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Continuing Professional Development for Filipino Educators: A Systematic Literature Review on PLCs, Reflective Practice, and In-Service Training Models

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Abstract

Continuous professional development (CPD) under Philippine law and teaching professionalism standards remains underexplored in the literature. The present study synthesizes existing research on CPD for Filipino teachers, its relation to professional communities and learning-enhancement practices, and teachers' professional development. The PRISMA procedure was used to accurately extract data from a small Scopus dataset. In summary, the study analyzed 177 sources in two stages. 61 empirical studies published or soon to be published were selected for the analysis. Four main themes have been highlighted: (a) While in-service training is fundamentally episodic, lecture-based, and weakly evaluated, needs-based, experiential, and technology-driven training courses are beginning to surface; (b) Professional learning communities, Learning Action Cells, and lesson study are collaborative models that foster collegial and pedagogical progress factor, but performance is hampered by workload issues, leadership dilemmas, and Filipino culture, especially in terms of *pakikisama* and *hiya*; (c) while reflective practice can be enriched by means of mentoring during practicum, feedback, and action research, it is never organized or maintained; and (d) the pre-service-in-service continuum lacks coherence and research capacity.

Keywords: continuing professional development, professional learning communities, reflective practice, in-service training, teacher education, Philippines, systematic review

1. Introduction

Teacher quality is viewed as the most important school lever for transforming learning, especially in the Philippines, which has changed its curriculum, basic education duration, and criteria for selecting and evaluating teachers several times. Continuing Professional Development (CPD) has become increasingly relevant in this context. The Continuing Professional Development Act (Republic Act No. 10912) makes CPD compulsory for renewing professional licenses; Department of Education (DepEd) Order No. 42, s. 2017 introduced the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) as the standard for teaching quality; DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016 established the Learning Action Cell (LAC) as the framework for school-based CPD; and the Excellence in Teacher Education Act (Republic Act No. 11713) aimed at connecting pre-service and in-service training. Teacher educators in state higher educational institutions must undertake CPD in accordance with rules related to their academic positions and advancement.

Yet, policy density differs from actual evidence. Filipino educators, on one side, claim that they appreciate professional development as an avenue towards professional advancement and lifelong learning (Ancho & Arrieta, 2021; Dayagbil & Alda, 2024), while research from the different parts of the country shows that training for work is mainly content-centered and consists of lectures (Tupas & Noderama, 2020), teachers think that CPD is not beneficial to them (Padillo et al., 2021), and that teachers who deliver training do not engage in CPD

activities (Tulo & Lee, 2022). The shift to remote learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic led to a boom of webinars and a syndrome called webinar fatigue (Tanucan et al., 2023); post-pandemic recovery entails new needs that need addressing in terms of content, technology integration, and research (Abella et al., 2024; Valle, 2024).

The research studies in question are scattered across different journals, academic disciplines, regions, and career stages and have not been systematically assembled. Standalone studies cannot assess whether the challenges acknowledged in one school are valid worldwide, whether approaches that work well in one context remain effective in another, or whether the phases of teacher development in policy and practice are similar. As such, a comprehensive literature review is required in order both to consolidate the accumulated knowledge and to assess where the information is lacking, especially at the time when the government of the Philippines reviews the work of its education system and when DepEd puts into operation a new version of the MATATAG curriculum (Peña et al., 2026).

This evaluation addresses the important task of identifying, reviewing, and synthesizing Scopus-indexed data on CPDs for Filipino teachers. The work concentrates on three types of CPD popular in the Philippines: professional learning communities, widely involving LACs, professional communities in education, lesson study, and similar methods; reflective practice using mentoring, feedback, and action research as a means for teachers' self-reflection; and in-service training, including workshops, seminars, conferences, outreach programs, and graduate programs. Since PPST and RA 11713 describe the teacher development process as a long process starting with initial education, the review also considers research on pre-service teacher training. There are four questions according to which the review is conducted.

1) What are the bibliographic and methodological characteristics of empirical research on CPD for Filipino educators?
2) What in-service training models are documented, and what do Filipino educators report about their design, relevance, and effects?
3) How are PLCs and other collaborative models enacted in Philippine educational institutions, and what conditions enable or constrain them?
4) How is reflective practice, including mentoring and action research, cultivated across the pre-service and in-service phases of Filipino teachers' careers?

2. Method

2.1 Review Design and Reporting

The review aimed to follow a systematic literature review approach with qualitative evidence synthesis, structured according to the PRISMA 2020 guidelines for systematic review reporting. This systematic approach makes study identification, selection, and synthesis transparent and reproducible. The review protocol, outlining the research questions, eligibility criteria, search string, and synthesis strategy, was finalized before screening began.

2.2 Eligibility Criteria

The eligibility definition considered four aspects: population, concept, context, and research design. Studies were deemed eligible for inclusion if they satisfied the following criteria: (a) focused on Filipino educators, including in-service teachers, school principals with instructional functions, teacher educators, or pre-service teachers; (b) investigated CPD, or any form of professional development and training programs for teachers; (c) were carried out in the Philippines or involved Filipino teachers; (d) reported original empirical results through qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods studies, including those that followed design-based implementation research; and (e) were peer-reviewed and published in reputable journals and in English. Non-eligible studies included those focused on non-educational professionals (students) without professional development implications, those not conducted in the Philippines, and those without empirical data.

2.3 Information Source and Search Strategy

This research used only Scopus because Scopus offers a comprehensive range of peer-reviewed educational publications, including local journals that often publish scholarly articles from the Philippines. The database also allows for systematic searches with specified filters for document type, subject area, language, and country of affiliation. The search was conducted in October 2026 based on the search string:

TITLE-ABS-KEY (("professional development" OR "teacher professional development" OR "teachers' professional development" OR (teacher W/3 (professional OR development)) OR "in-service training" OR "inservice training" OR CPD OR "continuing professional development" OR "teacher training" OR "pre-service training" OR "preservice training" OR "workshop" OR "coaching" OR mentoring OR "teacher coaching" OR

“instructional coaching” OR “lesson study” OR “peer observation” OR “teacher mentoring” OR “reflective practice” OR “reflective teaching” OR “professional learning” OR “professional learning community” OR PLC OR “communities of practice” OR “teacher communities”) AND (Philippines OR Filipino OR “Philippine” OR “Republic of the Philippines”) AND (teacher OR educator* OR “teaching staff”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, “SOCI”) OR LIMIT-TO (SUBJAREA, “ARTS”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE, “ar”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE, “English”)) AND (LIMIT-TO (AFFILCOUNTRY, “Philippines”))

The three concept blocks outlined CPD and its related models, the Philippine context, and the group of educational practitioners being studied. The criteria limited the search results to documents in the social sciences, arts, and humanities, published in English, and with at least one author based in the Philippines. No date limit was applied to reflect the development of CPD research before and after the enactment of the CPD Act of 2016 and the PPST.

