Physical Educators' Lived Experience in Continuing Professional Development in Hong Kong's Higher Education

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Acknowledgements

It took me 19 years from completing a master's degree to embarking on the doctoral study journey. I am truly grateful for Prof. S.Y. Cheung, my work supervisor at the time, in talking me into pursuing a doctorate because I have learned tremendously in the process. I learned how important writing is to thinking, how crucial negotiations and compromises are in the online learning environment, and how helpful seeing issues from multiple perspectives can be. Most importantly, I learned once again why physical education practitioners must continually develop so as to make positive impact to higher education in Hong Kong.

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Abstract

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In the past decade, a number of universities in Hong Kong have altered their curricula to make PE-oriented courses more health-oriented in nature. Understandably, such shift in focus would generate new and different professional development needs for PE practitioners. However, professional learning and growth of the university practitioners themselves has not been thoroughly explored and examined in academic research in Hong Kong. The purpose of the study was to generate a picture of how higher education (HE) physical educators make sense of their participation in continuing professional development (CPD) activities.

The research design was qualitative and adopted interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) as its methodological framework. Data were collected from seven physical educators working in three universities through in-depth interviews facilitated by personal CPD artifacts, and CPD-related documents. Analysis of data was done reflexively following principles and protocols of IPA (Smith, Flowers, & Larkins, 2009) and a constructivist-interpretative perspective. Voices of the physical educators were captured, reflecting their sense-making and the researcher's interpretations from an insider perspective.

It was found that CPD was mostly an individual endeavor with little peers' collaboration, and minimal guidance and support from work supervisors and institutional structures. The participants' were motivated extrinsically to attain higher academic credentials but the ensuing study journeys were not necessarily conducive to positive professional growth. On the other hand, the PE practitioners managed to satisfy their need for growth through self-directed explorations and learning from trusted individual colleagues and experts. At times, the participants' realization of learning manifested as combinations of formally organized CPD and informal learning activities. Intrinsic motives resulting from a desire to master advanced sports skills, promote personal growth, and advance professional competence helped to sustain the participants' CPD engagement. Finally, tending to the physical conditions of the body surfaced as a critical factor in prolonging and enhancing a physical educator's professional life.

This study concludes by calling for dissemination of CPD insights and collaborative CPD endeavors among physical educators, and guidance and support for professional learning from work leaders and HE administration. Self-evaluation of teaching practices is recommended as a form of action research to take advantage of the independent characteristic of HE physical educators.

Key words: physical education practitioners, continuing professional development, interpretative phenomenological analysis, higher education

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Chapter 1: Introduction

> "Every teacher needs to improve, not because they are not good enough but because they can be even better" (Dylan Wiliam of Education Scotland, cited in DfE, 2016b).

Teachers are professionals in ensuring learning in our younger generations; and teaching is arguably the most important profession of a nation's future (DfE, 2016b). Prior research has demonstrated that teacher continuing professional development (CPD) can make important impact on student learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Garner, 2017). Ever since the turn of the millennium, teachers along with other professionals have been increasingly expected to take part in CPD because changes in knowledge and accessibility to knowledge have become exponentially quicker than before (Evers, Kreijns, & Van der Heijden, 2016). Scholars contend that CPD is a professional right and duty for all teachers at the present time (Armour, 2010; Johnson, 2001).

Nowadays, teachers are expected to develop "and be supported to develop" their professional knowledge throughout their careers, such that the knowledge they possess and base their teaching on is the best available at any given time (Armour, 2010, p. 3). Teacher's CPD ranging from highly structured to self-initiated and informal formats is being acknowledged in many parts of the world (AITSL, 2014; Ferman, 2002; Hunzicker, 2010 & 2011; King, 2004).

The increasing importance of CPD is also reflected by systematic guidelines and frameworks developed for enhancing standards of teaching and learning around the world (Alfrey, Cale, & Webb, 2012). Prominent examples of efforts made by developed nations include the Standard for Teachers' Professional Development (SfTPD) (DfE, 2016a) of England, the UK Professional Standards Framework for Teaching and Supporting Learning in Higher Education (HEA, 2011), and the Australian Teachers Performance and Development Framework (AITSL, 2014). Examples aiming to enhance the standards and development of teachers from the developing countries include the National Professional Standards for Teachers in Pakistan (Ministry of Education, Pakistan, 2009), and the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (DepEd, 2017). So efforts to push for better quality in teacher CPD can be observed in different corners of the world. CPD of educators is important because it affects both the performance of the educators and the students they come

into contact with (Deglau & O'Sullivan, 2006; Mizell, 2010).

