

INVESTIGATING MOTIVATIONAL AND HINDERING FACTORS INFLUENCING VIETNAMESE EFL TEACHERS' PARTICIPATION IN PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AT PRIVATE ENGLISH LANGUAGE CENTERS

HUỲNH TRANG THU
NGUYỄN BỬU HUÂN
Can Tho University

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Tóm tắt

Phát triển chuyên môn ngày càng được công nhận là một thành tố quan trọng của cải cách giáo dục tại Việt Nam, đặc biệt trong lĩnh vực giảng dạy tiếng Anh tại các trung tâm ngoại ngữ tư thục đang phát triển nhanh chóng. Nghiên cứu theo phương pháp hỗn hợp này nhằm khảo sát các yếu tố thúc đẩy và cản trở sự tham gia của giáo viên tiếng Anh như một ngoại ngữ (EFL) Việt Nam vào các hoạt động phát triển chuyên môn tại các trung tâm ngoại ngữ tư thục thông qua bảng hỏi ($n = 110$) và phỏng vấn bán cấu trúc ($n = 11$). Kết quả nghiên cứu cho thấy các yếu tố ở cấp độ cá nhân có ảnh hưởng mạnh nhất đến cả động lực và những trở ngại trong việc tham gia các hoạt động phát triển chuyên môn. Bên cạnh đó, không có sự khác biệt có ý nghĩa thống kê giữa giáo viên nam và nữ, cũng như giữa giáo viên có trình độ cử nhân và thạc sĩ, về các yếu tố thúc đẩy và cản trở sự tham gia phát triển chuyên môn. Dữ liệu phỏng vấn cũng nhấn mạnh tầm quan trọng của các hoạt động phát triển chuyên môn mang tính thực tiễn, linh hoạt và phù hợp với bối cảnh giảng dạy. Từ những kết quả này, nghiên cứu đề xuất rằng các cơ sở giáo dục cần thiết kế các chương trình phát triển chuyên môn dựa trên bằng chứng và phù hợp hơn với nhu cầu nghề nghiệp của giáo viên nhằm tăng cường sự tham gia của họ.

Từ khóa: Phát triển chuyên môn, trung tâm Anh ngữ tư thục, yếu tố cản trở, yếu tố thúc đẩy.

1. Introduction

Over the past few decades, education systems worldwide have undergone considerable reforms in response to economic, social, and technological changes. Within this context, professional development (PD) of teachers, particularly those in English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts, has become a key driver of educational quality, with teachers expected to engage in continuous PD to meet evolving demands (Villegas-Reimers, 2017). Guskey (2002) conceptualizes PD as a purposeful, ongoing process aimed at enhancing teachers' instructional practices and improving students' academic achievement, while in English Language Teaching (ELT), PD refers to activities teachers undertake, often with institutional support, to improve their professional practice and student achievement (Kohl, 2005). Thus, PD is an integral part of teachers' lifelong professional learning.

Despite extensive research on teacher PD, limited attention has been paid to the factors influencing Vietnamese EFL teachers' participation in PD, particularly in private English language centers. Given the rapid expansion of this sector and its distinctive working conditions, understanding teachers' engagement in PD is essential. The present study therefore explores the motivational and hindering factors influencing Vietnamese EFL teachers' participation in professional development activities in private English language centers, addressing the following research questions:

1. What motivational factors influence Vietnamese EFL teachers' participation in professional development activities?
2. What hindering factors influence their participation in these activities?

Email: trangthu2202@gmail.com

2. Literature Review

2.1. Teachers' Professional Development and Approaches

Professional development is a continuous process through which teachers refine their professional knowledge, pedagogical skills, and attitudes throughout their careers (Bolam, 2002). It enables teachers to reflect on their practice, adopt innovative instructional approaches, and stay informed of advances in educational research, thereby improving teaching quality and student learning (Efu, 2023; Richards & Farrell, 2005). Effective PD should be responsive to teachers' individual needs and teaching contexts, taking into account factors such as teaching experience, subject specialization, and institutional setting (Martin et al., 2019), and should be viewed as a lifelong process supported throughout teachers' careers by schools, institutions, and policymakers (Hairon & Dimmock, 2012; Westwood, 2018). PD also strengthens teachers' understanding of teaching, learning, and students' needs, while contributing to institutional improvement and broader educational reform (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 1995; Fraser et al., 2007). In English language teaching, PD encompasses a wide range of activities, including workshops, peer observation, reflective journaling, teacher support groups, portfolios, peer coaching, team teaching, action research, and self-monitoring (Richards & Farrell, 2005). PD may take formal forms, such as structured training courses, workshops, and institutional activities, or informal forms occurring through daily teaching experience, self-directed learning, reflective practice, and collaboration with colleagues (Wilden & Porsch, 2017). While formal PD provides organized opportunities for professional learning, informal PD enables teachers to recontextualize and refine their knowledge in relation to their own teaching contexts. Because the two forms are complementary, educational institutions should promote both to support teachers' continuous professional growth and improve instructional quality (Bennett & Moriarty, 2013).