2.4 Study Selection

All the records obtained from Scopus were exported, and full texts were obtained for each record. Because only one database was searched, duplicate records did not arise. Selection occurred in two phases. The first phase involved title and abstract screening against eligibility criteria and excluding records that did not meet the population or concept criteria. The second phase entailed assessing the remaining records against all eligibility criteria. We logged selection decisions, phases, and reasons for ethical decisions. The other reviewer independently reviewed borderline decisions, and the third reviewer resolved disagreements through consultation.

2.5 Data Extraction

A systematic data collection form was created for each of the included studies, capturing the authorship and publication year, research design, study subjects and setting, the CPD model or focal point, the theoretical or conceptual framework if mentioned, and main results such as the mentioned barriers, facilitators, and results of the study. The study was assigned to one of the main CPD themes (in-service training and CPD, PLC and collaborative models, reflective practice and mentoring, and pre-service training), depending on the study’s main focus. Studies belonging to several categories contributed to every section of the synthesis where relevant.

2.6 Appraisal of the Evidence

Because the review aimed to map and collate an emerging body of evidence rather than assess a specific impact, studies were not excluded on methodological grounds. Nonetheless, aspects of evidence quality such as the methodology of a study, the sampling method employed, the sample size, the type of outcome measurement used (self-reported or observational), and whether or not the study in question assessed the impact of CPD were collected for each of the studies and factored into the synthesis process and the discussion of evidence.

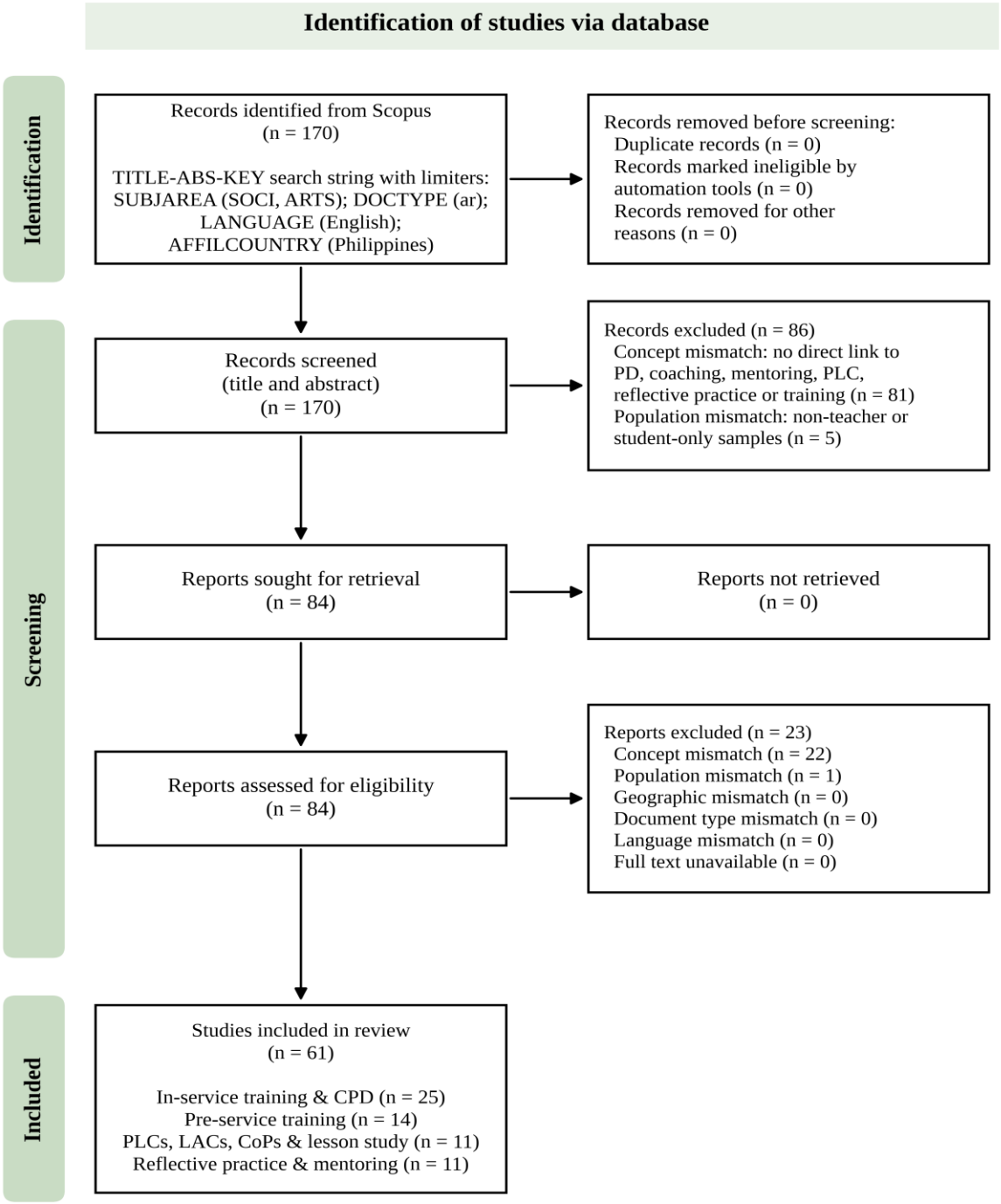
2.7 Synthesis

Because the studies varied in design, sample, and outcomes, meta-analysis was unsuitable. The results were synthesized applying reflexive thematic synthesis. All the extracted results were first coded inductively according to the studies’ research objectives, while recurrent themes and culturally relevant factors affecting the results were transformed into analytical themes. During this process, we paid special attention to overall similarities and differences between studies, the education system levels from which the results originated, and their robustness.

3. Results

3.1 Study Selection

The Scopus search produced 170 results, as shown in Figure 1. There was no elimination of duplicates. The first screening step (titles and abstracts) excluded 86 results; 81 were rejected because they did not meet the definitions of CPD, mentoring, reflective practice, PLC, or training. The remaining five results were excluded, as participants in these studies were not educators. The eligibility test was then run on the remaining text of the papers for analysis. The results showed that 84 papers passed the analysis, but 23 studies did not meet the inclusion requirements: 22 because of a mismatch in concepts, and one because of a mismatch in the population studied. The reports were not rejected because of their geographical location, document type, or language of presentation, as the search limiters accounted for these factors.



Adapted from Page et al. (2021), the PRISMA 2020 statement. Search date: October 2026.

