CPD	14	36	06/11/2015 11:11	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
1. Facilitating factors	0	0	19/11/2015 09:55	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:25	K D A A L B
1. Factors affecting CPD access	4	5	19/11/2015 11:04	K D A A L B	24/11/2015 14:14	K D A A L B
2. Factors affecting CPD success	11	23	19/11/2015 11:04	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
2. Inhibiting factors	0	0	19/11/2015 09:56	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:25	K D A A L B
1. Factors hindering CPD access	12	21	19/11/2015 11:05	K D A A L B	26/04/2016 12:06	K D A A L B
2. Factors hindering CPD success	19	37	19/11/2015 11:05	K D A A L B	26/04/2016 12:06	K D A A L B
2. Impact of CPD	18	49	06/11/2015 11:10	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
1. New knowledge and strategies	16	28	19/11/2015 11:03	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
2. Improve teaching and learning	14	28	19/11/2015 11:03	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
3. Exchange experience	9	14	19/11/2015 11:03	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
4. Language improvement	1	3	19/11/2015 11:04	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:51	K D A A L B
5. Lack of impact	2	2	19/11/2015 11:04	K D A A L B	24/11/2015 14:29	K D A A L B
555 Participation in CPD	1	1	06/11/2015 12:20	K D A A L B	03/12/2015 13:14	K D A A L B

interviews and observations.nvp - Nvivo

Name	Sources	References	Created On	Created By	Modified On	Modified By
2. Factors affecting CPD success	11	23	19/11/2015 11:04	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
2. Inhibiting factors	0	0	19/11/2015 09:56	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:25	K D A A L B
1. Factors hindering CPD access	12	21	19/11/2015 11:05	K D A A L B	26/04/2016 12:06	K D A A L B
2. Factors hindering CPD success	19	37	19/11/2015 11:05	K D A A L B	26/04/2016 12:06	K D A A L B
2. Impact of CPD	18	49	06/11/2015 11:10	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
1. New knowledge and strategies	16	28	19/11/2015 11:03	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
2. Improve teaching and learning	14	28	19/11/2015 11:03	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
3. Exchange experience	9	14	19/11/2015 11:03	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:29	K D A A L B
4. Language improvement	1	3	19/11/2015 11:04	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 16:51	K D A A L B
5. Lack of impact	2	2	19/11/2015 11:04	K D A A L B	24/11/2015 14:29	K D A A L B
555. Participation in CPD	1	1	06/11/2015 12:20	K D A A L B	03/12/2015 13:14	K D A A L B
1. decision making	5	6	06/11/2015 12:20	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:28	K D A A L B
2. involvement in CPD process	11	15	06/11/2015 12:21	K D A A L B	20/11/2015 10:29	K D A A L B
3. Teachers' intiality in their CPD	11	15	19/11/2015 11:57	K D A A L B	04/12/2015 12:16	K D A A L B
4. Evaluation of the participatory model of CPD	0	0	26/11/2015 13:36	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 14:12	K D A A L B
1. Teachers' reaction to the model	0	0	26/11/2015 13:38	K D A A L B	26/11/2015 13:38	K D A A L B
1. Workshop-Positive experience	7	17	03/12/2015 13:15	K D A A L B	04/12/2015 13:19	K D A A L B
2. Online discussion groups-Useful contributions	7	19	03/12/2015 13:16	K D A A L B	04/12/2015 13:20	K D A A L B
2. Teachers' learning from the model	0	0	26/11/2015 13:38	K D A A L B	04/12/2015 11:07	K D A A L B
1. Sharing ideas and experiences	6	29	26/11/2015 13:50	K D A A L B	26/04/2016 12:06	K D A A L B
2. Skills gained	6	27	26/11/2015 14:03	K D A A L B	26/04/2016 12:06	K D A A L B
3. The use of ideas in practice in schools	7	15	26/11/2015 13:50	K D A A L B	04/12/2015 12:18	K D A A L B
4. Impact on students' learning	4	7	03/12/2015 13:43	K D A A L B	26/04/2016 12:06	K D A A L B
3. The participatory model and the Omari CPD system	0	0	04/12/2015 11:06	K D A A L B	04/12/2015 11:06	K D A A L B
1. Benefits	7	51	04/12/2015 11:08	K D A A L B	26/04/2016 12:06	K D A A L B
2. Limitations	7	40	04/12/2015 11:08	K D A A L B	26/04/2016 12:06	K D A A L B

**Example of data Organisation of a code from different sources (e.g. INSET)**

interviews and observations.nvp - Nvivo

Name	In Folder	References	Coverage
1	Internal3 Observations/Day 1	1	0.93%
1	Internal3 Observations/Day 2	1	0.72%
1	Internal3 Observations/Day 3	1	0.75%
1	Internal3 Observations/Day 4	1	0.68%
1	Internal3 Observations/Day 5	1	0.90%
1 Halima	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	0.78%
1 Maryam	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	4.13%
1 Salima	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	0.93%
2	Internal3 Observations/Day 1	1	4.77%
2	Internal3 Observations/Trainers' re	1	21.44%
2 Alys	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	1.42%
2 Amal	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	2	0.49%
2 Lulwa	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	0.76%
3	Internal3 Observations/Trainers' re	1	16.47%
3 Ameera	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	0.97%
3 Noora	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	0.08%
3 Shamsa	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	0.57%
4 Anisa	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	0.29%
4 Zital	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	2	1.67%
5 Fanda	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	3.74%
5 Huda	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	1.08%
6 Muna	Internal311 Semi-structured interview	1	0.29%

The screenshot shows the NVivo software interface. On the left, a hierarchical tree of nodes is displayed under the heading "Nodes". The tree includes categories like "2. Teachers' learning from the model", "3. The participatory model and the Omani CPD system", "111. Teaching as a Profession", "222. Teachers' beliefs about CPD", "333. Teachers' CPD Experience", and "1. Types of CPD".

On the right, a search results pane is open for the query "1. INSET programmes". It displays several search results with text excerpts and coverage information:

- Reference 1: -4.13% Coverage. Excerpt: "did a lot Alhamdulillah, I remember the first year I started teaching I joined the cycle 1 course, I also did a language development course the second year of my teaching, I attended many and many workshops, I also did the jolly phonics workshop, I did the integrated curriculum course, I also attended many forums in our educational governorate, we are nominated for these activities before no the one who is willing"
- Reference 1: -0.76% Coverage. Excerpt: "I did the cycle 1 course, jolly phonics, shared reading, I also attended many workshops"
- Reference 1: -0.97% Coverage. Excerpt: "For example, I did the cycle one course, the jolly phonics, the language development course, the online course TKT"
- Reference 1: -0.93% Coverage. Excerpt: "I also did the cycle one course, IC3, I also attended many curriculum support workshops such as"

The screenshot shows the NVivo software interface. On the left, the same hierarchical tree of nodes is visible. On the right, a preview of a document titled "First Observation schedule (In the train)" is displayed. The document contains handwritten text and a table.

The document text includes:

- Observation Date: 1/11/2015
- Observer (Code): Trainer (A)

The table below has two columns: "Task Components" and "Observations".