2.2 Motivational and Hindering Factors for Professional Development

Motivation refers to an individual's willingness and internal drive to exert effort toward achieving desired goals (Maduka & Okafor, 2014; Robbins, 2001). In teaching contexts, motivation plays a critical role in encouraging PD participation and the effective application of newly acquired knowledge and skills. According to Self-Determination Theory (SDT), motivation is enhanced when three basic psychological needs are satisfied: autonomy, or having choice and control over one's learning; competence, or confidence in one's ability to learn and apply new knowledge; and relatedness, or feeling supported and connected to colleagues and facilitators. When PD programs satisfy these needs, teachers are more likely to perceive them as meaningful, engage actively, and transfer new knowledge into classroom practice; conversely, motivation declines when teachers experience limited autonomy, low confidence, or insufficient social support. Previous studies have identified multiple barriers to teachers' PD participation, arising from both individual and institutional factors. Dang (2018) reported seven key constraints, including limited funding, weak teacher-administrator relationships, low teacher motivation, insufficient information about PD opportunities, time constraints, poor-quality training, and a shortage of qualified trainers. Hoang (2020) highlighted differing perceptions between school managers, who emphasized institutional and teacher-related issues such as financial support and teacher competence, and teachers, who primarily reported structural challenges such as policy delays, heavy workloads, and limited financial resources. Eroglu and Kaya (2021) similarly identified barriers related to institutional organization, training quality, and teacher attitudes, including negative attitudes toward training, scheduling conflicts, ineffective trainers, repetitive content, and workload pressures. Overall, the literature indicates that barriers to PD stem from individual and institutional factors, which may reduce teachers' participation and undermine the effectiveness of professional learning initiatives.

2.3. Private English Language Centers

Private English language centers have become an important component of English education in Vietnam, complementing the formal education system by meeting the growing demand for English proficiency (Le, 2011; Nguyen et al., 2024). Unlike public schools, these centers offer diverse programs,

including General English and international test preparation courses such as IELTS and TOEIC, generally employ both Vietnamese and foreign teachers, and emphasize communicative, learner-centered instruction (Le, 2011). Although they have considerable autonomy in curriculum design, instructional practices, and staff recruitment, private English language centers operate within Vietnam's non-formal education sector and are regulated by the Ministry of Education and Training through provincial education authorities. The organizational characteristics of private English language centers create a distinct context for teachers' PD. Operating in a competitive educational market, these institutions rely heavily on teaching quality to maintain student satisfaction and institutional reputation, making continuous teacher learning a strategic priority. At the same time, teachers are expected to adapt to diverse courses, evolving materials, and technological innovations, all of which require ongoing PD. However, participation may be constrained by the conditions of private-sector employment, including flexible contracts and evening and weekend teaching schedules. Consequently, teachers' engagement in PD is shaped not only by individual motivation but also by the organizational environment in which they work (Borg, 2015; Desimone, 2009; Guskey, 2010).

2.4. Theoretical Framework

This research is guided by Self-Determination Theory (SDT), developed by Deci and Ryan (2000), and the Teacher Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Motivation Model proposed by McMillan, McConnell, and O'Sullivan (2016). SDT suggests that individuals are inclined to pursue personal development when their environment fosters three basic psychological needs: autonomy, competence, and relatedness. The Teacher CPD Motivation Model complements this framework by identifying the personal, school-related, and system-wide factors that may encourage or hinder teachers' involvement in PD activities. Together, these frameworks provide a comprehensive lens for understanding teachers' participation in PD, capturing both internal motivation and external influences, including how workplace contexts and educational policies may promote or discourage engagement.

