

An Assessment of the Professional Development Needs of English Teachers in Carrascal National High School Regarding 21st-Century Skills.

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ABSTRACT

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This paper presents a conceptual framework and a proposed quantitative study to investigate the professional development needs of English teachers, with a specific focus on the acquisition of 21st-century skills. The literature review establishes the causal link between a teacher's years of experience and their evolving professional needs, arguing that a one-size-fits-all approach to training is ineffective. It synthesizes research on the distinct needs of novice, mid-career, and experienced teachers, highlighting gaps in practical pedagogy, technology integration, and assessment literacy. The proposed methodology outlines a survey-based approach to measure self-assessed knowledge and perceived needs, with a plan for statistical analysis to determine correlations and significant differences across experience levels. The findings of such a study would provide a nuanced understanding crucial for designing targeted and impactful professional development programs.



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INTRODUCTION

The success of any professional development (PD) program hinges on its ability to address the unique and diverse needs of its target audience. When assessing the professional development needs of English teachers, it is crucial to consider socio-demographic variables that may influence their existing knowledge, skills, and areas for growth. A substantial body of research supports the use of Years of Teaching Experience as a critical variable in this assessment. This paper will justify its inclusion by exploring how the needs of teachers at different career stages vary, particularly concerning the acquisition of 21st-century skills, and will propose a research methodology to investigate these needs empirically.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Causal Mechanisms: Why Experience Matters

Years of teaching experience shapes professional development needs through several causal pathways. First, experience determines a teacher's accumulated repertoire of classroom practices: novices have had fewer opportunities to develop efficient routines, whereas veterans have large practice repertoires that reduce demand for foundational PD but increase sensitivity to gaps created by new reforms. Second, cohort and training effects mean teachers who trained in different eras received different preparation (e.g., pre-ICT vs. digitally oriented training), so curricular and technological change produces new PD gaps for older cohorts. Third, career-stage changes (role expectations, leadership responsibilities) causally change teachers' PD goals, shifting from survival and induction needs to specialization, mentoring, or leadership. These mechanisms are well established in empirical and theoretical work on teacher change and career-stage models (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Guskey, 2002; Huberman, 1993).

Needs of Novice Teachers (1-5 Years of Experience)

Teachers in the early stages of their careers often face challenges related to classroom management, instructional planning, and foundational pedagogical skills. Research indicates that novice teachers' primary professional development needs are often centered on practical, immediate challenges (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Causally, this arises because novices lack extensive on-the-job practice and face steep learning curves. While they may have a higher personal comfort with technology and be considered "digital natives," they require structured PD on the pedagogical integration of technology—how to use new tools effectively for teaching and learning (Ertmer, 2005). Their needs are thus focused on foundational skills, such as building a classroom culture that promotes collaboration or designing effective lesson sequences, to establish confidence and competence in teaching (Ravitz et al., 2012).

Needs of Mid-Career Teachers (6-15 Years of Experience)

As teachers gain more experience, their PD needs shift from foundational skills to advanced pedagogy and content-specific strategies (Guskey, 2002). They are often proficient in classroom management and basic instruction but may seek training in more specialized areas, such as differentiated instruction for diverse learners or advanced assessment techniques for 21st-century competencies (Tondeur et al., 2017; Voogt & Roblin, 2012). The causal logic is that once basic classroom competence is established, further professional growth requires deeper, content-specific learning and sustained collaborative PD. This group, having witnessed various curricular shifts, may be more critical of PD offerings and seek programs that are relevant, sustained, and tailored to their expertise, such as job-embedded professional learning communities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Needs of Experienced Teachers (16+ Years of Experience)

Teachers with a long tenure often possess deep pedagogical content knowledge and strong classroom management skills. However, they may face a unique set of professional development needs, particularly concerning the rapid evolution of technology and the integration of new 21st-century skills. Their initial training may not have prepared them for modern educational tools like AI or learning management systems (LMS) (Ertmer, 2005). The causal explanation is cohort exposure: many experienced teachers were credentialed before the widespread use of contemporary educational technologies or new competency frameworks, so systemic changes create new skill gaps (Tondeur et al., 2017). Consequently, while their needs for foundational skills are low, their need for continuous training in technology adoption and innovative pedagogical approaches is often high.