Figure 1. PRISMA 2020 Flow Diagram of Study Identification, Screening, and Inclusion

3.2 Characteristics of the Included Studies

Table 1 presents the characteristics of the 61 studies included in this research, while Appendix A provides brief details on each study. The studies show that the evidence is recent. The earliest recorded study dates back to 2015 (Valdez & Lapinid, 2015), while 95% of the studies were published between 2020 and 2023. The peak period was marked in 2025, when 23 studies were published. This growth can be attributed to the post-pandemic recovery and the advanced status of the PPST methodological framework.

Qualitative designs predominated (n = 27, 44%), chiefly phenomenological studies, case studies, lesson studies, and one grounded theory (Bongco & Ancho, 2023). Mixed-methods designs accounted for 18 studies (30%), quantitative designs for 13 (21%), and design-and-development or research-and-development studies for three (5%). Quantitative studies were mostly descriptive surveys; only one tested a structural model (Awado et al.,

2024) and two validated measurement instruments (Alia et al., 2025; Tulang et al., 2023). Only a small number of studies evaluated a CPD intervention directly, through pre–post comparisons of an AI-focused course for pre-service teachers (Antonio, 2025), an eight-hour AI seminar for higher education faculty (Cordero et al., 2026), and an Appreciative Inquiry workshop for teacher education students (Hilao-Valencia & Ortega-Dela Cruz, 2023), or through comparison of face-to-face and online sections of a hybrid graduate program (Sintos, 2026). None used a comparison or control group, and none linked CPD participation to measured student learning, except for a study that found no significant relationship between teachers' PD activities and their teaching competencies (Padillo et al., 2021).

In total, 24 studies focused on basic-education teachers, 21 concerned pre-service teachers and their practice or training, nine involved higher-education faculty/teacher-educators, three dealt with education graduate students who are practicing teachers, and four were studies on mixed or cross-sector groups. The studies drew on information from Luzon, Visayas, and Mindanao, including far-flung and rural areas, although institutions of teacher education in Metro Manila and regional state universities were the most common settings. Overall, 25 studies addressed in-service training and CPD; 14 addressed pre-service training; 11 addressed PLCs and collaborative models; and 11 addressed reflection, such as mentoring.

Table 1. Characteristics of the Included Studies

Characteristic	Category	*n*	%
Publication year	2015–2019	3	5
	2020–2022	11	18
	2023–2024	16	26
	2025–2026	31	51
Research design	Qualitative	27	44
	Mixed methods	18	30
	Quantitative	13	21
	Design and development	3	5
Population	Basic-education teachers	24	39
	Pre-service teachers and teacher preparation	21	34
	Higher education faculty and teacher educators	9	15
	Graduate students who are practicing teachers	3	5
	Mixed or cross-sector groups	4	7
Primary CPD focus	In-service training and CPD	25	41
	Pre-service training	14	23
	PLCs and collaborative models	11	18
	Reflective practice and mentoring	11	18

3.3 In-Service Training Models

3.3.1 The Dominant Model: Episodic, Content-Driven, and Weakly Evaluated

Short-duration, scheduled training events are the most common form of CPD observed across industries. According to an assessment of DepEd's INSET program for the academic year of 2019-2020, the summer sessions and those that took place throughout the breaks turned out to be focused predominantly on information, making no use of practical knowledge besides writing action plans and neglecting the themes associated with Education 4.0 (Tupas & Noderama, 2020). The research showed that the CPD before the pandemic meant a diverse use of effective teaching strategies such as content delivery, pedagogical practices, technology, action learning, postgraduate programs, and others, while during the pandemic the focus turned to webinars connected

to online learning, technological advancement, and mental health (Ancho & Arrieta, 2021). The consequences of the development of webinars seem to be negative: educators stating they experienced fatigue mentioned the effects occurring in all spheres of their existence (physical, emotional, mental, social, and even economic), low retention of information learned during the webinars, and perceiving attendance as a necessity for winning (Tanucan et al., 2023).

The results of this model seem to be contradictory. Most teachers from Cebu reported becoming skilled planners and instructors, yet they felt the institution's activities were almost useless and that CPD did not significantly influence their skills (Padillo et al., 2021). In state universities and colleges, teachers' engagement in CPD was low, although it was required by law, and their participation grew with higher academic titles and personal circumstances that limited participation (Tulo & Lee, 2022). A survey of 1,063 teachers in Central Visayas found that teachers faced obstacles to participation, including a shortage of time, funding, and heavy workloads (Dayagbil & Alda, 2024). The state CPD program in Biliran improved teachers' classroom work but faced challenges from high workload and time limitations, as well as unequal access for urban and rural teachers (Concepcion, 2025). These studies show that CPD quantity is high, but it is not based on teachers' needs, their daily work, or its effects on them.

3.3.2 The Turn Toward Needs-Based Design

Another area of research that has gained momentum since 2020 focuses on applying diagnostic information to CPD design. The training needs were determined on the basis of various factors: five years of data on National Achievement Test scores indicating a drop in performance in the areas of science and mathematics (Junio-Sabio et al., 2020); self-perception of teachers with respect to their research skills as positive regarding knowledge and attitude but negative regarding research efficiency, availability of resources, and excessive teaching loads (Abella et al., 2024); and a combination of an analysis of the difficulties elementary mathematics teachers of different experience levels encounter in enriching the knowledge about mathematics and implementing new technologies after the pandemic (Valle, 2024). Furthermore, a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods was used to conduct a needs assessment, which showed that while science teachers are good at identifying research problems, they lack knowledge in data processing and research writing (Walag et al., 2025).

Additional research has been based on established PPST-related training, as demonstrated by the lack of faculty expertise of non-pre-school graduates in Kindergarten and elementary education, small achievement rate in academic knowledge, pedagogical skills and learner diversity (Valdez & Begnalen, 2026), school principals' high rating of administrative support in teaching quality with the exception of learner diversity (Araneta et al., 2020), and teachers' knowledge of the historical misinterpretation resulting in social studies departments' appeal to run workshops and conferences on misrepresented history of the Philippines (Briones, 2025). Needs assessment was also used to plan higher education outreach programs in rural institutions (Daminar & Galusan, 2025), while the evaluation of 3 such programs revealed their efficiency and the need to update materials and extend both time and individualized follow-up (Martin & Ildefonso, 2025).

The studies all follow a common logic: CPD needs to respond to identified gaps rather than take a more generalized approach. The drawback is also common. The studies conclude with a proposed program that is never implemented or evaluated, creating an abundance of needs analyses and a deficit of program evaluations in the field.

