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Lifelong Learning Tendencies as Predictors of Teachers' Engagement in Continuing Professional Development: An Ordinal Regression Analysis

Christian I. Lamud *

University of Saint Anthony, Philippines

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Abstract
Ensuring quality in higher education hinges on robust teacher professional development. A crucial aspect of this development is the cultivation of teachers' disposition towards lifelong learning. Given the growing importance of lifelong learning on continuing professional development (CPD) of teachers, this SDG-driven research was conducted to determine whether lifelong learning tendencies (LLTs) are significant predictors of teachers' engagement in CPD. Using the revised LLTs Scale of Diker-Coskun, the lifelong learning tendencies of 244 full-time faculty members from public and private higher education institutions (HEIs) in the Province of Camarines Sur were calculated. The computed LLTs were analyzed using logistic ordinal regression to see if they influence teacher engagement in various aspects of CPD. Subsequent data analysis revealed that faculty members exhibit remarkably strong lifelong learning tendencies along with motivation, persistence, self-learning regulation, and curiosity. In terms of CPD engagement, while a significant majority participate actively in continuing education and career-related training, their engagement with professional organizations appears lower. Further, the predictive influence of LLTs on CPD was found to be contingent upon specific aspects of professional development. Drawing on the insights gained from these findings, a lifelong learning framework specifically tailored to the needs and contexts of HEIs in the Province of Camarines Sur was made.

*Corresponding author
cilamud@usant.edu.ph

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1 INTRODUCTION

Learning is a natural human tendency. When cultivated, this tendency pushes an individual to become a lifelong learner, but when neglected, it weakens someone's drive to pursue further education. The need to cultivate learning tendencies fueled the lifelong learning movement that started in the late 20th century. Today, the global commitment to promote lifelong learning opportunities for all is enshrined in the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, specifically Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) Number 4 (United Nations, n.d.).

However, creating an environment that fosters lifelong learning means rethinking education and redefining the role of schools as lifelong learning institutions. Toward this end, teachers

have a vital role to play. According to Zhou et al. (2021), teachers need to be lifelong learners themselves to shoulder the heavy responsibilities entrusted to them and be capable of positively influencing students in their thoughts, behaviors, and lifestyle. To clearly define the teacher quality standards necessary to promote lifelong learning among teachers, the Southeast Asian Ministers of Education (SEAMEO) devised the Competency Framework for Southeast Asian Teachers, putting premium on teacher professional development within a context that is regionally appropriate and in line with global best practices. Enabling competencies include understanding education trends and keeping oneself updated of regional and global developments. These competencies are also encapsulated in the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST), which was launched in 2017 in lieu of the National Competency-Based Teacher Standards (NCBTS). The seventh domain of the PPST focuses on personal growth and professional development, which includes philosophy of teaching, dignity of teaching as a profession, professional links with colleagues, professional reflection and learning to improve practice, and professional development goals.

Additionally, in 2016, Republic Act 10912, or the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Act, was enacted, requiring teachers and other professionals to earn 15 units before the renewal of their professional licenses every three years (Professional Regulation Commission, 2016). This law made CPD a mandatory requirement for all teachers, which translates to lifelong learning being a cornerstone of a teacher's career. Moreover, to complement the establishment of legal mandates and operational frameworks, concerned agencies are actively developing programs to equip teachers with lifelong learning opportunities. In the tertiary level, the Commission on Higher Education (CHED) has implemented programs like the Scholarship for Graduate Studies under the K to 12 Transition Program and Scholarships for Instructors' Knowledge Advancement Program (SIKAP) to advance the academic qualifications of faculty members to master's and doctorate degree levels. This is on top of the faculty development initiatives and tuition remission programs of HEIs and professional development grants from non-government organizations. While numerous professional development opportunities exist, the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022 identified a gap between these opportunities and the observed professional competence of teachers. In addition to the lack of an enabling environment and inadequate support from schools and agencies, other extraneous variables were identified as contributory factors to the teachers' declining pursuit of professional development. Even among teachers who are actively engaged in career advancement, many do not manifest a genuine and consistent desire to learn. In highly competitive professions like teaching, some undergo CPD solely for promotion. Others do it for mere compliance.

In accordance with that, to ensure that professional development initiatives will produce meaningful outcomes, it is necessary to check on the teachers' attributes and intrinsic drive to learn. This drive is shaped by motivation, perseverance, curiosity, and self-learning regulation that collectively form the lifelong learning tendencies (LLTs). Coşkun and Demirel (2010) defined these lifelong learning tendencies as an individual's natural or prevailing disposition to pursue learning. A review of existing literature revealed a bulk of studies focusing on lifelong learning tendencies. For instance, Cetin and Çetin (2017) investigated the lifelong learning tendencies of prospective teachers according to different demographic variables. Şen and Yildiz Durak (2022) examined the lifelong learning tendencies of English teachers, their professional competencies, and their self-efficacy in integrating technology. Furthermore, Demir et al. (2022) explored the relationship between these tendencies and teachers' digital literacy levels. These studies have demonstrated links between lifelong learning tendencies and a range of personal and professional factors. While much is known about lifelong learning tendencies of educators, research that links this concept to the professional development of teachers is either insufficient or nonexistent.