Task Components	Observations
Session Focus	=Topic/s covered in the session (skills and knowledge) how to te...



### Example of a coded Interview

Researcher: Thank u very much for being willing to take part in this interview, again I am assuring you that your real name will not be used in the research, it will be unreal names and data to be used for the purpose of this research inshallah

Researcher: As I explained to you, there are four parts; the first part is focussing on your views about teaching then your views about professional development then your experience of continuing your professional development and finally about the future what are you thinking of the future, ok?

Lulwa: Ya okey

Researcher: Can I first ask you about your experience of working as an English language teacher, anything you want to share with me about the job...

Lulwa: To be honest I was shocked with my job, I didn't understand the meaning of a teacher, I mean entering the field, teachers are overloaded with lots of things that they have to do, they are also overloaded with lots of lessons<sup>1</sup>, first of all I thought that the teachers will be more appreciated,<sup>2</sup> I thought that there will be less lessons so that the teacher work more with his students, and I thought that teachers will have opportunities to complete their studies for example as a price for them from the ministry of Education which supports her to be an excellent teacher, I thought that before

**Commented [ABK1]:** Shocked with the job

**Commented [ABK2]:** Didn't understand the meaning of the job

**Commented [ABK3]:** Different reality

**Commented [ABK4]:** less appreciation for teachers

**Commented [ABK5]:** thought there will be rewards for teachers

Researcher: So what happened in reality?

Lulwa: Things changed, teachers are overloaded with lots of lessons lots of students in the classroom, aaaa teachers have to do lots of activities that may contain low achievers, out standers and who are level levels, also teachers have to do other jobs that teachers not only teaching, there is no time to be creative at all, there is no time even to think for other things outside, you have even to carry your work home<sup>3</sup> that is mean a problem we are suffering from.

**Commented [ABK6]:** reality is overloaded of work for teachers

**Commented [ABK7]:** No time to be creative

**Commented [ABK8]:** Take school work to home to complete them

Reseracher: What about the status of the teacher in the community? Do you feel the teacher has a status?

Lulwa: It depends on the community itself?

**Commented [ABK9]:** Teachers' status depends on the community

Researcher: like here in your community, what do you think?

Lulwa: It depends, as I said before if the parents appreciate the teacher and push their children to respect the teacher, of course I will feel appreciating while if the parents push to not respect the teacher and to say bad words to the teacher, so what do think the status of the teacher is going to be, there is no status of the teacher at all, so parents are sometimes against the teacher , don't punish my child, don't say bad words to my child, you are putting my child under pressure, you are giving them too much home work, you are giving them too much activities,<sup>4</sup> so how can we deal with their students, we have no solution at all

**Commented [ABK10]:** Parents have a big role in lowering the status of teachers

Researcher: What does teaching as a profession means to you?

Lulwa: The teacher have to prepare for the lesson before the present, teachers have to do lots of activities which matches the students level, teacher have to follow up the students and encourage them to raise their level, teachers have to design exams and use for example the media which attract the attention, to design lots of materials, lots of activities in the classroom, lots of strategies, teachers have to attract the attention using several ways, teachers have to use eye contact, use voice I mean variety with the students, teachers have to do lots of things, teachers has to use marks to assess the students<sup>5</sup>

**Commented [ABK11]:** Teaching is different from other jobs

Researcher: Are you happy with your job?

Lulwa: To be honest, I am trying to be happy

**Commented [ABK12]:** Trying to be happy with the job

Researcher: What do you mean?

Lulwa: Aaaa

Researcher: Lets divide the questions into two parts, are you happy, are you satisfied?

Lulwa: I am satisfied<sup>6</sup>

**Commented [ABK13]:** Satisfied with my job

Researcher: I mean you might be happy but not satisfied, you might be satisfied but not happy, you might not be both of them?

Lulwa: To be honest I depends first of all yes now I am under pressure I try to carry on with my students with my school then I think things will be alright

**Commented [ABK14]:** Job happiness depends on work pressure

inshallah, I am happy to be a teacher, I want to complete my studies.<sup>7</sup>

**Commented [ABK15]:** I am happy to be a teacher

Reseracher: Have you become a teacher from a personal desire?

Lulwa: Chance chance<sup>8</sup> to be honest my aim was to be a math teacher then in the college they told me if you want to be an English teacher you should put English as your first choice wow but I want to be a math teacher then okey I choose English than math then they did a placement test

**Commented [ABK16]:** Became a teacher by chance

Researcher: But I mean that your desire was to become a teacher not anything else, right?

Lulwa: Yes a teacher, to be honest when I was a child I want to be a doctor but my marks at last year was not enough to be a doctor I got 94% and this was not enough at that time to be a doctor, so I decided to be a teacher

**Commented [ABK17]:** Wanted to be a doctor but my marks didn't help so became a teacher

Researcher: So you decided to be a teacher because of the choices they gave you English ,Math right?

Lulwa: Yes and I am happy to become an English teacher

Researcher: Good that is my next question, you have English language, you have bachelor in English, so do you have any moments of dought to continue with this job and find another job?

Lulwa: Yes, to be honest yes yes yes, at the present because I am away from my home and I am suffering, I am away from my parents that's why, I ask my

family to search for another job than being a teacher, there is no other reason but because I am far away from my family<sup>9</sup> the main reason and till now I am looking

**Commented [ABK18]:** Searching for another job to be closer to home/ family

Researcher: Okey, now your views about continuing professional development, what does professional development means to you?

Lulwa: How to be creative, and how to expand how to be excellent in a not only in your job in your life how to deal with others how to gain another experience, exchanging knowledge, also, a that's it may be<sup>10</sup>

**Commented [ABK19]:** Meaning of PD

Researcher: Ok, can you give me examples of some professional development activities? What activities can teachers do to develop professionally for example?

Lulwa: Activities may be a creating plays for the students, or may be acting, may be also ask the students to participate<sup>11</sup>

**Commented [ABK20]:** Examples of CPD activities

Researcher: What about participating in conferences, courses like jolly phonics?

Lulwa: Also that is develops attending conferences as you said, courses, workshops not only attending presenting, doing research, what else aaam doing interviews discussions with the teachers take a part discussion as I said, may be study like doing MA<sup>12</sup>

**Commented [ABK21]:** Examples of CPD activities

Researcher: OK, do you think there is a relationship between teaching as a job and professional development?

Lulwa: There is a relationship

Researcher: What is this relationship?

Lulwa: How can you develop your language without developing your teaching which push you to do that, I mean learning is something not ending, I mean it endless, first of all we are not native speakers how can we develop our language without reading , listening to news, watching some T.V programmes, even without listening to music or songs, professional development in order to develop our language<sup>13</sup>

**Commented [ABK22]:** There is a relationship between PD and language development

Researcher: Okey, do you think English teachers should participate in the professional development activities? Need it or not?

Lulwa: Yes

Researcher: Why?

Lulwa: As I said before with this professional development how can teachers develop their language, how can they gain more vocabulary or idioms without keeping touch with others or without speaking, without reading, without development, without professional development teachers will have limited vocabulary, and cannot even contact with others<sup>14</sup>

**Commented [ABK23]:** PD leads to language development

Researcher: Ok, in your view, who is responsible for teachers' Professional development?