3.3.3 Experiential, Immersive, and Technology-Focused Models

Documentation on a third model refers to the model that is developed outside of the workshop. Professionals who participated in industry-based professional development training, which consisted of a series of science-industry visits by science teachers in Central Visayas, reported building their confidence as instructors, establishing linkages with industry standards, and enhancing their interdisciplinary programs (Cutillas et al., 2025). Teachers from Agusan del Sur, Surigao del Norte, and Samar emphasized the importance of practical, culturally relevant interdisciplinary workshops that blend creativity and rationality, and noted the need for support beyond training so learning can be applied later (Peligro et al., 2025). Regional academic meetings were seen as beneficial because they covered teaching innovations and offered opportunities for research collaboration, grounded in respect, open conversation, and integrity to support continuous development (Vivero, 2025). For teacher trainers, higher education and interactions with teachers worldwide are also linked to shifts from teacher-oriented approaches to student-centered education and technology use (Borbon et al., 2025).

Artificial intelligence has quickly become a critical area in CPD. Faculty members who attended an 8-hour seminar on AI were able to overcome their need to further develop their understanding of AI in relation to course completion and text creation (Cordero et al., 2026). Graduate studies will also contribute to CPD provision as teachers learn new practices. Graduate students in English language education found that connecting teaching and research in their programs enhanced their research and teaching skills (Ulla et al., 2025). At another

university, education graduates reported a strong interest in research but low confidence and productivity (Castulo et al., 2025). In a mixed-approach program for mathematics educators, face-to-face modules outperformed online ones in examination performance and attendance; however, successful learning outcomes were defined by the quality of engagement, not attendance alone (Sintos, 2026). In teaching the Chinese language, when foreign volunteers were unavailable during the pandemic, the instructional process continued through in-service training and higher education programs for teachers in local institutions (Pamintuan, 2021).

3.4 Professional Learning Communities and Collaborative Models

3.4.1 Forms of Collaborative Professional Learning

The studies examined indicated four main types of collaborative CPD. One is the Learning Action Cell, an institutionalized, school-based CPD model developed by DepEd. In researching the perceptions of 403 science teachers from remote areas, it was found that LACs structured in line with specific objectives improved their attitudes towards professional growth, supported students' holism and technological advancement, created an environment for exchanging ideas and experiences between fellow teachers, enabling teachers to develop their leading roles as well (Vega & Orleans, 2025). A study of virtual school-based LACs implemented in 16 primary schools found that they were essentially characterized as specialist-member interactions resembling regular teacher-student relationships and problematically involved choosing which classroom activities to focus on and how to implement them (Tulang et al., 2023).

The second type is known as the PLC, or a community of practice. Secondary teachers and school leaders have reported that implementing PLCs provides new strategies and materials, supports first-year teachers, improves communication between school leaders and teachers, and offers opportunities for more contextualized discussion of school and student problems (Tayag, 2020). There were four outstanding schools that were selected by DepEd regional offices as successful PLCs, and they depended on a good leadership style, devoted membership, and many chances for effective communication: means of participation in the PLC made teachers more cooperative, flexible, and innovative and strengthened their relations, trust, and motivation (Confesor & Belmi, 2022). Another collegial resource is informal intergenerational ties. The grounded theory of multigenerational school communities states that teachers of different generations can realize professional opportunities only with effective multigenerational communication, but generational gaps, seniority, and isolating school structures prevent this (Bongco & Ancho, 2023).

Lesson study is the third form of collaborative practice. Lesson study was used by teacher groups to contextualize a senior high school lesson on simple interest with the help of example–conclusion maps, which led to meaningful discussions and deeper thinking and showed that contextualized examples required further elaboration (Ngiwas et al., 2022), and to enhance the instruction of synthetic division in a post-pandemic HyFlex class, where the cycle revealed both misconceptions and practical barriers in the form of scheduling meetings online and imperfect internet connection (Agsalon et al., 2023). Finally, the former form includes collaborative schemes that extend beyond classrooms. Researchers among teachers in the Asia-Pacific region, comprising the Philippines, have defined virtual collaborative research writing as useful and effective in boosting professional skills, research skills, and efficiency (Villarama et al., 2025). Furthermore, validation of a collaborative lesson-planning technique that brought together student teachers and already employed science teachers during their internship showed it was effective in enhancing lesson quality, teamwork, and reflective practice (Ebillo-Canalita & Jugar, 2025). More importantly, classroom observations aligned with the Results-based Performance Management System and the PPST appeared to be an inherently collegial and developmental process when supported by pre- and post-observation discussions (Peña et al., 2026).

3.4.2 Conditions That Enable and Constrain Collaboration

In this way, the studies reveal enabling conditions: active, visible leadership; fully committed membership; safe opportunities for interaction; and clear meeting goals (Confesor & Belmi, 2022; Vega & Orleans, 2025). They also indicate limitations. Teacher participants in PLCs noted that they had to deal with such problems as excessive work and time conflicts, low level of trust in their peers, contradiction between their cooperative nature of learning and the system of personal ranking and promotion, and low understanding of the real advantages of participation, all of them being rooted in the school functions and culture. (Tayag, 2020). Time and schedule restrictions also limited the number of lesson study cycles (Agsalon et al., 2023) and collaborative lesson plans, and the model was threatened by disparities in participation levels and fixed mindsets (Ebillo-Canalita & Jugar, 2025).

A notable outcome is the mediating role of Filipino relational values. In a six-month study on the lesson study process in a low-cost private institution, it was found that smooth interpersonal relations, *pakikisama* (community), and *hiya* (feeling of propriety/shame) mean that the idea of critique that is critical for the lesson-study method cannot be put into effect, whereas bilingual language practices influence the depth of

collaboration (Espinosa & Elipane, 2025). Other scenarios, such as the tradition of smooth intergenerational relations shaped by the school's atmosphere, Filipino social relations, and gender, could be observed (Bongco & Ancho, 2023). Moreover, classroom observation was seen as positive when feedback was given for development and stressful when seen as evaluative (Peña et al., 2026). Therefore, it can be inferred that although Filipino schools tend to show a lack of collegiality, it is because of a tradition of collegiality that fosters harmony.

3.4.3 Action Research as Peripheral Participation

Action research has found itself in a somewhat unclear position between individual and group learning. Teachers of mathematics in Catholic schools who participated in an action research course were placed on the outskirts of the research community, with little chance for formal socialization in scientific circles due to non-conducive material, social, and political factors (Valdez & Lapinid, 2015). Even though action research was acknowledged as helping teachers improve their teaching methods, students' learning, and the curriculum, teachers suffered from difficulties associated with writing reports and analyzing results, mentioned a lack of time, and stated that participation in action research is connected to their career growth in terms of getting higher ranks and making promotions (Aguilar-de Borja, 2018). Finally, science teachers have indicated that the lack of mentoring and institutional support was the main barrier to their development in action research, urging institutions to provide online training and analytics seminars (Walag et al., 2025). Overall, action research is widely implemented but poorly supported as a form of professional research.