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design

This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design to investigate the motivational and hindering factors influencing Vietnamese EFL teachers' participation in PD at private English language centers. Quantitative data were collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data to further explain the quantitative findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018). Questionnaire data were collected from 110 Vietnamese EFL teachers, and semi-structured interviews were subsequently conducted with 11 teachers to provide deeper insights into the quantitative results and suggestions for encouraging teachers' participation. The two data sets were integrated during the interpretation stage, with the qualitative findings used to explain and complement the quantitative results.

3.2. Participants and Sampling

Participants were 110 EFL teachers employed at private English language centers in the Mekong Delta region of Vietnam, with diverse demographic backgrounds and teaching experience. Table 1 presents the demographics of the participants.

Table 1. Participants' demographic data

Variables	Sub-variables	Number of Participants
Gender	Male	33
	Female	77
Academic qualification	Bachelor's degree	88
	Master's degree	22
Teaching experience	Under 5 years	56
	5-10 years	44
	11-15 years	6
	Over 15 years	4

This study used a convenience sampling method to recruit participants. The questionnaire was administered to EFL teachers working at private English language centers who met the research criteria, namely currently teaching English at a private language center and having participated in at least one PD activity. The questionnaire was distributed electronically through Google Forms, and the survey link was sent directly to teachers.

3.3. Instruments

A questionnaire was used for quantitative data collection, adapted from the Teacher CPD Motivation Model (McMillan et al., 2016) and Self-Determination Theory (Deci & Ryan, 2000), with modifications to reflect the context of Vietnamese EFL teachers working at private English language centers. It comprised two sections: Section A gathered demographic information (gender, workplace, teaching experience, and academic qualifications), while Section B consisted of 49 five-point Likert-scale items across six clusters: personal-related motivational factors, school-related motivational factors, system-related motivational factors (Items 1-25) and personal hindering factors, school-related hindering factors, and system-related hindering factors (Items 26-49), along with three open-ended questions. The questionnaire was available in English and Vietnamese, reviewed by the research supervisor for content, clarity, and relevance, and piloted with 30 EFL teachers not involved in the main study, after which minor revisions were made. Internal consistency, assessed using SPSS version 27, was good overall (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .88$), and the six clusters showed acceptable to good internal consistency, with Cronbach’s alpha coefficients ranging from .764 to .886. Semi-structured interviews were conducted to explain and enrich the quantitative findings. The interview protocol, comprising 16 open-ended questions on teachers’ professional background, PD experiences, and recommendations, was developed from the theoretical frameworks, the questionnaire, and relevant literature. It was reviewed by the research supervisor for content validity and alignment with the research objectives, and piloted with two teachers not included in the main study, after which minor revisions were made. Face-to-face interviews, each lasting approximately 45 minutes, were then conducted in Vietnamese with 11 volunteer teachers, audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and translated into English for analysis. To ensure trustworthiness, Vietnamese transcripts were returned to participants for verification before translation and coding.

3.4. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 27. Cronbach’s alpha coefficients assessed the internal consistency of each subscale; descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) summarized participants’ responses; and independent samples t-tests examined differences in teachers’ perceptions across demographic groups. Qualitative data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke’s (2006) six-phase thematic analysis. Following member checking, translated transcripts were independently coded by the first author using a hybrid deductive-inductive approach, guided by the study’s theoretical frameworks while remaining open to emerging patterns. Codes were organized into themes, which were reviewed and refined in consultation with the research supervisor before being finalized. Responses to the open-ended questionnaire items were analyzed using the same coding framework. Finally, the qualitative findings were integrated with the quantitative results during interpretation to explain and contextualize the survey findings.

4. Results

This section presents findings addressing the two research questions under separate headings below.

4.1 Motivational Factors Influencing Vietnamese EFL Teachers’ Participation in Professional Development Activities

Table 2 summarizes the descriptive statistics for the three motivational factor clusters.

Cluster	N	Mean	SD
Motivational factors			
Personal-level factors	110	4.20	.54
School-level factors	110	3.53	.71
System-level factors	110	3.91	.60

Overall, teachers reported a high level of motivation to participate in PD, with cluster mean scores ranging from 3.53 to 4.20. Personal-level factors had the highest mean score ($M = 4.20$, $SD = .54$), followed by system-level factors ($M = 3.91$, $SD = .60$), whereas school-level factors recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 3.53$, $SD = .71$).