Lulwa: All are responsible, the ministry, the supervisors the SETs but the main person who is responsible for that is the teacher him or herself,<sup>15</sup> if the teacher for example do not have the desire to engage in different mmmm professional development then he will not learn lots of vocabulary he will not be able to participate he will be I mean shy as will not be able to contact with others<sup>16</sup>

**Commented [ABK24]:** Different parties are responsible for teachers' CPD

Researcher: Now we will talk about your experience of continuing professional development, can you tell me all the professional development activities that you have participated in?

Lulwa: Last year I attended forest<sup>17</sup> and it was my first time to be honest I was struggling to attend<sup>18</sup>, to be honest I enjoyed the topics<sup>19</sup> and I have many ideas about English teachers and English language teaching and I wanted to present inshallah

**Commented [ABK25]:** Attended local conference

**Commented [ABK26]:** Have challenges to attend CPD

**Commented [ABK27]:** Enjoyed the presented topics

**Commented [ABK28]:** Want to present in future confernces

Researcher: What about courses?

Lulwa: I did the cycle 1 course, jolly phonics, shared reading, I also attended many workshops<sup>20</sup>

**Commented [ABK29]:** CPD ctivities attended/ participated in

Researcher: Did you join the RPD course?

Lulwa: What is RPD?

Researcher: Research for Professional Development course?

Lulwa: Do you mean action research course?

Researcher: Yes

Lulwa: No I didn't attend this one

Researcher: What about Online courses like the special needs course and the TKT?

Lulwa: No because I was overloaded overloaded really, I have been nominated to be honest last year to do the TKT course and I really really was overloaded 21 lessons<sup>21</sup>

**Commented [ABK30]:** Workload stopped me from participating in CPD event

Researcher: Ok, lets talk about the activities you participated in, do you think these activities met you needs?

Lulwa: They met my needs<sup>22</sup> in ways that I saw lots of strategies that help me to deliver the message easily to my students, designing activities for my students, controlling the time, controlling the students how can I give with my students, cycle 1 activity met my needs on how to design different activities that suit different students for example, low achievers,<sup>23</sup>

**Commented [ABK31]:** Ways CPD met my needs

Researcher: Ok, what type of knowledge and skills you have learnt from these CPD activities I mean professional development activities or specific skills or strategies?

Lulwa: Yes, how to spell the words like look, cover, write, check, how to teach students the tricky words, how to teach jolly phonics project, also the steps that we have to follow to teach them the shared reading or the shared writing or how can we deliver the message for the students, ask them to write following the steps<sup>24</sup>

**Commented [ABK32]:** Skills gained from participation in CPD

Researcher: Ok, have you used these strategies in your classroom

Lulwa: Yes, they help me in managing my time and help the students to write sentences, knowing the structure of the sentence, how to start the paragraph, how to end it<sup>25</sup>

**Commented [ABK33]:** Ideas from CPD and used in classroom

Researcher: Ok, do you think that all activities you participated in were beneficial, relevant and ideas applicable?

Lulwa: All of them were beneficial but the challenge for me was how to apply them

**Commented [ABK34]:** Beneficial ideas but not applicable

Researcher: Why?

Lulwa: Because of the number of students and the time<sup>26</sup>

**Commented [ABK35]:** No of students per class and time stopped me from applying ideas

Researcher: OK, in your view, what should the ministry of Education do to help teachers develop professionally?

Lulwa: Giving teachers some scholar ships as a support idea for them to develop their language to contact with foreigners give them a chance but not here abroad I mean<sup>27</sup>

**Commented [ABK36]:** Teachers need courses abroad to develop their language and develop professionally

Researcher: Ok, what's the role of the teacher himself?

Lulwa: As I said before the teacher has the main responsibility

**Commented [ABK37]:** Teacher has the main responsibility for his/ her CPD

Reseracher: How?

Lulwa: Using the Internet, youtube<sup>28</sup>...etc

**Commented [ABK38]:** Ways the teacher can develop him/ herself professionally

Researcher: Ok, do you agree that the teacher sometimes should take responsibility and initiate for his professional development, e.g pay to attend course or complete higher studies...

Lulwa: Yes, if they have money, why not, if they have the desire why not<sup>29</sup>

**Commented [ABK39]:** If teachers have the desire and money they can initiate and pay for their PD

Reseracher: Ok, do you think teachers should be involved in the process of their professional development, e.g. should teachers be asked to suggest topics according to their needs?

Lulwa: No, I think teachers should be involved, they should write some suggestions for these courses, also the trainer has to do extra things topics to help the teachers, it is the role of everyone<sup>30</sup>

**Commented [ABK40]:** Teachers should be involved in their CPD process/ suggest content of INSET courses

**Commented [ABK41]:** Trainer has to do extra topics

Researcher: That is the last question, thank you for helping me and giving up your time, is there any thing you want to add?

Lulwa: Thank you, no I just want to be close to my parents

Researcher: Ok, Thank you very much

### **Annotations**

- 1 shocked with the job/work load
- 2 Appreciation/status
- 3 Teachers take their work home
- 4 Parents role in the status of teachers in community
- 5 meaning of teaching profession-job duties
- 6 satisfied with the job
- 7 Happy to be a teacher-complete studies
- 8 Became a teacher by chance
- 9 Searching for another job
- 10 Meaning of PD
- 11 CPD activities
- 12 More CPD activities
- 13 Relationship between teaching and PD
- 14 Importance of PD
- 15 PD responsibility
- 16 Affect of lack of desire in PD to teachers' learning
- 17 CPD activities
- 18 Struggling to attend CPD
- 19 Enjoyed topics
- 20 Courses and workshops
- 21 Workload stops teachers from joining PD

- 22 Met needs
- 23 Strategies learnt from PD events
- 24 Strategies learnt from PD events
- 25 Ideas used in classroom from PD events
- 26 Challenges to application of CPD ideas
- 27 Role of Ministry in teachers' PD
- 28 Role of teacher in his PD
- 29 Teachers' pay for their PD
- 30 Teachers' involvement in their CPD process with trainers

**Linked Memo**

Memos\\School 1-2

## Appendix 16: Reliability statistics

### Scale 1 Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	
Cronbach's Alpha	Standardized Items	N of Items
.833	.826	10

### Scale 2 Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	
Cronbach's Alpha	Standardized Items	N of Items
.877	.949	10

### Scale 3 Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	
Cronbach's Alpha	Standardized Items	N of Items
.898	.908	13

### Scale 4 Reliability Statistics

	Cronbach's Alpha Based on	
Cronbach's Alpha	Standardized Items	N of Items
.769	.766	14



## Appendix 17: Ethical approvals

MSc, PhD, EdD & DEdPsych theses.



Graduate School of Education

### Certificate of ethical research approval

MSc, PhD, EdD & DEdPsych theses

To activate this certificate you need to first sign it yourself, and then have it signed by your supervisor and finally by the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee.

For further information on ethical educational research access the guidelines on the BERA web site: <http://www.bera.ac.uk/publications> and view the School's Policy online.