3.5 Reflective Practice and Mentoring

3.5.1 Structured Reflection in Teacher Preparation

Explicitly theorized reflective practice emerged primarily in the context of pre-service training, and often in relation to the use of new technologies. Using Schön's differentiation between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action, first-year pre-service mathematics teachers engaged in lesson planning using generative AI technologies, trained in comparative literacy skills before AI technologies, and working with prompts and AI outputs using their pedagogical judgment, maintaining humans' involvement in ensuring accuracy, curriculum compliance, and ethics (Farillon-Labis, 2025). Courses in the use of AI technologies for teaching that offered a combination of conventional lectures, hands-on training, collaborative lesson design, and reflective practice showed impressive results in different dimensions of the TPACK model in 84 pre-service science teachers, whose reflections highlighted their positive outcomes as well as the limitations of AI, including the ethical aspect and contextual limitations (Antonio, 2025). The second application of reflective practice in teacher education involved students' participation in an Appreciative Inquiry workshop, where they reframed negative self-talk into self-confidence and determination (Hilao-Valencia & Ortega-Dela Cruz, 2023).

3.5.2 Mentoring and Feedback in the Practicum

The practicum setting is where reflective practice combines with mentoring. Pre-service teachers experienced feedback not only as an evaluation process, but as a phenomenon that formed a body and a timeline, revealing students' readiness and growth (Tubal et al., 2025). Cebu public high school student teachers have learned that real-world practice differs greatly from the training setting, and that mentors are essential, even when communication skills are lacking (Origenes et al., 2024). Passive language participation does not connect to readiness for practicum among English pre-service students; active communication, proper mentoring, modeling, reflective feedback, and real-life teaching experiences do (Dimzon, 2026).

Mentoring activities of cooperating teachers have been analyzed and deliberated upon in great detail. Cooperating teachers of pre-service English teachers taught them how to observe and analyze practices, carry out questioning, and conduct formative and authentic assessment in line with assessment principles through discussions (Reyes, 2023). In mathematics, mentors of practice teachers demonstrated their performances and offered feedback while providing different assessment options and mentoring towards independence (Tandas, 2025). Using the Cooperating Teacher Mentoring Scale, which included 265 student teachers, Alia et al. (2025) identified three forms of mentoring. The analysis of the documents in the portfolio, which included lesson plans, observation materials, and reflective journals, revealed that practice teachers were familiar with the competencies of the PPST but could not adapt the lessons, manage the classroom, and use inclusive approaches to assessment, and that there was a need for a structured approach in this area.

3.5.3 Reflection Across the Career

There has been limited research into reflective practice during professional life. Teachers with between 15 and 30 years of experience tend to prefer self-reflection and self-development over mentoring, and they struggle to find common ground between their traditional teaching methods and the preferences of Generation Y learners (Aguirre & Faller, 2018). Reflection was indirectly included in collaborative practices, such as lesson study methodology (Espinosa & Elipane, 2025), the deeper reflection mentioned in collaborative lesson planning (Ebillo-Canalita & Jugar, 2025), or action research (Aguilar-de Borja, 2018).

4. The Pre-Service–In-Service Continuum

Studies of teacher preparation reveal how CPD needs are seeded before teachers enter service. Teacher education institutions were working to integrate the PPST into curricula but reported difficulties with instructional materials, outcomes-based assessment tools, and training seminars, and faculty and pre-service teachers disagreed in their ratings of competence in content and pedagogy, assessment, and community linkages (Atienza, 2026). Curriculum greening in early childhood education was regarded as vital, but its integration with PPST domains was only moderately evident, weakest for learner diversity (Lacea, 2026). Program-level studies proposed curriculum models to align technical-vocational teacher education with industry demands and emerging fields (Moreno et al., 2025), recommended integrating competencies benchmarked against international large-scale assessments through stronger content teaching and more pedagogical content knowledge courses (Espinosa et al., 2024), and developed outcomes-based instructional materials for professional education courses (Romarate et al., 2023).

Pre-service technical-vocational teachers rarely attend or complete program-related training or certification (Estubio & Sarsale, 2024), while alumni are highly satisfied with their training and call for more involvement in teaching and research (Bansiong & Alawas, 2024). Teacher educators' teaching styles influence pre-service teachers' views about their engagement, self-perception, and performance in mathematics (Awado et al., 2024), and pre-service physical education teachers find undergraduate research to be both a technical and emotional challenge, which requires a fusion of social-emotional and technical support (Tolentino et al., 2024).

The pandemic revealed vulnerabilities in the practicum process. Several pre-service teachers who did their student teaching through remote learning noted that the experience was difficult but limited due to issues of poor connection, technology issues, and lack of feedback provided (Camayang & Bautista, 2022), while another group of students revealed that they generally had a great experience thanks to familial and institutional help and the quality of the educational program they took part in (Arnilla et al., 2025). Online teachers noted that the transition to face-to-face classrooms after pandemic restrictions was both expected and shocking, as they learned classroom management and social interaction in real time (Lemana et al., 2026).

Table 2. Cross-Study Synthesis of Enablers, Constraints, and Evidence Strength by CPD Model

CPD model	Reported enablers	Reported constraints	Strength of evidence
In-service training (INSET, seminars, webinars, conferences)	Needs-based content; hands-on and interdisciplinary activities; post-training support; respectful, collaborative climate (Peligro et al., 2025; Vivero, 2025)	Content-heavy lectures; time, funding, workload; webinar fatigue; urban–rural access gaps (Concepcion, 2025; Dayagbil & Alda, 2024; Tanucan et al., 2023; Tupas & Noderama, 2020)	Mostly self-report surveys and interviews; two pre–post evaluations without controls (Antonio, 2025; Cordero et al., 2026)
PLCs, LACs, and communities of practice	Active leadership; committed membership; clear session objectives; support for new hires (Confesor & Belmi, 2022; Tayag, 2020; Vega & Orleans, 2025)	Overload; low trust; conflict with promotion schemes; difficulty choosing and executing plans (Tayag, 2020; Tulang et al., 2023)	Qualitative case studies and descriptive surveys; no outcome evaluation
Lesson study and collaborative lesson planning	Contextualised lessons; substantive collegial dialogue; teamwork (Ebillo-Canalita & Jugar, 2025; Ngiwas et al., 2022)	*Pakikisama* and *hiya* inhibit critique; scheduling; connectivity; unequal involvement (Agsalon et al., 2023; Espinosa & Elipane, 2025)	Small-team lesson studies and one validated model; no comparative designs
Reflective practice and mentoring	Dialogic, affective feedback; modelling; progressive independence; structured reflective tasks (Antonio, 2025; Tandas, 2025; Tubal et al., 2025)	Unstructured mentoring; judgemental feedback; restricted access to structured development (Ormilla, 2025; Peña et al., 2026)	Phenomenological studies; one validated mentoring scale (Alia et al., 2025)
Action research and research	Perceived value for teaching and promotion; mentoring; digital	Time; statistics and writing skills; peripheral participation;	Needs assessments and surveys; no evaluated