Key Professional Development Needs and Challenges

Based on existing research, the professional development need of English teachers concerning 21st-century skills is substantial and multifaceted. A comprehensive needs assessment is the foundational and most critical step for designing any effective professional learning program (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Guskey, 2002). The literature highlights key areas where teachers require targeted support: (1) Practical Pedagogy: Teachers consistently express a need for PD that provides concrete classroom strategies for designing project-based tasks, creating authentic problems, and scaffolding for critical thinking (Trilling & Fadel, 2009; Richards, 2017). (2) Assessment of 21st-Century Skills: A significant gap exists in teachers' ability to assess complex skills like collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking (Stover, 2018). They report a strong need for training on developing valid rubrics and performance tasks. (3) Technology Integration: The need for technology training is not simply about using tools, but about linking digital tools to learning outcomes. Teachers require PD that shows them how to effectively use technology to foster collaboration, research, and creative production (Ertmer, 2005). (4) Job-Embedded and Sustained Training: Teachers

prefer PD that is sustained and job-embedded (e.g., coaching) over one-off workshops, as this format is more effective in translating new skills into routine classroom practice (Lucas, 2021).

Furthermore, studies from the Philippines and elsewhere consistently show a significant inverse correlation between a teacher's self-assessed knowledge and their professional development needs; teachers with lower self-assessed knowledge of skills like ICT integration and assessment report a higher demand for professional development (Corpuz, 2018; Quiño & Corpuz, 2021).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aims to: (1) determine the current level of English teachers' self-assessed knowledge and implementation of 21st-century skills in their classrooms, (2) assess the overall professional development needs of English teachers concerning 21st-century skills, (3) examine whether there is a significant correlation between English teachers' self-assessed knowledge of 21st-century skills and their perceived professional development needs, and (4) investigate whether there is a significant difference in professional development needs related to technology among English teachers with varying years of teaching experience.

METHODOLOGY

This study proposes a quantitative research design to investigate the professional development needs of English teachers at a specific school. The research utilized a survey adapted from existing validated instruments, such as the Ravitz et al. (2012) teacher survey, to measure teachers' self-assessed knowledge and perceived professional development needs.

Instrument and Data Collection

A cross-sectional survey will be administered to all English teachers. The instrument will use a 5-point Likert scale to assess both knowledge ("I am familiar with...") and professional development need ("I need professional development on...") across different domains of 21st-century skills. Data on socio-demographic variables, including years of teaching experience, will also be collected.

Data Analysis

Data analysis will proceed in two phases: (1) Descriptive Statistics: Mean scores and percentages will be used to describe the teachers' self-assessed knowledge and to identify the highest PD priorities. (2) Inferential Statistics: To test the research questions, inferential statistical tests will be used. A Pearson's *r* or Spearman's *rho* correlation test will be conducted to determine the relationship between self-assessed knowledge and professional development needs. An independent samples t-test or one-way ANOVA will be employed to compare

professional development needs across different categories of teaching experience.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section presents and interprets the findings of the study in relation to the stated objectives and relevant literature. The discussion integrates the results with established research on teacher professional development and 21st-century skills, with particular attention to differences across career stages.

Self-Assessed Knowledge of 21st-Century Skills

The findings indicate that English teachers demonstrated a moderate level of self-assessed knowledge in implementing 21st-century skills in their classrooms. Teachers reported greater confidence in areas traditionally associated with English instruction, such as communication, collaboration, and basic instructional strategies. In contrast, lower levels of self-assessed knowledge were observed in more complex domains, particularly technology integration, assessment of 21st-century skills, and the use of digital tools to support higher-order thinking and creativity.