Table 3. Teachers’ Motivational Factors at Personal Level

Items	Mean	SD
1. I participate in professional development activities because I can freely choose topics that interest me.	3.95	.93
2. I participate in professional development activities because I myself choose to develop my professional competence.	4.53	.73
3. I participate in professional development activities because they help me develop teaching skills and feel more competent.	4.52	.74
4. I participate in professional development activities because mastering new teaching skills gives me a sense of personal fulfillment.	4.35	.74
5. I participate in professional development activities because they allow me to identify and address my own weaknesses in teaching.	4.45	.80
6. I participate in professional development activities because I enjoy learning new EFL teaching methods.	4.40	.78
7. I participate in professional development activities because I feel obliged to do so rather than because I personally want to.	2.24	1.13

Table 3 presents the personal-level motivational items, the highest-rated cluster overall, with mean item scores ranging from 2.24 to 4.53. The highest mean score was observed for teachers’ autonomous decision to develop their professional competence ($M = 4.53$, $SD = .73$) and the perception that PD enhances teaching skills and competence ($M = 4.52$, $SD = .74$). In contrast, item 7, “I participate in professional development activities because I feel obliged to do so rather than because I personally want to,” received the lowest mean score ($M = 2.24$, $SD = 1.13$), indicating that participation was driven more by intrinsic motivation than by external obligation.

At the school level, the practical relevance of PD activities to classroom teaching was rated highest ($M = 3.98$, $SD = .93$), followed by a supportive professional culture ($M = 3.91$, $SD = 1.03$), collegial connectedness ($M = 3.76$, $SD = .94$), and recognition from center leaders ($M = 3.75$, $SD = .99$); financial support from the center was rated lowest ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.28$).

At the system level, updating professional knowledge and skills to meet current job requirements received the highest mean score ($M = 4.43$, $SD = .70$), followed by viewing PD as a professional standard ($M = 4.34$, $SD = .79$), career advancement ($M = 4.26$, $SD = .79$), and enhanced competitiveness in the job market ($M = 4.22$, $SD = .84$); contract renewal requirements received the lowest score ($M = 2.94$, $SD = 1.25$).

Independent samples t-tests found no statistically significant differences between male and female teachers, or between teachers holding bachelor’s and master’s degrees, in personal-level, school-level, or system-level motivation. (all $p > .05$)

Interview findings supported the survey results, showing that teachers’ participation in PD was driven primarily by intrinsic motivation. As Teacher 1 explained, “*The foremost important thing is that I must be genuinely interested. If I’m truly interested, I can get through anything.*” Another prominent theme was commitment to improving classroom practice and student learning. Teacher 5 identified improving teaching ability as “*the biggest factor that motivates me,*” and several teachers noted not wanting students to feel their lessons were boring. Career-related and social factors also encouraged participation, although they were secondary to intrinsic motivation. Teacher 2 noted, “*If I stop developing professionally, I will gradually fall behind,*” and others valued the professional connections gained through PD programs. Overall, teachers participated in PD primarily to support their professional growth and student learning, with career development, recognition, and collegial relationships providing additional encouragement.

4.2. Hindering Factors Influencing Vietnamese EFL Teachers’ Participation in Professional Development Activities

Table 4 presents the descriptive statistics for the three hindering factor clusters.

Table 4. Mean Scores of the Three Hindering Factor Clusters

Cluster	N	Mean	SD
Hindering factors			
Personal-level factors	110	2.99	.65
School-level factors	110	2.56	.78
System-level factors	110	2.93	.75

Teachers reported a moderate level of hindering factors overall, with mean scores ranging from 2.56 to 2.99. Personal-level factors had the highest mean score ($M = 2.99$, $SD = .65$), followed by system-level factors ($M = 2.93$, $SD = .75$), while school-level factors had the lowest mean score ($M = 2.56$, $SD = .78$).