CPD model	Reported enablers	Reported constraints	Strength of evidence
capacity building	tools (Aguilar-de Borja, 2018; Walag et al., 2025)	scarce resources (Abella et al., 2024; Valdez & Lapinid, 2015)	research-mentoring programmes

Note. CPD = continuing professional development; INSET = In-Service Training for Teachers; PLCs = professional learning communities; LACs = Learning Action Cells.

5. Discussion

This review aims to collate empirical findings on CPD for educators in the Philippines. Overall, the 61 articles reviewed present a CPD system that is rich in policy, activity, and concept but poor in both design and impact. Based on this review, four interpretations emerge from the information collected.

5.1 From Episodic Training to Coherent Professional Learning Systems

The predominant finding of this research is that the prevailing pattern of Filipino CPD is episodic and transmissive. Content-based INSET (Tupas & Noderama, 2020), as well as the blooming number of webinars (Ancho & Arrieta, 2021; Tanucan et al., 2023) and the activities assessed as of little value (Padillo et al., 2021) is still accompanied by the real desire to develop (Dayagbil & Alda, 2024). The current conflict lies not between teachers and institutions but in the high volume of CPD provided. Teachers' appeals describe a lack of practical activities, feedback, need-based content, and time that should be provided under the episodic approach (Concepcion, 2025; Peligro et al., 2025; Walag et al., 2025). Many assessments in this study indicate diagnostic capacity; however, one gap remains: implementing programs after diagnosis. Coherence, therefore, can be understood as the process of aligning diagnosis, provision, and follow-up.

5.2 Collegiality Is Abundant; Critical Collaboration Is Scarce

The second conclusion relates to collaborative CPD. The reviewed investigations show that LACs, communities of practice, and lesson study can produce effective pedagogical and relational outcomes (Confesor & Belmi, 2022; Vega & Orleans, 2025). They also reveal that the intense relational culture found in schools has a dual character. The cultural constructs like *pakikisama* and hiya, which foster harmony and help people support each other, prevent open assessment critique, which is essential in collaborative inquiry (Espinosa & Elipane, 2025), while hierarchies, seniority, and the individualistic nature of promotion facilitate avoidance of open exchange (Bongco & Ancho, 2023; Tayag, 2020). Instead of regarding these ideas as limitations, the developers of CPD should make the best of them, for instance, through the use of structured protocols, with the help of which one can depersonalize the critique and redirect the focus of discussions from teachers to students and create relationships before providing an evaluation.

5.3 Reflection Is Concentrated at the Beginning of the Career

The third conclusion suggests that structured reflection is mainly limited to teacher training. Pre-service educators practice Schön's reflection theory, prepare portfolios, and maintain reflective journals while benefiting from measurable feedback from mentors (Alia et al., 2025; Farillon-Labis, 2025; Ormilla, 2025). After entering the profession, however, reflection becomes implicit and integrated into collaboration methods and action research, which teachers find challenging and inadequately supported (Aguilar-de Borja, 2018; Valdez & Lapinid, 2015). Experienced educators prefer private self-reflection over mentorship (Aguirre & Faller, 2018), while peer observation can cause anxiety because it is perceived as an evaluation process (Peña et al., 2026). The mentorship system for pre-service educators provides no support for novice and expert teachers, so reflection is not seen as necessary outside of training.

5.4 Research Capacity as a Cross-Cutting Gap

The fourth conclusion about the developmental gap across career stages is that research capability has been most consistently highlighted. For instance, basic education teachers, graduate students, teacher educators, and college students in teacher education have reported a consistent lack of confidence and effectiveness in research, especially in research writing and analysis. These individuals have expressed frustrations regarding the limited time, resources, and mentoring available to them while conducting research (Abella et al., 2024; Castulo et al., 2025; Tolentino et al., 2024; Walag et al., 2025). In fact, a researcher's results can be instrumental in academic promotion; hence, research CPD has significant implications for educators in the Philippines (Aguilar-de Borja, 2018; Tulo & Lee, 2022). Some encouraging solutions have been proposed, such as graduate courses integrated with research (Ulla et al., 2025) and virtual collaborative research writing (Villarama et al., 2025), although no research has assessed the effectiveness of a structured mentoring approach for teachers.

5.5 Implications for Policy and Practice

The implications for Philippine policymakers are as follows. For DepEd, it is advisable to shift INSET from content-delivery sessions to a cycle of instructional technology sessions based on identified needs and including follow-ups. Workshop sessions organized under DepEd Order No. 35, series of 2016, should also be evidence-based. Implementing evidence-oriented learning or inquiry is an important requirement (Dayagbil & Alda, 2024; Tayag, 2020). Teacher observations are implemented under the RPMS and PPST programs.

According to the findings, the Professional Regulation Commission and the continuing professional development providers under RA No. 10912 must not confuse the total number of CPD units with their corresponding significance in professional learning. Accreditation may reward ongoing, integrated, and evaluated programs instead of one-off activities and prevent over-training, which the teacher reported as burnout (Tanucan et al., 2023). The Commission on Higher Education and teacher education institutions may consider evidence that points in favor of making the practicum more robust through organized mentoring, implementing tools like the Cooperating Teacher Mentoring Scale (Alia et al., 2025), and including PPST competencies in teaching materials and curricula (Atienza, 2026; Ormilla, 2025). In compliance with RA No. 11713, teacher education institutions and the Department of Education (DepEd) may collaborate to develop induction programs for graduates whose preparation was affected by circumstances (Lemana et al., 2026). Finally, equality should be maintained since educators in out-of-the-way places had significant difficulties in accessing professional development programs (Concepcion, 2025; Vega & Orleans, 2025), which will be achieved as a result of the extension work of teacher education institutions (Daminar & Galusan, 2025; Martin & Ildefonso, 2025).