This research focused on determining whether lifelong learning tendencies are significant predictors of teachers' engagement in continuing professional development. The chosen topic holds particular significance in the tertiary education sector where upskilling of faculty members is deemed essential towards a more relevant and responsive higher education. Subsequently, the study focused on two purposely selected key variables – teachers' lifelong learning tendencies and professional development status. Informed by the literature and studies reviewed at the beginning of the study, the researcher chose these variables due to their theoretically grounded

potential relationship. Along with professional development, three aspects were considered – continuing education, membership in professional organizations, and participation in seminars, trainings, and workshops. Since professional development is a broad concept that encompasses many indicators, the researcher opts to delimit the concept and chose aspects that are particularly relevant in the realm of higher education. The Commission on Higher Education, through its Policies, Standards, and Guidelines (PSGs), articulated the need for faculty members to complete relevant degrees, attend in seminars and trainings, and participate in professional organizations.

In line with the above-mentioned statements, the researcher believes it is high time to pursue studies that would delve into the lifelong learning tendencies of teachers and investigate how they affect their pursuit of professional development. By doing so, educators can develop models or frameworks that can explain how lifelong learning tendencies influence the type and frequency of professional development pursued by teachers. Further studies can also be done to extend the discussion of lifelong learning tendencies among learners, pre-service teachers, and even school heads. Other aspects of professional development, like research publications and engagement in extension services, may also be explored. Generally, the study focused on determining whether lifelong learning tendencies are significant predictors of teachers' engagement in continuing professional development. Guided by the framework as shown in Figure 1, the research aimed to: determine the level of lifelong learning tendencies of teachers along motivation, persistence, self-learning regulation, and curiosity; determine the status of the teachers' continuing professional development in terms of continuing education/pursuit of advanced studies, membership in professional organizations, and participation in seminars, trainings, and workshops; analyze the extent to which teachers' lifelong learning tendencies influence their engagement in continuing professional development; and develop a lifelong learning framework based on the findings of the study.

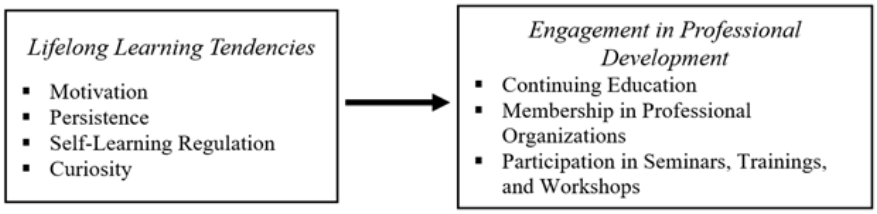

Figure 1. Research Paradigm

2 METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Design

The study employed the predictive correlational design, utilizing quantitative methods, to explore the relationship between teachers' level of lifelong learning tendencies and continuing professional development. In a correlational research design, investigators use statistical tests to describe and measure the degree of association between two or more variables (Creswell and Creswell, 2017). More specifically, the study used a predictive correlational design to determine how the predictor variable (lifelong learning tendencies) influenced the outcome (CPD engagement). Regression analysis was then used to see if higher levels of lifelong learning tendencies are associated with higher levels of CPD engagement.

2.2 Respondents

The respondents of the study comprised of 244 faculty members from higher education institutions in the Province of Camarines Sur. These respondents represented all types of HEIs – private higher education institutions, state universities and colleges (SUCs), and local universities and colleges (LUCs). Though CPD culture in private HEIs differ from that of SUCs and LUCs, the broader educational context these institutions operate within are often similar. Table 1

presents the distribution of the respondents according to institution type. The study focused on full-time faculty members only to ensure that external factors would not significantly influence the results. Based on CHED's Manual of Regulations, full-time faculty members are those with regular teaching loads and have no other remunerative occupation elsewhere requiring regular hours of work (Commission on Higher Education, 2025). Part-time faculty members may have additional work commitments that may influence their engagements in professional development activities. By focusing on full-time faculty, the researcher aimed to create a more controlled group, minimizing the confounding effects arising from external commitments.

Table 1. Distribution of the Respondents according to the Type of Institution

Type of Institution	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Private HEI	99	40.57
SUC	71	29.10
LUC	74	30.33
Total	**244**	**100.00**

2.3 Sampling Technique

Disproportionate stratified random sampling was used to determine samples from all types of institutions. In disproportionate sampling, the strata are not proportional to the occurrence of the population. Since it was difficult for the researcher to obtain precise figures on the percentage composition of teachers by institution type, disproportionate stratified sampling was used. This ensured that the study was able to capture data from all types of HEIs, even if the sample size within each category does not perfectly reflect the actual distribution of faculty members.