Table 5. Teachers' Hindering Factors at Personal Level

Items	Mean	SD
26. I find it difficult to participate in PD activities because of my teaching workload.	3.54	1.11
27. I find it difficult to participate in PD activities because I feel burnt-out every day.	3.11	1.13
28. I find it difficult to participate in PD activities due to my family responsibilities.	2.69	1.22
29. I find it difficult to participate in PD activities due to my personal responsibilities.	3.46	1.04
30. I find it difficult to participate in PD activities because the fees for training workshops are costly.	2.94	1.25
31. I find it difficult to participate in PD activities because the activities do not meet my needs.	3.14	1.07
32. I find it difficult to participate in PD activities because I lack motivation.	2.83	1.17
33. I find it difficult to participate in PD activities because I lack confidence in learning new skills.	2.13	1.03
34. I find it unnecessary to participate in PD activities provided by my English language center because I can manage my professional growth independently.	3.68	1.14

Table 5 presents the personal-level hindering items, which formed the highest-rated barrier cluster, with mean scores ranging from 2.13 to 3.68. The perception that professional growth could be managed independently, without center-organized PD, received the highest score ($M = 3.68$, $SD = 1.14$), followed by heavy teaching workload ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 1.11$) and personal responsibilities ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 1.04$). Lack of confidence in learning new skills was rated lowest ($M = 2.13$, $SD = 1.03$), suggesting it was the least influential personal barrier.

At the school level, inconvenient scheduling was the most influential barrier ($M = 3.29$, $SD = 1.12$), followed by poor organization of PD activities ($M = 2.67$, $SD = 1.08$) and limited facilities ($M = 2.64$, $SD = 1.08$); lack of encouragement from center leaders was rated lowest ($M = 2.03$, $SD = 1.07$), suggesting that leadership support was not perceived as a major barrier.

At the system level, PD content being overly theoretical was rated the strongest barrier ($M = 3.07$, $SD = 1.18$), followed by rapid external changes such as curriculum reforms ($M = 3.06$, $SD = .97$), insufficient institutional time and resources ($M = 3.05$, $SD = 1.16$), and lack of sufficient support ($M = 3.04$, $SD = 1.05$); lack of qualified trainers was rated lowest ($M = 2.83$, $SD = 1.17$).

As with motivational factors, independent samples t-tests revealed no statistically significant differences by gender or academic qualification in personal-, school-, or system-level hindering factors (all $p > .05$).

The interview findings provided further insights through five recurring themes. Time constraints and heavy workload were the most frequently reported obstacles. As Teacher 1 explained, "Although people often think that teaching only involves the two hours spent in the classroom, in reality we spend a great deal of time on other responsibilities outside class... one of the main reasons I sometimes choose not to attend a PD activity is that I need to prioritize other tasks". Weekend or evening PD sessions further reduced willingness to participate after an already exhausting week. Second, teachers questioned the value of PD when content was repetitive, overly theoretical, or insufficiently relevant. As Teacher 7 remarked, "The content was too general and didn't really meet our needs. If I want to know about that teaching theory, I could probably just search for it on ChatGPT now and get the same information." Organizational barriers were also prominent, including limited autonomy in selecting PD topics, schedules, or formats, with variation in trainer quality and preparation.

Finally, financial costs-including registration fees, travel, and accommodation expenses for PD held outside the Mekong Delta - discouraged participation; as Teacher 3 noted, *"Courses such as CELTA or specialized IELTS teacher training are quite expensive, so the cost is one factor that prevents me from participating more."*

Together, the interviews indicate that PD participation was constrained by the combined effects of workload, limited practical relevance, restricted autonomy, organizational issues, and financial considerations, helping to explain why personal-level barriers emerged as the strongest obstacles in the quantitative phase.

4.3. Suggestions for Encouraging Vietnamese EFL Teachers' Participation in Professional Development Activities

Responses to the open-ended questionnaire items identified six recommendations for promoting teachers' participation in PD: flexible scheduling, financial support, practical PD content, collaborative learning, expert involvement, and formal recognition.

Flexible scheduling was the most frequently suggested improvement, with teachers recommending shorter sessions, evening or weekend workshops, and online, recorded, or hybrid formats to better fit their personal commitments. Financial support was another common recommendation, as course fees, travel, accommodation, and unpaid training time often discouraged participation; teachers suggested subsidies or travel allowances from language centers. Participants also emphasized that PD content should be practical and responsive to real classroom needs, offering concrete strategies and supporting materials rather than general theory. Many teachers highlighted the value of collaborative learning, such as professional learning communities and mentoring, and recommended greater involvement of external experts and experienced practitioners - such as former IELTS or TOEIC examiners - to expose teachers to current developments in the field. Finally, participants emphasized the importance of formal recognition, such as certificates, financial rewards, salary increases, or promotion opportunities, to encourage sustained engagement in PD.