Background of the Study: CPD in Hong Kong Education

The concept of CPD is not new to Hong Kong, and the government has continually fine-tuned CPD-related policies for education. In 2003, the Advisory Committee on Teacher Education and Qualifications (ACTEQ) introduced the Teacher Competencies Framework and the Continuing Professional Development of Teachers (ACTEQ, 2003) for primary and secondary schools. All teachers in public primary and secondary schools are to reach a "soft target" of fulfilling 150 hours of CPD in a three-year cycle (University Grants Committee, 2015, Annex F, p. 118). In Hong Kong, as in a number of other countries, CPD is tied to job evaluation, career advancement and teacher registration at the primary and secondary levels (McMillan, McConnell, & O'Sullivan, 2016; Europa, 2018). There is however evidence that not all teachers find the CPD framework established by the ACTEQ applicable to their work (Wong, 2005).

At the university and HE level, the government established the Quality Assurance Council (QAC, 2007 & 2011) and Hong Kong Qualifications Framework (Joint Technical Group, 2016) for improving the teaching and overall performance of HE institutions (HEIs). There have not been independent investigations on whether HE practitioners find such quality assurance mechanisms as closely related to their growth and development. Moreover, since government-funded HEIs in Hong Kong are self-accrediting in nature, they have their own CPD policies and guidelines for faculty members and staff. Universities in Hong Kong generally mandate between 14 and 30 hours of participation in CPD programs for newly recruited teaching/academic staff within their first one to two years of employment. However, it is largely up to departments or work units to decide on their approach to and evaluation of faculty's professional learning. Subsequently, detailed pictures of CPD engagement and impact at the HE level are not as readily available.

Meanwhile, the ever-increasing diversity of students in HE has added pressure to HE practitioners – they must continually learn and develop in order to maintain relevance in the field (Adu & Okeke, 2014; Mizell, 2010). They must equip themselves better to support learner diversity by implementing pedagogies for enhancing students' problem-solving ability (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017) and accommodating students of different cultural backgrounds (Education Bureau,

2018b). Moreover, under the competitive nature of recent funding models for HEIs in many developed regions (e.g. UK and Hong Kong), universities must cater to students with an increasing customer-like attitude (Woodall, Hiller, & Resnick, 2014). These students tend to view HE merely as a transitory stage to job-finding rather than treating knowledge-seeking as an aspiration (Greenberg, 2004). Subsequently, students may see courses or programs that they deem not contributory to their earning potential as unnecessary (Aronson, 2016); with physical education (PE) being one of those dishonored courses in Hong Kong. In the next few sections, I will provide more contextual information of this study and explain why CPD of PE practitioners in Hong Kong universities warrant attention.

School PE in Hong Kong Education

Historically in Hong Kong's education, PE has not been treated seriously by school authorities, students, and parents alike – a phenomenon that has been noted by selected scholars (Johns & Dimmock, 1999; Moreira, Fox, & Sparkes, 2002). Some scholars reported that in the Asian region, PE is regarded as leisure and play and not "an intrinsic part of the educational process" (Hardman & Marshall, 2000, p. 214). Some schools would even cancel PE classes so that other more "academic" subjects could enjoy more time of classroom instruction (Fu, 2019). PE is also often disadvantaged in terms of resource allocation (Ha, Wong, Sum, & Chan, 2008).

In an attempt to "legitimize" PE as a school subject, the government officially added the PE subject into the Hong Kong Certificate of Education Examination in the year 1989. PE became an elective in selective schools up to the Secondary Form 5 level (Cheung, 2010). But even with such effort, the status of PE as a school subject had not improved because only a few hundred students would enroll in PE as an elective in the public examination each year (Vision Publishing Co., 2009). Students were worried that they would not be able to achieve good grades. In 2009, the "New Senior Secondary" academic structure was implemented by the Hong Kong Government. PE then officially became an elective subject, but still in selective schools only, which students could enroll when applying to universities.

From this brief summary of PE as a school and public examination subject, one could see that development of PE in Hong Kong's education has been moving quite slowly. Nonetheless, PE is considered one of the eight "key learning areas" of the Hong Kong school curriculum and school PE "aims to provide quality education

through a variety of physical activities that helps students develop physical competence, knowledge of movement and safety, and nurture their positive values and attitudes" (Curriculum Development Council, 2017, p. iii).

Under the jurisdiction of the government's Education Bureau, only teachers trained specifically in PE instruction are qualified to teach PE in primary and secondary schools in Hong Kong. In addition to being equipped with general education theory, the PE teacher candidates should have completed theoretical and practical components of PE training (including supervised teaching practice of PE) at post-secondary level locally or overseas to become eligible to teach PE in Hong Kong schools (Education Bureau, 2018a).