**READ THIS FORM CAREFULLY AND THEN COMPLETE IT ON YOUR COMPUTER** (the form will expand to contain the text you enter). **DO NOT COMPLETE BY HAND**

Your name: Khadija Al Bahushi

Your student no: 620031205

Return address for this certificate: 72 Greyfriars Road, Exeter, EX4 7BS

Degree/Programme of Study: P.h.D in Education

Project supervisor(s): 1. Dr. Salah Troudi , 2. Dr. Esmael Abdollahzadeh

Your email address: [kdaa201@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:kdaa201@exeter.ac.uk) , and [Khadija.b@moe.om](mailto:Khadija.b@moe.om)

Tel: 07516364290

I hereby certify that I will abide by the details given overleaf and that I undertake in my thesis to respect the dignity and privacy of those participating in this research.

I confirm that if my research should change radically, I will complete a further form.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to be 'K. Al Bahushi', written over a horizontal line.

date: 27/03/2015

Chair of the School's Ethics Committee  
updated: March 2013

## Certificate of ethical research approval

**TITLE OF YOUR PROJECT:** 'Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Omani in-service (INSET) TESOL teachers: Challenges and Opportunities'

---

**1. Brief description of your research project:** This research project endeavoured to critically examine the effectiveness of the continuing professional development/CPD activities run by the Ministry of Education in Oman for English language teachers and the possible influences they might have on improving schools, increasing teacher quality and improving the quality of student learning. In specific, the research investigates the challenges associated with TESOL teachers' CPD in Oman and the opportunities for developing CPD in the context of in-service training of teachers/INSET.

Phase one of this research aims to survey participants' beliefs/views and their CPD experiences. It seeks to identify participants' views about teaching as a profession and their views about CPD. It also seeks to collect information about participants CPD experiences. This phase will adopt an online survey which will be distributed to the research participants as a link and they can access it, complete it and submit it using either their computers or smartphones.

Phase two of the study will adopt a case-study through which one particular case will be selected to take part in the qualitative phase. The aim of the case-study is to look in detail at the CPD system in Oman, so interviews, and classroom observations will be used in this phase as a way of investigating teachers' beliefs and their real classroom practices about CPD.

Phase three of the study will adopt an action research to contribute to a change in the current situation. The action research is used to introduce teachers to the participatory model of professional development and to see their reaction to this suggested model of CPD through interviewing them after the action research.

**2. Give details of the participants in this research (giving ages of any children and/or young people involved):**

**Phase 1 participants:**

- An online survey will be distributed to a random sample of English teachers and Senior English teachers in the 11 educational regions of the country. Accessing the survey participants will be through colleague teacher trainers and administrators in each region. The administrators, teacher trainers and the participants in each educational region will be provided an outline of the research, the opportunity to seek further information and be given a summary of findings.

**Phase 2 participants:**

- The information gathered from phase 1 will inform the target for the second phase where one specific educational region will be selected as a case study (and within this region, one specific CPD activity e.g an INSET course and the participants of this course will be chosen to collect data from). Accessing the participants and the course will be also through the colleague trainers and administrators in the chosen region. Everyone will be informed about the aims of the study and it will be made clear that participation is voluntary and that the regions' and the course participants' consent will be obtained prior to involvement in the case-study. The participants of the case-study will be interviewed as well as observed in this phase.

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Chair of the School's Ethics Committee  
updated: March 2013

**Phase 3 participants:**

- The action research intervention will be done with the same participants of the case-study and the focus of the intervention will be on the same CPD activity focussed on within the case-study. After the intervention, participants will be interviewed to see their reaction to the intervention. Participants consent will be obtained prior to involvement in the action research phase of the study.

**Give details (with special reference to any children or those with special needs) regarding the ethical issues of:**

**3. Informed consent:** Where children in schools are involved this includes both headteachers and parents). Copy(ies) of your consent form(s) you will be using must accompany this document. a blank consent form can be downloaded from the GSE student access on-line documents: Each consent form **MUST** be personalised with your contact details.

I will be following the *Ethical Guidelines for Educational Research* set by the Council of the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2011), as well as the University of Exeter, GSE Ethics policy at every stage of conducting this research project. For example, in relation to the *Informed Consent*: It will be essential to obtain informed consent from teachers and senior English teachers in phase 1 of the research before they complete the online survey. Moreover, in phases 2 and 3 of the research within the case-study and action research informed consent will be obtained and recorded for each participant. Participants will be made aware of how the research finding will be used. Essentially, informed consent will be an ongoing process throughout the research. Participants will be reminded that they have the right to withdraw from the research at any given time and that data related to them will be destroyed.

**4. anonymity and confidentiality**

Assurances of anonymity and confidentiality will be outlined within the framework of voluntary informed consent, as well as in the instructions accompanied with the online survey. In terms of the online surveys, they will not include any names or any codes, so participants cannot be identified. Records of the data collected from all research instruments (including transcripts and any audio recordings) will be stored in a secure and safe place. Electronic information will only be accessed by the researcher with their username and password. This information will be stored on a secure system with recognised virus protection. Electronic and paper information will be locked in a secure building. Information will also be coded to ensure anonymity. This will remain anonymous in the write up of the research. Collected written information will be destroyed by shredding and securely disposing when it is no longer required. Any audio recording will also be disposed of digitally.

**5. Give details of the methods to be used for data collection and analysis and how you would ensure they do not cause any harm, detriment or unreasonable stress:**

**Data collection for phase one:**

- Quantitative: A quantitative measure using an online survey will be used to sample the views and experiences of English teachers and senior English teachers about continuing professional development. This online survey will involve ratings scales, given options and allow for fuller responses if required. It will also gather demographic information regarding gender, job title, age, experience and geographical location of setting.

**Data Analysis for Phase One:**

- Quantitative data will be input into the SPSS statistical package to allow for statistical analysis of the information. This will provide numerical data regarding participants' perceptions and experience of continuing professional development. It will also provide an overview of the descriptive statistics, including the mean scores, standard deviation and distribution of scores.

**Data Collection for Phase Two (case-study):**

Data collection for this phase will be qualitative.

- Semi-structured interviews: the participants of the case-study (all English teachers joining a specific CPD activity in a specific region) will be interviewed to follow up the survey data and dig deeply into teachers' perceptions towards CPD.
- Observations: the case-study participants will be also observed twice: first time during the CPD event (e.g in the training room), second time they will be observed again in their classrooms to see impact of the CPD event on teachers' real classroom practices.

**Data Analysis of Phase Two:**

- All qualitative information will be transcribed and uploaded to the NVivo programme, and will be coded and organised thematically. The interview data will explore the differences among views of participants and cross comparisons made with regard to different CPD activities. The data from class room observations will determine the effectiveness of the CPD activity in relation to having an impact in teachers' class room practices. It will also provide information from development of the programme.

**Data Collection for Phase Three (Action research):**

- I will design and administer one-shot workshops for the case-study participants which are going to introduce participants to "the participatory approach" to continuing professional development as an addition to the other approaches used in the CPD system in Oman. The workshops will be followed by on-line discussion groups to communicate the idea of the participatory model practically through online discussions.
- Semi-structured interviews: the participants will be interviewed after the intervention (workshops and online discussions) to see their reaction to the participatory model of CPD.