6. Limitations

There are limitations to this review. In particular, the search was limited to a single database and to articles with at least one author affiliated with an institution in the Philippines. While this ensures a comprehensive review of studies conducted within the Philippines, it may overlook important findings published under another author's name or by an author with no affiliation with the Philippine system. Further complicating matters, limiting the search to articles mostly in the social sciences and arts and humanities may exclude studies written in fields not included in the review. In addition, the keywords chosen may yield some irrelevant articles. Some articles will have to be removed because they address unrelated studies in the field of coaching. This highlights a problem: broad search terms can return many articles but reduce precision. Finally, some included articles are published in journals with different editorial policies, and readers should take that into account.

7. Directions for Future Research

The gaps identified point to a clear research agenda. First, the field needs evaluations of CPD programs, ideally with comparison groups, longitudinal follow-up, and measures of observed teaching practice and student learning, to move beyond needs assessment and self-reported benefit. Second, research should examine how collaborative models can be adapted to Filipino relational values, for instance by testing structured critique protocols within LACs and lesson study. Third, studies of induction and early-career mentoring are notably absent and are needed to connect the practicum to in-service development. Fourth, sustained in-service reflective practice, including instructional coaching and video-based reflection, remains unexamined. Fifth, research capacity-building programmes for in-service teachers should be designed and evaluated, given the centrality of research to promotion. Finally, studies of school heads as designers and leaders of CPD, and of CPD in Indigenous, island, and conflict-affected communities, would strengthen the equity dimension of the evidence base.

8. Conclusion

This systematic review examined 61 empirical studies listed in Scopus on continuing professional development among Filipino educators. Findings indicate that while there is a profession of education that embraces growth and a policy system that promotes that growth, the CPD system itself is still heavily reliant on episodic and content-based training; it is even employing collaborative models; however, the implementation of those models did not undergo the necessary transformations to fit into Filipino schools' culture; this explains the promotion of reflection and mentoring either in preparation or at the capacity of some other stages of CF development; however, research in this area is underfunded at every level of institutionalization.

Although evidence on CPD in the Philippines is relatively young and expanding, this work still relies on one-organization and self-assessment studies, as well as needs-assessment findings. In order for the implications of CPD policy structure in place in the Philippines to be translated into real teaching practice, coherent, culturally sensitive, and career-long learning programs need to be developed.

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Appendix A

Characteristics of the 61 Included Studies

Study	Design	Participants and setting	CPD focus	Key findings
Abella et al. (2024)	Mixed methods	440 public school teachers, Ilocos Sur	In-service (research competence)	High self-rated competence, low productivity; teaching load main hindrance; research training programme proposed
Agsalon et al. (2023)	Lesson study	4 teachers; HyFlex class	PLC (lesson study)	Lesson revised for procedural fluency; scheduling and connectivity constrained cycles
Aguilar-de Borja (2018)	Mixed methods	27 high school teachers, Calamba	Reflective (action research)	Framework writing hardest; time and statistics barriers; AR improved teaching and promotion prospects
Aguirre & Faller (2018)	Phenomenological case study	Mid-career university teachers, Leyte	Reflective (self-development)	Preference for self-reflection over mentoring; divide with millennial learners
Alia et al. (2025)	Instrument validation (EFA)	265 student teachers, Philippine HEIs	Mentoring	Three-factor Cooperating Teacher Mentoring Scale validated
Ancho & Arrieta (2021)	Qualitative	Filipino teachers, pandemic period	In-service	TPD seen as lifelong learning; pandemic CPD shifted to webinars
Antonio (2025)	Pre–post with interviews	84 pre-service science teachers, Bulacan	Reflective (AI-TPACK course)	Significant AI-TPACK gains (large effect); reflective affordances and constraints
Araneta et al.	Quantitative	384 school heads and	In-service	Very high administrative

(2020)	survey	teachers, Iloilo	(inputs to PD)	support related to teaching quality; learner diversity weakest
Arnilla et al. (2025)	Mixed methods	81 practice teachers, Aklan	Pre-service (practicum)	Mostly positive sentiments; resilience supported by family, institution, training
Atienza (2026)	Descriptive mixed methods	60 faculty, 335 pre-service teachers, Batangas	Pre-service (PPST)	PPST integration hindered by materials, assessment tools, training; programme proposed
Awado et al. (2024)	PLS-SEM	444 pre-service elementary teachers, central Philippines	Pre-service	Teacher educators' teaching style predicted attitude, self-concept, achievement
Bansiong & Alawas (2024)	Tracer survey	602 BSEd alumni, Benguet	Pre-service	High satisfaction; calls for authentic pedagogy, research exposure, facilities
Bongco & Ancho (2023)	Grounded theory	20 multigenerational teachers	PLC (collegial relations)	Smooth intergenerational relationships unlock collegial PD resources
Borbon et al. (2025)	Phenomenology	10 teacher educators with international exposure	In-service (international PD)	Shift to student-centred, technology-rich, global pedagogy
Briones (2025)	Descriptive mixed methods	Social science faculty, Albay community colleges	In-service (training needs)	Moderate awareness of historical distortion; workshops and symposia requested
Camayang & Bautista (2022)	Phenomenology	18 pre-service teachers, Quirino	Pre-service (practicum)	Remote student teaching superficial; connectivity, gadgets, feedback lacking
Castulo et al. (2025)	Quantitative survey	198 education graduate students	In-service (graduate study)	Interest but low research confidence; time, mentoring, capacity-building gaps
Concepcion (2025)	Qualitative interviews	25 college teachers, Biliran	In-service (state-facilitated PD)	PD supported resilience and satisfaction; workload and urban–rural gaps persist
Confesor & Belmi (2022)	Multiple-case study	4 exemplary schools across regions	PLC (community of practice)	Leadership, membership, interaction enable CoPs; collaborative, adaptive teachers
Cordero et al. (2026)	Explanatory mixed methods, pre–post	30 digital-immigrant faculty	In-service (AI seminar)	Significant reduction in perceived AI needs; renewed confidence
Cutillas et al. (2025)	Qualitative	25 science teachers, Central Visayas	In-service (industry-based PD)	Industry exposure built confidence, curricular relevance, interdisciplinarity
Daminar & Galusan (2025)	Survey with FGD	Teachers, rural high school, Caraga	In-service (training needs)	Priority needs include research writing and digital media skills
Dayagbil & Alda (2024)	Quantitative survey	1,063 teachers, Central Visayas	In-service (CPD)	Varied PD; time, funding, workload hinder; needs-based PD valued