2.4 Research Instrument

The researcher-made survey questionnaire was crafted based on the research questions and is divided into two parts. Part 1 contains 27 items that determine the level of lifelong learning tendencies of the teachers. Part 2 contains items related to the status of teachers' professional development. The first part of the instrument consisted of statements lifted from the LLTs scale of Coşkun and Demirel (2010). The Cronbach alpha internal consistency coefficient of this scale containing 27 items and four sub-dimensions (motivation, perseverance, lack of regulating learning, and lack of curiosity) was calculated as 0.89. The five-point Likert Scale was used to interpret the level of lifelong learning tendencies of the respondents. The respondents' degree of concurrence to the given indicators determines the level of their lifelong learning tendencies along four dimensions. The second part inquired into the current status of teachers' professional development. Questions focused on teachers' educational attainment, membership in professional development, and participation in seminars, trainings, and workshops. Additionally, the research instrument underwent content and semantic validation by subject matter experts. The selection criteria for these validators included qualifications in education, research experience, and relevance of their professional practice to teachers or faculty members.

2.5 Data Gathering Procedures

Data in this study were collected primarily through a survey with a validated questionnaire. Ethical considerations were upheld – the researcher sought permission from the School President or Director for the conduct of the study in the public schools. Letter of request was distributed to the heads of private institutions. Upon approval, the questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and collected for analysis and interpretation of the data. The researcher made sure that the confidentiality of the collected data was retained and was not accessible to the public.

2.6 Statistical Treatment of Data

The researcher used an ordinal regression analysis in which the predictive power of the computed LLTs was calculated. Ordinal regression analysis is a statistical technique used to model the relationship between an independent variable and a dependent variable that is ordinal. The study also utilized weighted means to determine the level of lifelong learning tendencies of teachers, along with motivation, persistence, self-learning regulation, and curiosity. Furthermore, to aid in data analysis and interpretation, regression coefficient was used to quantify the relationship between lifelong learning tendencies and the likelihood of being in a higher category of teacher engagement in CPD; wald statistic to test the statistical significance of the regression coefficient and helps determine if the observed relationships (indicated by the regression coefficients) between the predictor (lifelong learning tendencies) and the outcome (CPD) are likely to be real or due to random chance; and p-values to determine the probability of obtaining the observed results (or more extreme results) if there were actually no relationship between lifelong learning tendencies and CPD engagement in the population; if the p-value is below the chosen significance level (0.05), the predictor has a statistically significant influence on the outcome. Percentage was also used to present the status of the teachers' continuing professional development.

3 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Lifelong Learning Tendencies of Teachers

Using 27 indicators, teachers were asked to rate their level of motivation, persistence, curiosity, and self-learning regulation, which generally determine their level of lifelong learning tendencies. The researcher designed a scale to interpret the results. Strong agreement with the given indicators indicates a high level of lifelong learning tendency, while strong disagreement suggests a low level. Table 2 shows the current state of teachers' lifelong learning tendencies.

Table 2. Level of Lifelong Learning Tendencies along Motivation

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN				D	Int
A. Motivation	**Private HEIs**	**SUCs**	**LUCs**	**Overall**		
1. I am passionate about learning new things all the time.	4.65	4.68	4.73	4.68	SA	VH
2. I am more driven and enthusiastic to learn new things and acquire new skills than most of my colleagues.	4.29	4.52	4.31	4.36	SA	VH
3. If I believe that something will contribute to my self-improvement, I take appropriate actions to benefit from it.	4.59	4.72	4.69	4.66	SA	VH
4. I enjoy intellectual challenges which drive me to pursue a wide range of learning interests.	4.47	4.72	4.58	4.58	SA	VH
5. Most of the time, I am intrinsically motivated to learn new ways and trends in teaching.	4.51	4.68	4.62	4.59	SA	VH
6. I am willing to study and attend professional development activities to continuously improve my teaching performance.	4.68	4.73	4.77	4.72	SA	VH
Overall	**4.53**	**4.67**	**4.62**	**4.6**		

Legend: 4.20 – 5.00 Very High (VH), 3.40 – 4.19 High (H), 2.60 – 3.39 Moderate (M), 1.80 – 2.59 Low (L), 1.00 – 1.79 Very Low (VL)

Based on the presented table, the respondents' level of motivation is generally very high, with an average weighted mean of 4.60. Among the six indicators, respondents expressed the strongest agreement with indicator 6 pertaining to the willingness to study and attend professional development activities, with a weighted mean of 4.72, followed by indicator 1, which focuses on passion for learning, with a weighted mean of 4.68. Respondents also indicated a strong desire to take appropriate actions, high intrinsic motivation, and enjoyment of intellectual challenges with weighted means of 4,66, 4.59, and 4.58, respectively. Indicator 2, which compares the drive and enthusiasm of the respondents with those of their colleagues, had the lowest weighted mean of 4.36. Nonetheless, in all indicators under motivation, respondents showed a very high level of lifelong learning tendency, with almost similar rankings of indicators across institution types.

Contrary to the claims that teacher motivation is low, a wealth of studies proves otherwise. Özden et al. (2019) showed that the level of occupational motivation of the teachers in Turkey is high. A similar foreign study by Şen and Yildiz Durak (2022) discovered a high level of teachers' motivation alongside curriculum autonomy. On one hand, in the local context, Berondo (2020) reported a high level of motivation among selected public-school teachers in the Philippines.