**Data Analysis of Phase Three:**

- All qualitative information will be transcribed and uploaded to the NVivo programme. Data will be coded and organised thematically to determine the effectiveness of the intervention in participants' views regarding CPD.

**6. Give details of any other ethical issues which may arise from this project - e.g. secure storage of videos/recorded interviews/photos/completed questionnaires, or**

During the data collection, data analysis and write up, data (surveys, interview data and observation records) will be securely stored in a locked cabinet in a secure building. As previously mentioned, electronic information will only be accessed by the researcher with their username and password. Electronic information will also be stored on a secure system, within a locked building with recognised virus protection. It will be destroyed when it is no longer required.

7. special arrangements made for participants with special needs etc.

8. Give details of any exceptional factors, which may raise ethical issues (e.g. potential political or ideological conflicts which may pose danger or harm to participants):

I will be an insider participating in the research through observing participants, interviewing them, and doing the intervention with them. Also, I worked as a teacher trainer for a long time and I am aware of the context and the problematic issues related to teachers' CPD, and this may result in researchers' bias. To avoid researchers' bias or any harm to the participants, I will do the case-study and action research in another region not the one I worked in as a teacher trainer, where the participants do not know me and have no idea about my job.

*This form should now be printed out, signed by you on the first page and sent to your supervisor to sign. Your supervisor will forward this document to the School's Research Support Office for the Chair of the School's Ethics Committee to countersign. A unique approval reference will be added and this certificate will be returned to you to be included at the back of your dissertation/thesis.*

*N.B. You should not start the fieldwork part of the project until you have the signature of your supervisor*

This project has been approved for the period: April 2015 until: April 2016

By (above mentioned supervisor's signature):  date: 30/03/2015

*N.B. To Supervisor: Please ensure that ethical issues are addressed annually in your report and if any changes in the research occur a further form is completed.*

GSE unique approval reference: 0/14/15/40

Signed:  date: 30/4/15  
Chair of the School's Ethics Committee

**Arabic letter to the MoE to get their approval for data collection**



بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

الفاضلة/ مديرة المكتب الفني للدراسات والتطوير بوزارة التربية والتعليم

**الموضوع: طلب الموافقة على تطبيق دراسة حول متابعة الأبناء المهني لمعطي اللغة الإنجليزية بوزارة التربية والتعليم**

يسرني أن أرفق لكم طيه نسخة من مخطط الدراسة التي أود القيام بها في المحافظات التعليمية التابعة لوزارة التربية والتعليم، وذلك كجزء من متطلبات رسالة الدكتوراة التي أقوم بها في كلية التربية بجامعة أكسفورد بالمملكة المتحدة. كما أود أن أؤكد تعديي باستخدام البيانات والمعلومات لعرض البحث العلمي فقط وسوف يتم التعامل معها ضمنيا كأحصاءات عامة، بدون أي تصريح مباشر لأسماء الأشخاص أو الجهات المتضمنة بالدراسة.

أرجو التكرم بالموافقة على تطبيق هذه الدراسة بجميع المحافظات التعليمية، ومخالطة الجهات المعنية لتسهيل مهني لأتمام هذه الدراسة الميدانية، مع العلم أن عنوان بحثي **(الأبناء المهني المستمر لمعطي اللغة الإنجليزية بمدارس سلطنة عمان: التحديات والإمكانيات)** والذي يتضمن إجراء دراسته ميدانية لجميع البيئات من معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية والمعلمون الأوائل، حيث أن عينة الدراسة وأنوات جمع البيانات تتألف من التالي:

- 1) تعيينه استبيانات للتعرف على وجهات نظر معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية والمعلمون الأوائل تجاه مهنة التدريس ومتابعة الأبناء المهني (الاستبانة ستوزع على جميع المحافظات التعليمية خلال شهر مايو 2015)-بناء على تحليل نتائج الاستبانة سيتم اختيار محافظة تعليمية معينة لإجراء المقابلات مع عينة من معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية وإجراء ملاحظات صفيحة وعمل ورشة ومجموعة نقاش على الأنترنت لنس المجموعة من المعلمين.
- 2) إجراء مقابلات مع معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية في المحافظة التي تم اختيارها للتعرف على آرائهم حول برامج متابعة الأبناء المهني التي تنظمها وزارة التربية والتعليم لهذه الفئة ومدى استفادتهم منها وأهم التحديات التي تواجههم لمتابعة أبنائهم مهنيا (خلال شهري سبتمبر وأكتوبر 2015)
- 3) إجراء ملاحظات صفحية لاحدى البرامج التدريبية لقياس أثر البرنامج على الممارسات الصفحية للمشاركين بالبرنامج (خلال شهري أكتوبر ونوفمبر 2015)
- 4) حضور هؤلاء المعلمين لورشه عمل يوم كامل لتعريفهم بنموذج الأبناء المهني التشاركي وأثره على استمرار المعلمين ف التنمية المهنية (خلال شهر نوفمبر 2015)
- 5) عمل مجموعة نقاش على الأنترنت ومناقشة الأمور المتعلقة بالأبناء المهني المستمر للمعلمين (خلال شهري نوفمبر وديسمبر 2015)

حيث سيتم إرسال الاستبانة الكترونيا الى جميع المحافظات التعليمية وسيقوم الزملاء بالاطراف على تعبئة الاستبانة من قبل عينة الدراسة. كما أنني سأقوم شخصيا بإجراء المقابلات والملاحظات الصفحية والورشه في المحافظة التعليمية التي تم اختيارها بناء على نتائج الاستبانة وذلك بعد التنسيق مع المديرية العامة في هذه المحافظة.

هذا وتقنصلوا بقبول فائق الاحترام والتقدير،

مقدمة الطالب: خديجة بنت درويش بن علي البوشوية

طالبة دكتوراة بكلية التربية للدراسات العليا-جامعة أكسفورد-المملكة المتحدة

الوظيفة: اخصائية تدريب معلمي اللغة الإنجليزية بوزارة التربية والتعليم

للاستفسار والتواصل: [lkdaa201@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:lkdaa201@exeter.ac.uk)

المشرف على الرسالة: د. صالح الطويدي



## Appendix 18: Consent form



### GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

*Title of Research Project: 'Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Omani in-service TESOL teachers: Challenges and Opportunities'*

31/03/2015

Dear Colleague,

I am Khadija Al Balushi, a P.h.D student, in the Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter, United Kingdom, and I am investigating the continuous professional development of in-service English teachers in the Sultanate of Oman. In particular, my research project attempts to examine the challenges associated with TESOL teachers' CPD in Oman and the opportunities for developing CPD in the context of in-service training of teachers/INSET. This study is aiming to develop a model of CPD which can hopefully fit the needs of the in-service TESOL teachers working for the Ministry of Education in Oman.