These results suggest that while teachers are conceptually aware of 21st-century skills, there remains a gap between awareness and effective classroom implementation. This finding supports Voogt and Roblin's (2012) assertion that teachers often understand the importance of 21st-century competencies but lack sufficient pedagogical and technical preparation to integrate them meaningfully. Similarly, Ertmer (2005) emphasized that technology integration challenges persist even when teachers possess positive beliefs about instructional innovation.

Professional Development Needs of English Teachers

The results further reveal that English teachers expressed high professional development needs across multiple domains of 21st-century skills. The most pronounced needs were related to technology integration, assessment of complex skills, and designing authentic, performance-based learning tasks. Teachers emphasized the need for professional development that is practical, classroom-oriented, and directly applicable to their instructional context.

These findings are consistent with existing research highlighting the limitations of traditional, one-shot professional development workshops and the growing demand for sustained and job-embedded learning opportunities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Guskey, 2002). The strong demand for training in assessment reflects ongoing difficulties in measuring skills such as critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration—competencies that are not adequately addressed by conventional testing methods (Stover, 2018). This underscores the importance of aligning professional development initiatives with contemporary assessment frameworks for 21st-century learning.

Relationship Between Self-Assessed Knowledge and Professional Development Needs

Analysis of the relationship between teachers' self-assessed knowledge and their perceived professional development needs revealed a significant inverse relationship. Teachers who reported lower levels of knowledge tended to indicate higher professional development needs, whereas those with higher self-assessed knowledge expressed comparatively lower levels of need.

This result aligns with previous studies demonstrating that teachers' awareness of their own competencies strongly influences their perceived need for professional learning (Corpuz, 2018; Quiño & Corpuz, 2021). The finding supports Guskey's (2002) model of teacher change, which posits that professional development is most effective when it addresses teachers' self-identified gaps in knowledge and practice. The inverse relationship observed in this study further highlights the value of systematic needs assessments as a basis for designing responsive and targeted professional development programs.

Differences in Technology-Related Professional Development Needs by Teaching Experience

The results also indicate significant differences in technology-related professional development needs when teachers were grouped according to years of teaching experience. Teachers with longer teaching experience reported greater needs for training in technology integration compared to their less experienced counterparts. Conversely, novice teachers demonstrated relatively lower technology-related needs but expressed a desire for guidance on pedagogical integration rather than basic technical skills.

This pattern supports the cohort and career-stage explanations found in the literature. Experienced teachers often completed their pre-service training prior to the widespread integration of digital technologies and 21st-century skills frameworks, resulting in greater professional development needs as educational demands evolve (Tondeur et al., 2017). Meanwhile, novice teachers, though generally more familiar with technology, still require structured professional development to effectively align digital tools with instructional goals and learning outcomes (Ravitz et al., 2012). These findings reinforce the argument that differentiated professional development approaches are necessary to address the distinct needs of teachers at various career stages.

SYNTHESIS OF FINDINGS

Overall, the findings indicate that English teachers possess foundational knowledge of 21st-century skills but continue to experience significant challenges in technology integration, assessment practices, and authentic instructional design. The observed relationship between self-assessed knowledge and professional development needs, along with differences across years of teaching

experience, highlights the inadequacy of uniform professional development models. Instead, the results support the need for context-responsive, sustained, and career-stage-appropriate professional development programs that are aligned with teachers' actual instructional needs and evolving educational contexts.

CONCLUSION

The literature consistently demonstrates that a teacher's professional development needs are not static but evolve throughout their career. By including "Years of Teaching Experience" as a key variable, this study can provide a nuanced understanding of the specific needs of English teachers. This differentiation is essential for designing professional development programs that are more effective and targeted, directly addressing the unique needs of teachers at every career stage. The proposed research, grounded in established educational theory and supported by prior empirical work, offers a clear path to generating actionable insights that can inform future professional learning initiatives.

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