Several studies provided reasons behind this high level of motivation. Through a multivariate analysis, Zhang et al. (2021) revealed that several factors at the teacher level (teachers' prior experience with learning activities, teaching experience, self-efficacy, and conceptions of learning) and the school level (work and emotional pressure, colleague support, and principal leadership) were related to their motivation. Appova and Arbaugh (2018) claimed that teachers' dissatisfaction with their teaching and students' learning motivated them to learn professionally. When teachers perceive shortcomings or areas needing improvement in their work or in their students' progress, it doesn't necessarily lead to demotivation. Instead, this awareness of a gap between the current reality and a desired state can act as a powerful internal driver, pushing teachers to seek out opportunities for professional growth. They become motivated to learn new strategies, refine their skills, and acquire further knowledge in the hopes of addressing this dissatisfaction and ultimately enhancing their effectiveness in the classroom and improving student learning.

Interestingly, a potential variation in motivation levels across HEI types emerges. SUCs seem to have the highest average score, followed by LUCs and private HEIs. The variation in motivation across HEI types could be due to several factors, such as differences in workload, access to resources, or institutional culture surrounding professional development. Regardless of the difference, it is important for HEIs to continuously nurture teachers' motivation.

The data in Table 3 showcased that respondents appear to have a very high level of lifelong learning tendency in terms of persistence, as evidenced by the average weighted mean of 4.27. They demonstrate a strong willingness to continue learning new skills even when faced with challenges (indicator 3, weighted mean of 4.47). They are also inclined to put in significant effort when faced with difficult learning tasks (indicators 2 & 4, both with a weighted mean of 4.32). Despite busy schedules, they actively seek out opportunities to learn new things and skills (indicator 4, weighted mean of 4.25). These findings suggest that teachers tend to exert effort when they are given tasks that challenge them to persevere. In a systematic review of six studies, Assali et al. (2024) highlighted that professional development programs for teachers can enhance persistence and resilience among teachers, but these programs should be developed by focusing on carefully-chosen teacher and relevant institutional factors.

Along this dimension, respondents had the lowest weighted mean in the first and fifth indicators, with weighted means of 4.07 and 4.17, respectively. For some faculty members, the pursuit of professional development may be hindered by time and financial constraints. However, since teachers are exposed to these constraints because of the nature of their work, the impact may be less significant than what was initially perceived. Comparing the three institution types, SUC faculty demonstrate the strongest tendency with an average weighted mean score of 4.36, followed by LUC faculty and private HEIs, who scored 4.26 and 4.21, respectively.

Moreover, while the faculty members show a commendable level of persistence, the data suggest that there might be room to enhance their initiative and engagement in reading, researching, and

learning new things. This could be because they find reading and research activities less engaging, or they might not fully recognize the connection between lifelong learning and professional growth.

Table 3. Level of Lifelong Learning Tendencies along Persistence

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN				D	Int
B. Persistence	**Private HEIs**	**SUCs**	**LUCs**	**Overall**		
1. I like spending most of my time reading, researching, and learning new things.	3.98	4.17	4.11	4.07	A	H
2. I put great effort in learning something new even if it can be very difficult and complicated at times.	4.23	4.48	4.28	4.32	SA	VH
3. I do not easily give up when learning new skills such as when discovering how new technologies work.	4.46	4.45	4.49	4.47	SA	VH
4. I try to create opportunities to learn new things and skills even if my schedule can be very hectic.	4.16	4.38	4.24	4.25	SA	VH
5. To expand my knowledge, I allocate extra budget for professional development from my personal spending.	4.09	4.31	4.15	4.17	A	H
6. The more difficult a task is, the more determined I am to finish it.	4.33	4.37	4.26	4.32	SA	VH
Overall	**4.21**	**4.36**	**4.26**	**4.27**	**SA**	**VH**

Legend: 4.20 – 5.00 Very High (VH), 3.40 – 4.19 High (H), 2.60 – 3.39 Moderate (M), 1.80 – 2.59 Low (L), 1.00 – 1.79 Very Low (VL)

A strong belief in the value of a task fuels a teacher's persistence. As stated in indicator 6, the more difficult a task is, the more determined a person is to finish it. However, while consistent exposure to these activities can significantly enhance teachers' persistence, oversaturation can lead to diminishing returns. It has been observed that teachers' persistence decreases when they are burdened with excessive activities. To maintain engagement and prevent burnout, it is crucial to provide a well-planned mix of activities that offer a balance of challenge and support.

In summary, while the faculty members show a commendable level of persistence, the data suggest there might be room to enhance their initiative and engagement in reading, researching, and learning new things. This could be because they find reading and research activities less engaging, or they might not fully recognize the connection between lifelong learning and professional growth.

The average weighted mean along self-learning regulation is 4.36, which is verbally interpreted as "very high" as shown in Table 4. Based on the results, teachers demonstrate a strong ability to utilize various learning resources (indicator 3, weighted mean of 4.53), suggesting they can effectively navigate and select appropriate information sources for their learning needs. Furthermore, they seem comfortable with the cyclical nature of learning (indicator 4, weighted mean of 4.48), demonstrating an understanding that learning often involves unlearning outdated knowledge and acquiring new skills. They also view self-directed learning as an important tool in their career (indicator 6).