5. Discussion

Research Question One: What motivational factors influence Vietnamese EFL teachers' participation in professional development activities?

The questionnaire data reveal that Vietnamese EFL teachers' motivation to participate in PD was influenced, in descending order of importance, by personal-level, system-level, and school-level factors.

Personal-level factors emerged as the strongest motivators, consistent with previous studies in both international and Vietnamese contexts. Yang (2021) found that Chinese EFL teachers were mainly driven by intrinsic motivations such as academic improvement and self-fulfillment, and Ngo (2021) similarly identified the enhancement of professional knowledge and skills as the most prominent motivation among Vietnamese EFL lecturers. One possible explanation is that teachers view PD as an essential means of improving their professional competence and adapting to the evolving demands of English language teaching.

School-level factors received the lowest mean score among the three clusters, although their influence remained relatively high. This finding partially aligns with Dang (2021), who highlighted the positive role of school policies, support from superiors, and collegial contributions in promoting PD. One possible explanation is that teachers in private English language centers may rely more on personal motivation than institutional support when deciding to participate in PD, so that school-related factors exert less influence than personal and system-level factors.

The findings also revealed no statistically significant differences in motivational factors based on gender or educational qualification, consistent with Jamalizade and Fetahi (2022), who likewise found no significant demographic differences in teachers' PD motivation. A possible explanation is that the need for professional growth and competence development is broadly shared by teachers regardless of demographic background. Overall, personal-level factors appear to be the primary drivers of Vietnamese EFL teachers' PD participation, while system-level and school-level factors play supportive roles, and motivational perceptions remain relatively consistent across demographic groups.

Research Question Two: What hindering factors influence Vietnamese EFL teachers' participation in professional development activities?

The questionnaire data also reveal that personal-level factors were the most influential hindrance to PD participation, followed by system-level and school-level factors.

Personal-level factors emerged as the strongest barrier, consistent with previous studies by Afshar and Ghasemi (2020), Dang (2021), and Koay and Nguyen (2025), which identified time constraints, workload, family responsibilities, and lack of motivation as major obstacles to teachers' PD. One possible explanation is that teachers often juggle multiple professional and personal commitments that limit their opportunities to engage in PD.

School-level factors received the lowest mean score among the three clusters, a finding that differs from Dang (2021) and Saud and Mahara (2024), who emphasized the importance of institutional support in facilitating PD. One possible explanation is that private English language centers may already provide teachers with sufficient support and access to PD opportunities, reducing the relative impact of school-level barriers.

Regarding demographic variables, no significant differences were found based on gender or educational qualification, consistent with Jamalizade and Fetahi (2022), although contrasting with Mahmood and Khidhir (2022). A possible explanation is that barriers such as workload, time constraints, and financial concerns are commonly experienced by teachers regardless of their demographic characteristics.

6. Conclusions

The findings of this study offer useful insights into the factors that motivate and hinder Vietnamese EFL teachers' participation in PD activities at private English language centers. Personal-level factors were the strongest motivators for teachers' involvement in PD, followed by system-level and school-level factors. Similarly, personal-level factors were identified as the main barriers to participation, whereas school-level factors had the least influence. No significant differences were found according to gender or educational qualification, indicating that teachers held broadly similar views regarding both the motivational and hindering factors related to PD participation.

Based on these findings, teachers are encouraged to take an active role in their professional growth, with participation in PD activities, collaboration with colleagues, and involvement in professional learning communities offering valuable opportunities for sharing experience and sustaining commitment to continuous professional development. In addition, administrators and managers of educational institutions should create favorable conditions that support teachers' participation in PD, reducing common hindrances such as heavy workloads, inconvenient schedules, and financial constraints. PD programs should also be practical, flexible, and closely connected to teachers' actual professional needs, with opportunities for interaction with peers, mentors, and experts to further encourage teachers' engagement in professional learning and improve the quality of English language teaching at private English language centers.

7. Limitations and Suggestions for Future Research

This study has two main limitations that provide directions for future research. First, as the study was limited to private English language centers in the Mekong Delta of Vietnam, the findings may not be generalizable to other educational contexts. Future research should include teachers from more diverse educational settings and regions to improve the generalizability. Second, the study relied on self-reported data from questionnaires and semi-structured interviews, which may have been subject to participants' perceptions. Future studies should incorporate additional data sources, such as classroom observations and administrator interviews, to enable data triangulation and strengthen the validity of the findings.

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