Higher Education PE in Hong Kong

Since HEIs are not under the jurisdiction of the Education Bureau of the government, the aims and focuses of PE-related courses offered at different universities are not centrally determined and they vary. Indeed, HEIs in Hong Kong have different approaches towards PE, with some universities offering mandatory PE courses while others offering elective PE or sport courses focused on physical skills, such as those in badminton, basketball, volleyball, physical fitness, and various dance types. In addition to physical performance of the taught motor skills, in some cases students are also assessed on knowledge of game rules, etiquettes of engaging in physical activity, and scientific bases of exercise techniques and nutrition. Other universities offer elective physical activity/sports courses (e.g. yoga, Exergame, sports climbing) or courses more focused on healthy lifestyle with some exercise components (e.g. "Wellness in Contemporary Society", "Stay Healthy & Wellness by Walking").

As compared to the primary and secondary education levels, some argued that PE/sport in HE should address the concepts of "lifelong learning" and "lifelong physical activity" instead of general motor skills and sports techniques (Penny & Jess, 2004). Other scholars suggested that HE physical educators should aim to promote a cultural change towards active lifestyle in students when faced with an obesity epidemic (Sallis & Glanz, 2009; Solmon, 2015). In fact, a few universities in Hong Kong have altered their curricula such that originally PE-oriented courses have become more health-oriented in nature.

For Hong Kong's HEIs, however, there are no specific requirements with respect

to supervised teaching practice; and graduates returning to Hong Kong with overseas PE/sports-related university degrees (e.g. from Taiwan, Canada, United States, and Australia) can land teaching posts in Hong Kong's universities. PE teachers who are trained locally in teacher-training programs may take up teaching in HE after working in primary and/or secondary schools, and so can graduates from local PE/sports-related university programs. Thus HE physical educators in Hong Kong exhibit a range of training backgrounds. Ostensibly, some of the current PE practitioners in universities may lack teaching experience prior to their entry to HE and may not be sufficiently equipped to "understand the nuances of proper physical activity instruction" (Langdon & Wittenberg, 2019, p. 17) and how to handle a large number of young adult learners.

Judging from the staff credentials stated on university webpages and my professional contacts, PE practitioners working in Hong Kong's HE typically already have expertise in selected sports categories upon their entry into HE. Nevertheless, some universities recruit part-time sports coaches for sports team training purposes. Thus full-time HE PE practitioners' involvement in sports team coaching varies depending on specific staff deployment strategies of different institutions. In some cases, PE practitioners may work as team managers who coordinate team administrative matters while part-time coaches handle the technical training of students' sports skills (e.g. CityU, 2020; HKUST, 2013).

Profile of the Researcher's University

The current study took place in and took references to my full-time work environment, thus it is essential that I elaborate on the study context. The university I work in started out as a diploma-offering college in 1954 with a Christian heritage; it became a fully-funded public HEI in the 1980s. It gradually grew in scale and acquired the status of a university in 1994. Since then it has expanded rapidly into three campuses (two in Hong Kong and one in mainland China), offering programs ranging from sub-degree to the doctoral level. There are a total of three academic faculties, four schools, and one academy and over 26 departments. The university's vision is "to be a leading liberal arts university in Asia for the world delivering academic excellence in a caring, creative and global culture" (HKBU, 2017).

Adhering to the ethos of "Whole Person Education" ever since its days as a college, the university aims to nurture students to grow and develop not just

intellectually but also physically. Thus, PE has always been in the institution's core curriculum. All students, regardless of their main academic discipline, must fulfill PE requirements in order to graduate. The unit I worked in grew from a "section" under the Education Department to a stand-alone academic department in 1992, and it has been responsible for delivering PE courses to all students for a long time. In the early years however, the mandatory PE courses offered no academic credits, they were purely graduation requirements. The credit-bearing status of PE courses was granted by the University's Senate in 2008-2009 after long deliberations lasting for years.

PE courses contribute to one of the seven "graduate attributes" identified by the university in 2008: "Teamwork - Be ready to serve, lead and work in a team, and to pursue a healthy lifestyle" (HKBU, 2020). Since 2012, the PE courses had been offered under the then newly established General Education (GE) curriculum, matching the launch of the 4-year university structure adopted by Hong Kong's city-wide education system. Under GE, mandatory courses in languages, public speaking, philosophy, and computer literacy were offered along with PE in the university.

In 2017-18, there were major discussions and debate about the structure and requirements of GE within the university among students, faculty, and university administration. Dissatisfaction and disapproval of GE requirements from students and faculty led to a number of town hall meetings and consultations. There were suggestions of removing PE and other courses from the mandatory list. In the end, the entire GE curriculum was revamped. PE courses were re-designed to become new "Healthy Lifestyle" core courses which are now offered by several academic departments. These courses vary in the amount of physical activity involved depending on expertise and instructional approach of the offering departments.