As part of the process, the views and experiences of in-service TESOL teachers about continuing professional development will be sought through an online survey, interviews with some teachers and classroom observations with others. You might be asked to participate in one of these if you wish to take part in this study. I would like to emphasize that involvement in the study is voluntary and participants are free to withdraw their consent at any time. Information and data obtained will be analysed by Khadija Al Balushi solely for the purpose of this study and will not affect any participant anyhow. The final written thesis will ensure anonymity by not using any actual names or identifying characteristics of any participants. This letter gives you some information about my study and seeks your permission to be involved in my P.h.D research. Please read the consent form in the following page, indicate approval for your participation in the section specified for that and write your details below.

I am looking forward to hearing from you. Thank you!

Khadija Al Balushi

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Khadija Al Balushi', written over a horizontal line.



GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

CONSENT FORM

I have been fully informed about the aims and purposes of the project.

I understand that:

There is no compulsion for me to participate in this research project and, if I do choose to participate, I may at any stage withdraw my participation and may also request that my data be destroyed.

I have the right to refuse permission for the publication of any information about me.

Any information which I give will be used solely for the purposes of this research project, which may include publications or academic conference or seminar presentations.

All information I give will be treated as confidential

The researcher will make every effort to preserve my anonymity.

**Please indicate approval for your participation in the study by deleting as applicable.**

I wish/ I do not wish to participate in the study titled: 'Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for Omani in-service TESOL teachers: Challenges and Opportunities'

.....  
(Signature of participant)

.....  
(Date)

.....  
(Printed name of participant)

One copy of this form will be kept by the participant; a second copy will be kept by the researcher

Contact phone number of researcher(s): 0044 7516364290

If you have any concerns about the project that you would like to discuss, please do not hesitate to contact:

**The Researcher:** Khadija Al Balushi at the above phone number or email her at [kdaa201@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:kdaa201@exeter.ac.uk), or at [khadija.b@moe.om](mailto:khadija.b@moe.om)

OR

**The Researcher's Supervisor:** Dr. Salah Troudi by sending him an email at [S.Troudi@exeter.ac.uk](mailto:S.Troudi@exeter.ac.uk)

\* when research takes place in a school, the right to withdraw from the research does NOT usually mean that pupils or students may withdraw from lessons in which the research takes place

Data Protection Act: The University of Exeter is a data collector and is registered with the Office of the Data Protection Commissioner as required to do under the Data Protection Act 1998. The information you provide will be used for research purposes and will be processed in accordance with the University's registration and current data protection legislation. Data will be confidential to the researcher(s) and will not be disclosed to any unauthorised third parties without further agreement by the participant. Reports based on the data will be in anonymised form.  
Revised March 2013



## Appendix 19: Questionnaire data - reasons for entering teaching

(Reasons for entering the teaching profession-Age)

		Age					Total
		22-26 years	27-31 years	32-36 years	37-41 years	42 years or over	
- Salary	Count	4	60	27	12	5	108
	% within Q51	19.0%	39.0%	36.5%	33.3%	23.8%	
- To serve my country	Count	8	73	40	22	10	153
	% within Q51	38.1%	47.4%	54.1%	61.1%	47.6%	
- Good working conditions	Count	5	58	31	18	8	120
	% within Q51	23.8%	37.7%	41.9%	50.0%	38.1%	
- Long holidays	Count	6	24	19	4	3	56
	% within Q51	28.6%	15.6%	25.7%	11.1%	14.3%	
- The desire to work with students	Count	4	51	24	13	14	106
	% within Q51	19.0%	33.1%	32.4%	36.1%	66.7%	
- It is a stimulating job	Count	2	30	12	6	7	57
	% within Q51	9.5%	19.5%	16.2%	16.7%	33.3%	
- Job security	Count	11	48	26	11	5	101
	% within Q51	52.4%	31.2%	35.1%	30.6%	23.8%	
- To learn new skills and knowledge	Count	11	64	27	11	12	125
	% within Q51	52.4%	41.6%	36.5%	30.6%	57.1%	
- Teaching fits in with my lifestyle and family situation	Count	12	103	48	25	13	201
	% within Q51	57.1%	66.9%	64.9%	69.4%	61.9%	
- The only option I have according to my marks in high school	Count	2	18	9	4	4	37
	% within Q51	9.5%	11.7%	12.2%	11.1%	19.0%	
- Others Please specify	Count	2	11	6	5	5	29
	% within Q51	9.5%	7.1%	8.1%	13.9%	23.8%	
Total	Count	21	154	74	36	21	306

Percentages and totals are based on respondents.

**(Reasons for entering the teaching profession-Teaching experience)**

		Experience in teaching English					Total
		1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21 years or over	
	Count	23	50	19	11	5	108
- Salary	% within Q52	31.9%	39.1%	38.0%	30.6%	25.0%	
	Count	28	64	33	16	12	153
- To serve my country	% within Q52	38.9%	50.0%	66.0%	44.4%	60.0%	
	Count	23	53	20	17	7	120
- Good working conditions	% within Q52	31.9%	41.4%	40.0%	47.2%	35.0%	
	Count	15	21	10	7	3	56
- Long holidays	% within Q52	20.8%	16.4%	20.0%	19.4%	15.0%	
	Count	22	38	20	14	12	106
- The desire to work with students	% within Q52	30.6%	29.7%	40.0%	38.9%	60.0%	
	Count	9	26	9	6	7	57
- It is a stimulating job	% within Q52	12.5%	20.3%	18.0%	16.7%	35.0%	
	Count	22	46	17	12	4	101
- Job security	% within Q52	30.6%	35.9%	34.0%	33.3%	20.0%	
	Count	29	56	19	10	11	125
- To learn new skills and knowledge	% within Q52	40.3%	43.8%	38.0%	27.8%	55.0%	
	Count	42	88	35	24	12	201
- Teaching fits in with my lifestyle and family situation	% within Q52	58.3%	68.8%	70.0%	66.7%	60.0%	
	Count	7	16	5	4	5	37
- The only option I have according to my marks in high school	% within Q52	9.7%	12.5%	10.0%	11.1%	25.0%	
	Count	10	8	3	3	5	29
- Others Please specify	% within Q52	13.9%	6.2%	6.0%	8.3%	25.0%	
Total	Count	72	128	50	36	20	306

Percentages and totals are based on respondents.

## Appendix 20: Questionnaire data- job satisfaction

(Having worked as a teacher for some time how satisfied are you about the job-Age)

		Age					Total
		22-26 years	27-31 years	32-36 years	37-41 years	42 years or over	
Very satisfied	Count	3	15	11	12	11	52
	% within Age	11.1%	9.5%	14.1%	30.0%	50.0%	16.0%
	% of Total	0.9%	4.6%	3.4%	3.7%	3.4%	16.0%
Satisfied	Count	8	88	35	13	5	149
	% within Age	29.6%	55.7%	44.9%	32.5%	22.7%	45.8%
	% of Total	2.5%	27.1%	10.8%	4.0%	1.5%	45.8%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Count	6	32	23	11	4	76
	% within Age	22.2%	20.3%	29.5%	27.5%	18.2%	23.4%
	% of Total	1.8%	9.8%	7.1%	3.4%	1.2%	23.4%
Dissatisfied	Count	9	18	6	3	2	38
	% within Age	33.3%	11.4%	7.7%	7.5%	9.1%	11.7%
	% of Total	2.8%	5.5%	1.8%	0.9%	0.6%	11.7%
Very Dissatisfied	Count	1	5	3	1	0	10
	% within Age	3.7%	3.2%	3.8%	2.5%	0.0%	3.1%
	% of Total	0.3%	1.5%	0.9%	0.3%	0.0%	3.1%
Total	Count	27	158	78	40	22	325
	% within Age	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	8.3%	48.6%	24.0%	12.3%	6.8%	100.0%