Table 4. Level of Lifelong Learning Tendencies along Self-Learning Regulation

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN				D	Int
C. Self-Learning Regulation	**Private HEIs**	**SUCs**	**LUCs**	**Overall**		
1. My self-evaluation about what I have learnt generally pushes me to learn new things.	4.44	4.42	4.41	4.43	SA	VH
2. I develop strategic ways of learning new skills through careful planning and intensive reading.	4.27	4.37	4.31	4.31	SA	VH
3. I use different sources of data (book, internet, etc.) to address any issue that affects my work.	4.56	4.48	4.55	4.53	SA	VH
4. To constantly upgrade my professional knowledge, I always find ways to learn, unlearn, and relearn.	4.47	4.52	4.46	4.48	SA	VH
5. I think I will experience little or no difficulty in juggling work, studies, and personal matters.	3.97	3.97	3.97	3.97	A	H
6. I view self-directed learning as a very important tool for success in my chosen career.	4.4	4.49	4.43	4.44	SA	VH
Overall	**4.53**	**4.67**	**4.62**	**4.6**	**SA**	**VH**

Legend: 4.20 – 5.00 Very High (VH), 3.40 – 4.19 High (H), 2.60 – 3.39 Moderate (M), 1.80 – 2.59 Low (L), 1.00 – 1.79 Very Low (VL)

However, a potential challenge emerges in indicator 5 (weighted mean of 3.97). Here, faculty members reported slightly lower agreement regarding their ability to manage competing demands such as work, studies, and personal life. This suggests that while they possess strong self-directed learning skills, time management might be an area where they could benefit from additional support. This is also one of the factors cited by Aquino et al. (2022) that hamper the participation of teachers in professional development. Educators grapple with time management due to the multifaceted nature of their roles, which extend beyond lesson planning and delivery. A local study by Pepito et al. (2024) revealed that public-school teachers are heavily burdened with multitasking responsibilities, including ancillary tasks, negatively affecting their teaching performance and leading to subpar academic outcomes. A case study by Arañas (2023) also showed that teachers regard ancillary functions as additional tasks. Though these functions help teachers in their personal and professional development, many teachers claimed that their time for instruction and family is sacrificed. This, in turn, significantly limits their time for further studies. It is true that a multitude of seminars and trainings are conducted for teachers, but problems arise when they cannot fully concentrate on these activities because of several deliverables that they need to attend to.

Foregoing findings suggest that the faculty members are strategic and resourceful learners. However, balancing their professional and personal lives with the demands of self-directed learning could be a hurdle. HEIs need to acknowledge these time constraints and provide targeted support to help teachers become self-directed learners. In the long run, this can contribute to a culture of continuous learning and ultimately benefit both faculty development and student learning outcomes.

The curiosity of the respondents is also very high, based on the results shown in Table 5. Seven out of nine indicators scored in the "very high" range, suggesting a strong general interest in exploring new knowledge and ideas. This is further supported by the high score for indicator 6 (positive attitude towards seminars, trainings, and conferences - weighted mean of 4.66). Faculty members also demonstrate a strong inclination towards questioning (weighted mean of 4.43), indicating a desire to challenge assumptions and deepen their understanding. Their interest in learning new developments in education (weighted mean of 4.43) aligns with their overall commitment to continuous learning.

However, the data suggest potentially lower prioritization for activities requiring more dedicated time investment. The respondents' scores are lower for indicator 1 ("prioritizing learning new skills over leisure" - weighted mean of 4.13) and indicator 9 ("conducting research" - weighted mean of 4.11). This might imply a preference for shorter, more structured learning activities that fit more easily into their existing schedules. Gutierez (2019) claimed that activities must be designed in a way that fuels teachers' curiosity to ensure engagement and completion. Given the occupational stress and pressure, they face every day, many teachers may favor activities outside of work. But if these activities constantly feed their curiosity, they may still feel the need to undertake such.

Table 5. Level of Lifelong Learning Tendencies along Curiosity

INDICATORS	WEIGHTED MEAN				D	Int
D. Curiosity	**Private HEIs**	**SUCs**	**LUCs**	**Overall**		
1. If something tickles my mind, I normally ask series of questions until I get acceptable answers.	4.48	4.37	4.43	4.43	SA	VH
2. Recent advancements in technology such as Artificial Intelligence push me to explore and learn more.	4.37	4.35	4.34	4.36	SA	VH
3. I can set aside leisure and recreation time to prioritize learning new skills.	4.1	4.21	4.09	4.13	A	H
4. Prevailing issues or problems in my workplace urge me to conduct research.	4.14	4.17	4.03	4.11	A	H
5. If I wonder about some things, I usually develop a plan to learn how they work.	4.19	4.34	4.23	4.25	SA	VH
6. I consider seminars, trainings, and conferences as avenues for self-improvement.	4.71	4.54	4.7	4.66	SA	VH
7. New developments in higher education along instruction, research, and extension make me want to pursue studies.	4.38	4.41	4.53	4.43	SA	VH
8. I would put any effort to tackle challenging problems in the workplace by thinking out of the box.	4.32	4.48	4.41	4.39	SA	VH
9. I consider libraries and other learning hubs as interesting places.	4.27	4.39	4.34	4.33	SA	VH
Overall	**4.33**	**4.36**	**4.34**	**4.34**	**SA**	VH

Legend: 4.20 – 5.00 Very High (VH), 3.40 – 4.19 High (H), 2.60 – 3.39 Moderate (M), 1.80 – 2.59 Low (L), 1.00 – 1.79 Very Low (VL)

The minimal variation in average weighted means across HEI types suggests a relatively consistent level of curiosity among faculty members regardless of their institution type. Generally, the respondents demonstrate a strong intellectual curiosity and a desire to stay up-to-date in their field. This curiosity acts as a dual flame, fueling the teachers' own thirst for knowledge and innovative teaching methods while simultaneously igniting a passion for continuous exploration and discovery within their students, fostering a mutually beneficial ecosystem of lifelong learning.