Dimzon (2026)	Explanatory mixed methods	69 pre-service English teachers, Iloilo	Mentoring (practicum)	Mentorship and engagement, not exposure, built practicum readiness
Ebillo-Canalita & Jugar (2025)	Concurrent nested mixed methods	31 pre-service, 17 in-service science teachers	Reflective (collaborative lesson planning)	Validated model improved lessons, teamwork, reflection; time constraints
Espinosa & Elipane (2025)	Case study (6 months)	4 mathematics and science teachers, low-SES school	PLC (lesson study)	*Pakikisama* and *hiya* inhibited critique; language shaped reflection
Espinosa et al. (2024)	Descriptive-dev elopmental	Teacher education faculty, PNU	Pre-service (curriculum)	Framework integrating ILSA competencies into teacher education
Estubio & Sarsale (2024)	Descriptive survey	143 pre-service TVET teachers	Pre-service	Few certifications; uneven competence across TVET areas
Farillon-Labis (2025)	Qualitative, reflexive TA	30 pre-service mathematics teachers, Iloilo	Reflective (GenAI lesson planning)	Five reflective themes; human oversight emphasised
Hilao-Valencia & Ortega-Dela Cruz (2023)	Intervention workshop	11 teacher education students, Laguna	Pre-service	Appreciative Inquiry raised motivation and self-confidence
Junio-Sabio et al. (2020)	Document analysis	NAT results 2013–2018, one elementary school	In-service (CPD plan)	Declining outcomes; CPD plan proposed
Lacea (2026)	Quantitative descriptive	ECE experts and teaching interns, Cebu	Pre-service (curriculum)	Curriculum greening valued; PPST integration moderate
Lemana et al. (2026)	Transcendental phenomenology	5 novice teachers trained online, Sultan Kudarat	Pre-service (practicum transition)	Online-to-onsite transition staggering; identity reconfigured
Martin & Ildefonso (2025)	Descriptive evaluation	Elementary teachers in 3 extension programmes, Ifugao	In-service (extension training)	Programmes effective; outdated materials, time, logistics issues
Moreno et al. (2025)	Exploratory sequential mixed methods	BTVTEd experts nationwide	Pre-service (curriculum model)	Curriculum–industry misalignment; new BTVTEd model proposed
Ngiwas et al. (2022)	Lesson study	Teacher team; SHS class	PLC (lesson study)	Example–conclusion map deepened understanding of simple interest
Origenes et al. (2024)	Phenomenology	40 student teachers, Cebu City	Pre-service (practicum)	Reality shock; supportive mentors essential
Ormilla (2025)	Documentary analysis with interviews	42 practice teachers, Ifugao	Reflective (portfolios, PPST)	PPST awareness with application gaps; internship enhancement programme proposed
Padillo et al. (2021)	Quantitative descriptive	University teachers, Cebu	In-service (PD activities)	PD perceived as low benefit; no link with competencies
Pamintuan (2021)	Document review	Policies and training plans	In-service (training models)	Three local Chinese-teacher training modes sustained instruction

Peligro et al. (2025)	Descriptive qualitative	40 SEM educators, Mindanao and Samar	In-service (training design)	Hands-on, interdisciplinary training; post-training support needed
Peña et al. (2026)	Phenomenology with document analysis	24 elementary teachers, Pampanga	PLC (classroom observation)	Observation developmental yet stressful; observer training needed
Reyes (2023)	Qualitative case study	8 cooperating teachers, Pampanga	Mentoring (assessment)	Cooperating teachers modelled formative and authentic assessment
Romarate et al. (2023)	Descriptive-developmental	38 faculty, 655 pre-service teachers, Batangas	Pre-service (materials)	Outcomes-based instructional materials developed and validated
Sintos (2026)	Mixed methods	26 graduate mathematics educators, Samar	In-service (hybrid graduate PD)	Face-to-face outperformed online; engagement quality decisive
Tandas (2025)	Mixed-methods developmental	19 mathematics practice teachers, Ifugao	Mentoring (assessment)	Mentoring by modelling and feedback; school-based programme proposed
Tanucan et al. (2023)	Hermeneutic phenomenology	39 professional teachers	In-service (webinars)	Webinar fatigue harmed wellbeing and learning retention
Tayag (2020)	Interviews and FGDs	40 teachers, 24 school heads, 4 schools	PLC	Overload, low trust, promotion conflicts; gains for new hires and practice
Tolentino et al. (2024)	Hermeneutic phenomenology	10 pre-service PE teachers, Pampanga	Pre-service (research)	Research demanding emotionally and technically; holistic support needed
Tubal et al. (2025)	Phenomenology	10 pre-service teachers, Northern Mindanao	Reflective (feedback)	Feedback embodied and relational; dialogic feedback recommended
Tulang et al. (2023)	Survey with EFA	97 teachers, 16 primary schools	PLC (virtual LAC)	Specialist–member style patterns; difficulty executing LAC plans
Tulo & Lee (2022)	Mixed methods	222 teacher education faculty, SUCs	In-service (CPD)	Low CPD engagement; rank-related participation
Tupas & Noderama (2020)	Qualitative document analysis	DepEd INSET, SY 2019–2020	In-service (INSET)	Content-based, few hands-on activities; no Education 4.0 topics
Ulla et al. (2025)	Survey and interviews	Filipino ELE graduate students	In-service (graduate study)	Teaching–research nexus supported growth in research and teaching
Valdez & Begnalen (2026)	Research and development	199 K–3 teachers, Abra	In-service (PPST-based training)	Gaps in content-pedagogy and learner diversity; validated training
Valdez & Lapinid (2015)	Rights analysis	13 mathematics teachers, Manila	PLC (action research, CoP)	Teachers positioned at periphery of research community
Valle (2024)	Descriptive survey	68 elementary mathematics teachers	In-service (training needs)	Difficulties in content and technology across experience levels

Vega & Orleans (2025)	Survey and case study	403 science teachers, remote regions	PLC (LAC)	LAC built collaboration, leadership, pedagogical proficiency
Villarama et al. (2025)	Hermeneutic phenomenology	Teacher-researchers, Asia-Pacific incl. Philippines	PLC (virtual collaboration)	Virtual collaborative writing built skills and productivity
Vivero (2025)	Mixed survey	104 educators, Eastern Visayas	In-service (conferences)	Conferences valued for trends, collaboration, respectful climate
Walag et al. (2025)	Explanatory sequential mixed methods	24 science teachers, Cagayan de Oro	In-service (research training needs)	Low confidence in analysis and writing; mentoring and structures lacking

Note. AR = action research; CoP = community of practice; ECE = early childhood education; EFA = exploratory factor analysis; ELE = English language education; FGD = focus group discussion; HEI = higher education institution; ILSA = international large-scale assessment; LAC = Learning Action Cell; NAT = National Achievement Test; PLC = professional learning community; PLS-SEM = partial least squares structural equation modelling; PPST = Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers; SEM = science, engineering, and mathematics; TA = thematic analysis; TPD = teacher professional development; TVET = technical-vocational education and training.

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