(Having worked as a teacher for some time how satisfied are you about the job-Teaching Experience)

		Experience in teaching English					Total
		1-5 years	6-10 years	11-15 years	16-20 years	21 years or over	
Very satisfied	Count	8	16	4	15	9	52
	% within Experience in teaching English	10.1%	12.0%	7.7%	37.5%	42.9%	16.0%
	% of Total	2.5%	4.9%	1.2%	4.6%	2.8%	16.0%
Satisfied	Count	35	70	27	12	5	149
	% within Experience in teaching English	44.3%	52.6%	51.9%	30.0%	23.8%	45.8%
	% of Total	10.8%	21.5%	8.3%	3.7%	1.5%	45.8%
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Count	21	24	15	10	6	76
	% within Experience in teaching English	26.6%	18.0%	28.8%	25.0%	28.6%	23.4%
	% of Total	6.5%	7.4%	4.6%	3.1%	1.8%	23.4%
Dissatisfied	Count	12	18	5	2	1	38
	% within Experience in teaching English	15.2%	13.5%	9.6%	5.0%	4.8%	11.7%
	% of Total	3.7%	5.5%	1.5%	0.6%	0.3%	11.7%
Very Dissatisfied	Count	3	5	1	1	0	10
	% within Experience in teaching English	3.8%	3.8%	1.9%	2.5%	0.0%	3.1%
	% of Total	0.9%	1.5%	0.3%	0.3%	0.0%	3.1%
Total	Count	79	133	52	40	21	325
	% within Experience in teaching English	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
	% of Total	24.3%	40.9%	16.0%	12.3%	6.5%	100.0%

## Appendix 21/a: Questionnaire data- importance of CPD

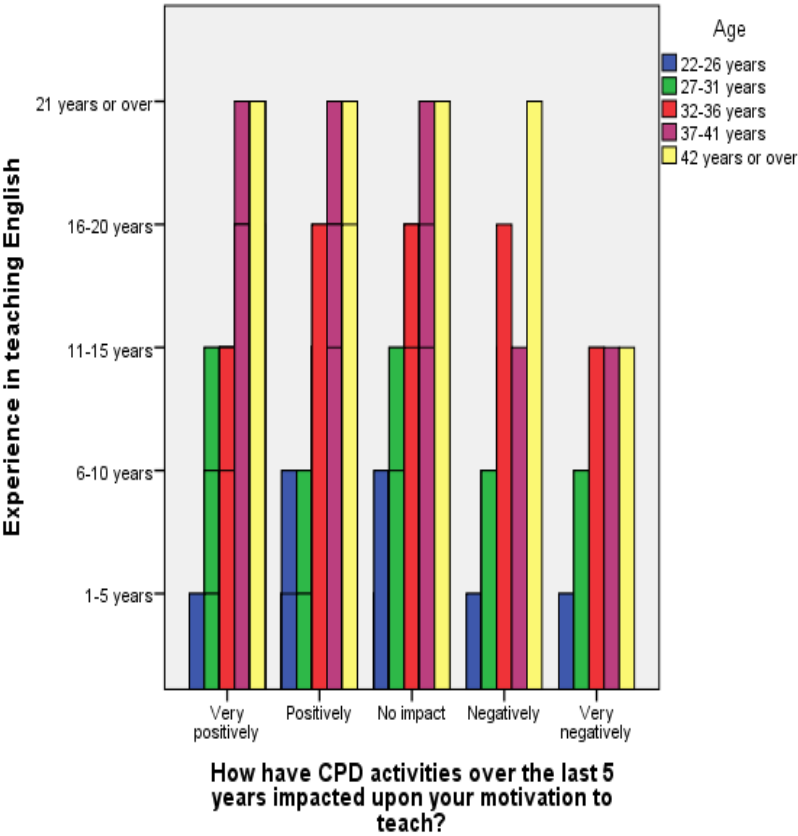
(Importance of CPD activities/overall frequencies)

	Very important		Important		Unsure		Not important		Not important at all	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Participating in Conferences/Symposia	143	43.3%	145	43.9%	29	8.8%	13	3.9%	0	0.0%
Reading professional materials (e.g. books)	185	56.1%	115	34.8%	24	7.3%	5	1.5%	1	0.3%
Attending training courses/workshops	209	63.3%	87	26.4%	28	8.5%	6	1.8%	0	0.0%
Peer observation	144	43.6%	149	45.2%	25	7.6%	11	3.3%	1	0.3%
Coaching/Mentoring (e.g. by a SET)	117	35.5%	145	43.9%	45	13.6%	14	4.2%	9	2.7%
Doing action research	83	25.2%	141	42.7%	71	21.5%	31	9.4%	4	1.2%
Participating in communities of practice	88	26.7%	130	39.4%	76	23.0%	32	9.7%	4	1.2%
Higher academic study (e.g. MA)	110	33.3%	118	35.8%	61	18.5%	35	10.6%	6	1.8%

## Appendix 21/b: Questionnaire data- CPD experience

	Always		Often		Sometimes		Seldom		Never	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	Table N %
Participating in Conferences and Symposia	37	11.3%	70	21.3%	120	36.6%	63	19.2%	38	11.6%
Reading professional materials eg books article	75	22.9%	108	32.9%	103	31.4%	37	11.3%	5	1.5%
Attending training coursesworkshops language me	91	27.7%	103	31.4%	111	33.8%	19	5.8%	4	1.2%
Peer observation	113	34.5%	106	32.3%	64	19.5%	40	12.2%	5	1.5%
Coaching/Mentoring by a senior English teacher...	113	34.5%	113	34.5%	71	21.6%	22	6.7%	9	2.7%
Doing action research	11	3.4%	42	12.8%	79	24.1%	106	32.3%	90	27.4%
Participating in communities of practice	35	10.7%	77	23.5%	85	25.9%	51	15.5%	80	24.4%
Higher academic study e.g MA Doctorate	36	11.0%	47	14.3%	40	12.2%	30	9.1%	175	53.4%

**Appendix 21/c: Questionnaire data- the impact of CPD on motivation to teach (differences between novice and experienced teachers)**



## Appendix (22) The annual PD plans for the three schools

### School (1) PD Plan

Teachers' development (Training Sessions conducted at school)