3.2 Status of the Teachers' Continuing Professional Development

Continuing Professional Development, in this study, is delimited to teachers' continuing education or pursuit of advanced studies, membership in professional organizations, and participation in seminars, trainings, and workshops.

Table 6 discloses a high overall engagement in postgraduate studies among the faculty members surveyed. Over half (57.79%) are currently pursuing either Master's or Doctoral degrees. While a significant portion (27.05%) has already completed postgraduate qualifications, a sizeable minority (15.16%) has not yet enrolled in any further studies.

Table 6. Status of Teachers' Continuing Professional Development in terms of Continuing Education or Pursuit of Advanced Studies

Status	Private HEI	SUC	LUC	Total	Percentage (%)
Completed Master's/Doctorate	23	35	8	66	27.05
- aligned with specialization	19	30	6	55	22.54
- not aligned with specialization	4	5	2	11	4.51
Ongoing Master's/Doctorate	54	35	52	141	57.79
- aligned with specialization	42	30	43	115	47.13
- not aligned with specialization	12	5	9	26	10.66
Not yet Enrolled	22	1	14	37	15.16
Total	**99**	**71**	**74**	**244**	**100**

To further discuss the data collected, the researcher investigated the alignment of the completed degrees with the teachers' specialization. This analysis aligns with the Commission on Higher Education's emphasis on ensuring faculty expertise through vertically aligned postgraduate degrees (Master's and Doctorate) in their teaching fields. Vertically aligned degrees demonstrate a progressive deepening of knowledge within a specific discipline, potentially leading to more effective teaching. In addition, the data suggest a potential misalignment between the teachers' postgraduate programs and their areas of specialization.

Among the 66 respondents with postgraduate degrees, 55 exhibited vertical alignment with their specialization. This raises a potential concern, as 26 out of the 141 currently pursuing degrees also lack vertical alignment. Notably, the incidence of misalignment seems to be slightly higher in private HEIs and LUCs. This poses a problem because the qualifications of faculty members are questioned when their degrees do not align with the requirements of the Commission on Higher Education. In addition, when HEIs seek accreditation for their academic programs, they undergo a rigorous evaluation by accrediting agencies, and one of the key areas examined is faculty qualifications. Compliance with the vertical alignment is also critical, according to Castolo and Chan (n.d.), as the country implements the ASEAN Qualification Framework.

The high enrollment rates suggest a strong commitment among faculty members to continuous learning and professional development. However, the misalignment between postgraduate studies and specialization raises concerns about the effectiveness of these programs in enhancing teaching practice within specific disciplines. Data from Table 7 showed a near-even split among faculty

members in regards to their membership in professional organizations. A total of 123 or 50.41 percent do not have membership, as opposed to 121 respondents or 49.59 percent who have active membership. The average number of affiliations in professional organizations is highest in SUCs (2.16) and lowest in private HEIs (1.27).

Table 7. Status of Teachers' Continuing Professional Development in terms of Membership in Professional Organization

Status	Private HEI	SUC	LUC	Total	Percentage (%)
With Membership	52	49	20	121	49.59
- Average Number of Affiliations in Professional Organizations	1.27	2.16	1.45	1.58	
Without Membership	47	22	54	123	50.41
Total	**99**	**71**	**74**	**244**	**100.00**

This relatively high proportion of faculty members lacking membership suggests a potential underutilization of these organizations as resources for professional development. While nearly half of the respondents recognize the value of professional organizations, a significant number might be missing out on the benefits they offer. These benefits include access to professional development workshops and conferences, networking opportunities with colleagues in their field, peer-reviewed journals and other scholarly resources, mentorship programs, and advocacy efforts for faculty development initiatives. Conversely, it is also crucial to investigate the factors hindering faculty engagement with these organizations. These factors might include admission requirements, membership fees, or a perceived lack of value.

By promoting professional organization membership, HEIs can help faculty members connect with broader scholarly communities, access valuable resources, and enhance their knowledge and skills. One sensible step, according to Tulo and Lee (2022), to achieve this aim is to involve the faculty in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the CPD programs, including the planning and selection of relevant professional organizations. Teachers' participation in the planning process fosters a sense of ownership and can ultimately contribute to improved teaching practices and elevated student learning outcomes.

Faculty members seem to be active in attending seminars, trainings, and workshops, as shown in Table 8. Nearly all faculty members (95.49 percent) reported attending these events, with a significant proportion being active (45.08 percent), moderately active (33.61 percent), and very active (16.80 percent). Interestingly, the data suggest a potential disparity in participation rates across HEI types. Faculty members at private HEIs and SUCs attended an average of 10.64 and 10.21 events, respectively, compared to a lower average of 5.64 for LUCs. Furthermore, a similar pattern emerges regarding the number of events aligned with teachers' specialization. This disparity could be due to several factors, such as differences in funding available for faculty development activities across HEI types, variation in institutional policies regarding professional development support, and limited access to professional development opportunities in certain areas.

Table 8. Status of Teachers' Continuing Professional Development in terms of Participation in Seminars, Trainings, and Workshops

Status	Private HEI	SUC	LUC	Total	%
Very Active	18	16	7	41	16.80
Active	42	45	23	110	45.08

Moderately Active	36	9	37	82	33.61
Not Active	3	1	7	11	4.51
Average No. of Seminars, Trainings, and Workshops Attended for the last 3 years	10.64	10.21	5.64		
Average No. of Seminars, Trainings, and Workshops Attended that are Related to Specialization and Subjects Taught	8.16	7.44	4.51		
Total				**244**	**100.00**

The data suggest a strong commitment among faculty members to ongoing professional development through attending seminars, workshops, and training. However, there might be unequal access to these opportunities across different types of HEIs. Oracion (2023) mentioned limited funding for professional development programs and inadequate support from educational institutions as influential factors that hinder teachers' professional development. Further, he stated that while there are sufficient opportunities in the public schools, there might be problems on the availability of sustained faculty development programs in the private schools. In the case of LUCs, while funding originates from the local government, budgetary constraints can limit the support.

3.3 Teachers' Lifelong Learning Tendencies Influence their Engagement in Continuing Professional Development

The researcher examined variations in the status of teachers' continuing education, membership in professional organizations, and participation in seminars, trainings, and workshops. Using logistic ordinal regression in SPSS, the predictive influence of lifelong learning tendencies on teachers' engagement in continuing professional development was analyzed.

As shown in Table 9, two variables under professional development were found to be significantly related to the level of lifelong learning tendencies of faculty members: continuing education or pursuit of advanced studies, and participation in seminars, trainings, and workshops. In contrast, no statistically significant association was found between lifelong learning tendencies and membership in professional organizations.

Table 9. Regression Analysis of Teachers' Level of Lifelong Learning Tendencies and Professional Development Status

Variables	Regression Coefficient	Wald Statistic	p-value	Conclusion
Continuing Education/Pursuit of Advanced Studies				
Low LLTs	-1.261	5.966	0.015	significant
Average LLTs	-0.612	5.244	0.022	
High LLTs	0			
Membership in Professional Organizations				
Low LLTs	-0.23	0.192	0.661	not significant
Average LLTs	0.306	1.303	0.254	
High LLTs	0			
Participation in Seminars, Trainings and Workshops				
Low LLTs	-1.719	11.486	<0.001	significant
Average LLTs	-0.586	5.373	0.02	
High LLTs	0			

The statistical analysis used the "high" level of lifelong learning tendencies as the reference category, with its regression coefficient equal to 0. Other levels (average and low) were compared to this group. For continuing education, the negative coefficient estimates associated with low and average lifelong learning tendencies suggest that individuals with lower levels of such tendencies are less likely to engage in further education. The negative coefficients indicate that teachers with an average or low level of LLTs have lower cumulative odds of being in a higher CPD level compared to teachers with a high level of LLTs. The significance of these coefficients, as indicated by the Wald statistics and p-values, confirms their predictive power. Similar to the trend observed for continuing education, teachers exhibiting low levels of LLTs were significantly less likely to engage in seminars, trainings, and workshops. This is evident from the negative regression coefficients associated with low and average LLTs. The corresponding Wald statistics and p-values for these groups are also significant. In terms of membership in professional organizations, the p-values were greater than the significance level of 0.05. This indicates that, while there may be a trend, it cannot be definitively asserted that LLTs are a significant predictor of teachers' membership in professional organizations. This necessitates further studies and investigations.

Since findings generally suggest a relationship between the teachers' level of lifelong learning tendencies and their professional development, it's crucial to implement targeted initiatives that nurture a growth mindset and commitment to continuous learning among educators. Evers et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of cultivating a supportive learning environment within schools. This includes fostering a positive learning climate that encourages collaboration, risk-taking, and professional growth. Schools should also provide social support for educators, both from their immediate supervisors through regular feedback and mentorship, and from close colleagues through collaborative projects and professional learning communities. Finally, ensuring that professional development activities are perceived as valuable and relevant by educators is crucial. This can be achieved by aligning development opportunities with teachers' needs and interests. By focusing on these factors, schools can create an enabling environment that promotes lifelong learning opportunities for teachers. Nevertheless, it is crucial to emphasize that while a statistically significant relationship exists between LLTs and engagement in CDP, these variables are not the sole determinants of such engagement. The researcher acknowledges other influential factors like school culture, program design and relevance, accessibility, and resources, which could be a subject of further studies.

3.4 Lifelong Learning Framework

Drawing on the insights gained from the findings, the researcher developed a comprehensive lifelong learning framework that will aid institutions of learning in setting the roadmap towards a robust lifelong learning ecosystem. This framework, titled ASCEND or Aligning Strategies for a Continuously Evolving and Nurturing Development shown in Figure 2, proposes a tripartite model with three interconnected components – individual development, institutional development, and lifelong learning continuum. A core tenet of the model is the interdependence of these components. The arrows represent the reciprocal influence of lifelong learning. As individuals develop tendencies towards lifelong learning, they not only enhance their own knowledge and skills (individual development) but also contribute to the enrichment of the overall learning ecosystem (institutional development).