No.	Session Title*	Date	Targets*	Presenter(s)	Expected Outcome	Comments
SP	How to prepare scheme of work	25/8/2015	English Ts	S.T.	1. To discuss how to 2. get scheme of work and TP.	
Workshop	Using game in English	27/8/2015	English Ts	T.	1. To show different 2. kinds of games in Teaching E	
Workshop	"Group work"	31/8/2015	English Ts	T.	1. To find out which GSW 2. activities are more suitable to help improve	
Workshop	"J.P for Graded 1"	19/9/2015	Grade 1 Ts	S.T.	1. low achievers knowledge and skills in English. 2. To encourage str to	
Workshop	"J.P for grade 2"	19/9/2015	Grade 2 Ts	S.T.	1. read and write fluently 2. To provides new	
Workshop	"Shared Reading"	19/10/2015	Grade 1+2 Ts	S.T.	1. ideas in teaching 2. reading and writing.	
Workshop	"R. Time"	19/10/2015	Grade 3+4 Ts	S.T.	1. To help str to read 2. for pleasure. ☺	
Workshop	"How to teach dialogue"	11/12/2015	English Teachers	T.	1. To provides new 2. ideas in teaching dialogue.	
Workshop	"Teaching Grammar in cycle 1"	11/12/2015	English Teachers	T.	1. Provides new ideas 2. in teaching <del>teaching</del> grammar.	
Workshop	"How to form instructions in classroom"	12/12/2015	English Teacher	T.	1. To show Ts new way to 2. form instructions in class room.	
Workshop	"Increasing motivation for teaching vocabulary to young learners"	12/12/2015	English Teacher	T.	1. To help Ts to develop positive 2. attitude towards str.	
Workshop	"Effective strategies for teaching vocabulary to young learners"	12/12/2015	English Teacher	T.	1. To introduce different teaching 2. strategies for teaching vocab.	

\*Session title: title of seminar / workshop / lecture  
\*Targets: ( Teachers ): all levels in the school or specific levels e.g. only grade 9 teachers, or grade 11 skills teachers



School (2) PD Plan

Teachers development ( Training Sessions conducted )

No.	Session Title*	Date	Targets*	Presenter(s)	Comments
1.	How To Deal with Low Achievers	19/2015	English Teachers	[Redacted]	
2.	Jolly Phonics /G2	21/9/2015	English Teachers	ERS/ [Redacted]	Done in P[Redacted] school on Wednesday 21/9/2015
3.	How Could I Develop My Classroom Language	1/10/2015	English Teachers	[Redacted]	
4.	Motivation for Learning English Language	1/11/2015	English Teachers	[Redacted]	
5.	Teaching Grammar To Young Learners	1/11/2015	English Teachers	ERS/ [Redacted]	
6.	Promoting Students' Upper Thinking Skills	1/12/2015	English Teachers	SET/ [Redacted]	
7.	Techniques For Following Students' Work	1/12/2016	English Teachers	[Redacted]	
8.	Methods of Various Qs. in the Classroom	1/13/2016	English Teachers	[Redacted]	
		1/1			

\*Session title : title of seminar – workshop – lecture

\* Targets : (Teachers) : BE Cycle 1 teachers ,BE Cycle2 teacher , GE teachers ,Supervisors, Senior Teachers, General.

Teachers development ( Training Sessions conducted )

No.	Session Title*	Date	Targets*	Presenter(s)	Comments
9.	Reading Time	13/2016	English Teachers	ERS/ [Redacted]	
10.	Effectiveness of Classroom Management	14/2016	English Teachers	[Redacted]	
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\*Session title : title of seminar – workshop – lecture

\* Targets : (Teachers) : BE Cycle 1 teachers ,BE Cycle2 teacher , GE teachers ,Supervisors , Senior Teachers, General.

School (3) PD Plan

10/5/10.2015  
R.S

implementer	Target	Pe riod	Plac e	Date	Aim	النوع type			البرنامج Program me
						تطويري Deve lopment al	علاجي Rem edial	إثرائي enri chi ng	
Senior teacher	English trs,	حصة دراسية	Free room صف فاضي	2015/9/6	مناقشة مستجدات الوثيقة	√			Student assessment handbook حلقة نقاش وثيقة تقويم الطلبة
	English trs,	حصة دراسية	مركز مصادر التعلم LRC		استخدام التكنولوجيا في التدريس			√	Model lesson حصة مشاهدة
	English trs,	حصة دراسية	مركز مصادر التعلم LRC			√			Model lesson حصة مشاهدة
Senior	English trs,	حصة دراسية	Free room صف فاضي		تفعيل ادوات التقويم المختلفة في الغرفة الصفية		√		Assessment tools ادوات التقويم
Senior	English trs,	حصة دراسية	Free room صف فاضي				√		Workshop "teaching writing skill"

									مشغل "تدريس مهارة الكتابة"
Senior teacher	English trs,	حصة دراسية	Free room صف فاضي		التعرف على الاستراتيجيات الحديثة في تدريس مهارة القراءة	√			Workshop "reading strategies مشغل "استراتيجيات القراءة"
Senior teacher	English trs	حصة دراسية	غرفة متعددة الأغراض Multi-resource room		الدراك أهمية التعلم الذاتي لدى المعلم والمتعلم	√			Workshop "
English trs	English trs	حصص	صفوف دراسية		التعرف على جوانب مختلفة في طريقة تدريس المعظمة... الخ		√	√	تنفيذ حصص تباليغية بين المعلمات Peer observation
		حصة دراسية	Free room صف فاضي		رفع دافعية الطالبات ومستوى تعلمهن بطريقة التدريس هذه			√	Workshop "
	معلمات اللغة الانجليزية English teachers	حصة دراسية	صف		التعرف على اساليب مختلفة في التدريس			√	زيارة مدرسة
	,	حصة دراسية	Free room صف فاضي		التعرف على طريقة تدريس حديثة			√	Workshop
	English Trs	حصة دراسية	/10		تطبيق استراتيجيات تدريس حديثة			√	Model lesson حصة مشاهدة
	,	حصة	Free room		تفعيل الاتجاهات الايجابية لدى الطالبات	√			Discussion panel "Implementing

		دراسة	صف فاضي					positive attitudes in students" حلقة نقاش غرز المؤلف الإيجابية في الطلاب
	معلمات اللغة الانجليزية English teachers	حصة دراسة	Free room صف فاضي		كيفية التعامل مع الطلاب لذو القدرات المختلفة		√	Seminar "How to deal with multi abilities students" كيفية التعامل مع الطلاب ذو القدرات المختلفة
Senior	معلمات اللغة الانجليزية English teachers	حصة دراسة	Free room صف فاضي				√	"Classroom instructions حلقة نقاش "اللغة الصعبة"
معلمات اللغة الانجليزية English teachers	معلمات اللغة الانجليزية English teachers	حصة دراسة	صفوف		التعرف على جوانب مختلفة في طريقة تدريس المعلمة... الخ		√	تقليد حصص تبادلية بين المعلمات Peer observation
معلمات اللغة الانجليزية English teachers	معلمات اللغة الانجليزية English teachers	حصة دراسة	صفوف		التعرف على جوانب مختلفة في طريقة تدريس المعلمة... الخ		√	تقليد حصص تبادلية بين المعلمات Peer observation

إذات صنية ، حضور اجتماعات ، حضور مؤتمر أو ملتقى ، قراءات موجهة ، المشاركة في منتدى بمواضيع هادفة ، الاطلاع على مواقع وبرامج خلال شبكة المعلومات الدولية ، كتابة تقارير أو أبحاث ، كتابة مقالات ،  
المجلات الرسمية ، المشاركة في المسابقات ، دراسة حالة )