The researcher posits that individual growth, nurtured by a robust learning environment, ultimately leads to further institutional advancement. The strategic placement of the terms "enablers" and "boosters" on both sides of the lifelong learning continuum underscores the critical role of these strategies in facilitating and amplifying lifelong learning pursuits. Enablers and boosters act as crucial components in supporting teachers on this journey. These are intentional programs, measures, and mechanisms designed to cultivate and amplify teachers' lifelong learning tendencies.

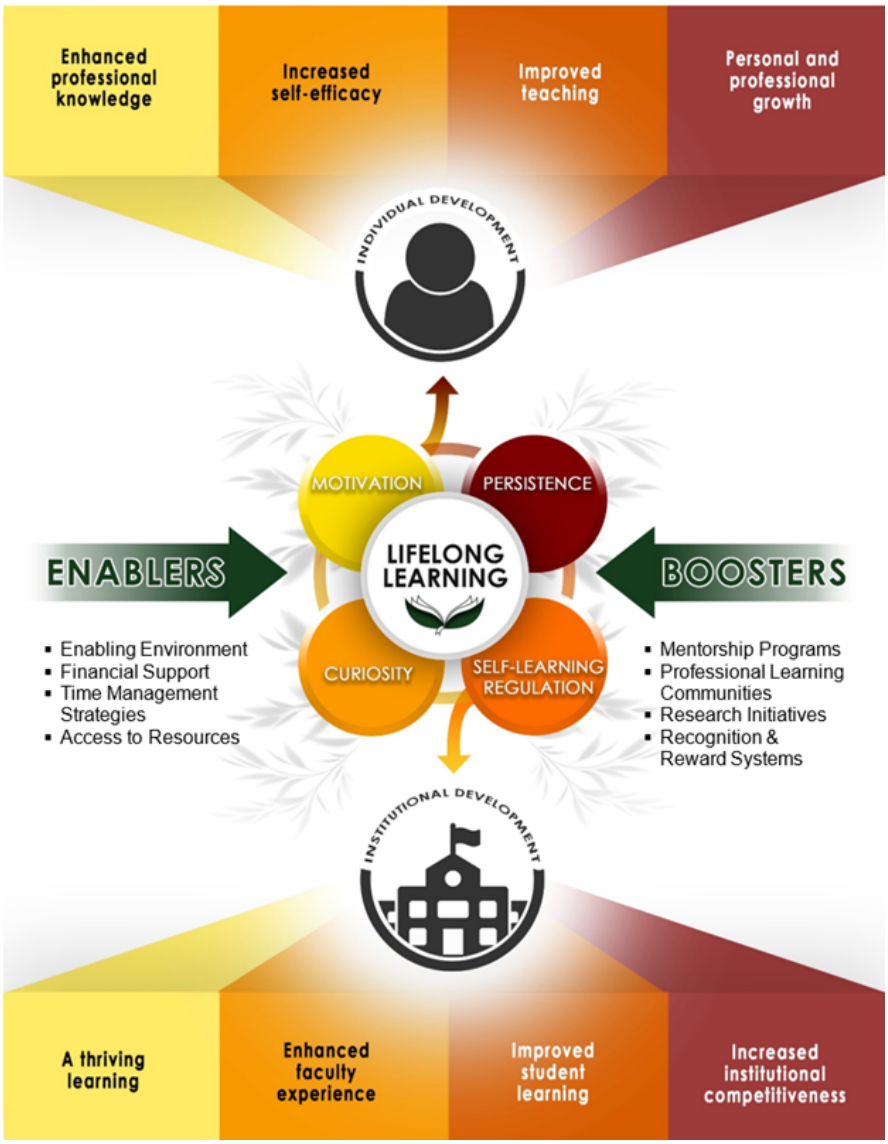

Figure 2. Lifelong Learning Paradigm

4 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the data and findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn. Faculty members exhibit a remarkably strong propensity for lifelong learning; A significant majority of faculty members are actively engaged in continuing professional development; Lifelong learning tendencies hold a moderate predictive power in teachers' engagement in continuing professional development; and the developed lifelong learning framework has the potential to be a valuable tool for cultivating these lifelong learning tendencies among faculty members. Future research can explore how best to implement the developed framework to further nurture a culture of lifelong learning within HEIs.

Recommendations were formulated based on the findings and conclusions. (1) HEIs must capitalize on the faculty's robust lifelong learning tendencies to further strengthen their continuing professional development, (2) Concerted efforts must be undertaken to encourage faculty membership in professional organizations, (3) Further studies may be conducted to explore how lifelong learning tendencies affect other facets of continuing professional development such as research productivity and publication as well as participation in internationalization activities,

and (4) Institutionalization of lifelong learning policies and frameworks may increase awareness of, engagement in, and access to CPD opportunities. These policies and frameworks can be integrated into faculty development programs used to assess and support individual learning needs and ultimately contribute to a culture of continuous learning among faculty members.

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