Research Rationale and Significance

Five of the eight government-funded universities in Hong Kong require students to fulfill certain PE-related type courses as graduation requirements, or "common core" courses. Regardless what academic disciplines students are studying, they have to complete and pass these stand-alone courses specified as core requirements in order to graduate. In so doing, these universities have acknowledged the importance of an active lifestyle in their students. But the potential of PE has yet to be fully explored in Hong Kong's HE as I will explain below.

PE and sport offer a unique platform for exploring a variety of holistic learning opportunities (Sparke & Palmer, 2018). For example, moral or equity controversies in sport can provide a score of educational stimulations for analysis, debate and critical thinking (Sparke & Palmer, 2018). The symbiotic relationship between physical well-being and intellectual development is often ignored (CDC, 2010). Moreover, when PE extends to encompass elements of healthy living, the potential benefit of having PE in education becomes even greater. The board area of health presents a fertile ground for interdisciplinary explorations that are apt for HE academic endeavors. These are some of the impending developments of HE PE that university practitioners should attend to nowadays because interdisciplinary approaches to learning and pedagogy have become one of the key HE curriculum development trends (EUA, 2019; Holley, 2017). It is therefore ill-advised to assume that the initial educational training that HE PE practitioners received would suffice to address these changing, emerging professional needs.

Following suit to CPD practices of western countries such as the UK and New Zealand (O'Sullivan, 2007), Hong Kong has also stepped up in investment into the CPD for primary and secondary school PE teachers in recent years (Education Bureau, 2016). The Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR) Government introduced "The Chief Executive's Award for Teaching Excellence" in the area of PE in 2016 to reward outstanding performance of PE teachers (Education Bureau, 2017). Four broad domains of "excellence indicators" have been formulated for promoting teaching excellence among PE teachers, namely professional competence, student development, professionalism and commitment to the community, and school development (Education Bureau, 2017, p.2). The last two domains focus on promoting teachers' CPD and fostering a culture of teaching excellence while the first two on recognizing good teaching performance. The introduction of such an award on teaching excellence sends an important message because previously only the "brief process of initial teacher training" got most of the attention in both policy and research (Armour, 2006, p. 203). To date, nonetheless, little has been done in terms of CPD-related policies or guidelines for HE PE specifically in the Asian region.

Selected HE PE practitioners have acted as CPD developers for PE school teachers in primary and secondary education (e.g. Ha, Wong, Sum, & Chan, 2008; Sum, Wallhead, Ha, & Sit, 2018) in Hong Kong. But since university practitioners

were not considered a main focus in these studies, there was no mentioning on how those investigators felt or what they had gained through the project. CPD experience of HE physical educators per se has, in essence, been largely neglected and unexamined.

In addition to acting as CPD developers for PE school teachers, HE PE practitioners must address their own developmental needs in teaching and other professional duties. In the past two decades, universities in Hong Kong are putting an increasing emphasis on quality student learning experience (see CETL, 2020; HERDSA Hong Kong, 2017; PolyU, 2018). A typical HE physical educator in Hong Kong may teach up to 480 student-hours per week (i.e. based on the calculations of eight classes of 30 students with two contact hours each week, and 26 weeks in total), which translates to 12,480 student-hours each academic year (see Armour, 2010). This amount of student contact could translate to a significant impact on the student learning experience in university.

With emerging challenges such as increasing learner diversity, the need of interdisciplinary knowledge, and accountability to student outcomes, HE PE practitioners will be well advised to carefully deal with their professional development needs. How these practitioners make sense of their CPD decisions and experiences will have bearing on how the practitioners see teaching-learning in PE and how they approach their work in shaping students' learning experience.

In recent years, there has been increasing evidence to suggest that subject specific CPD is superior to a generic approach to CPD (Cordingley et al., 2015; Cordingley, 2015; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). However, evidence of this was more limited to subjects such as Math, English, or Science. Insightfully, Sum et al. (2018) noted that "little research has been conducted in Hong Kong that has focused on the effects of a PE-CPD program on PE teachers' professional growth and important students' PA outcomes" (p. 3). Acknowledging that many studies have examined careers and lives of PE teachers in the West, Sum and Shi (2016) called for more of such studies in the Asian context. The scholars postulated that "it would be beneficial for those engaged in the teaching of PE in Hong Kong to take an in-depth look at their careers and lives as a whole" (Sum & Shi, 2016, p. 128). Up to this date, there is a scarcity of CPD research on PE practitioners in Hong Kong's HE, thus the current study aims to learn from the PE practitioners first-hand what they are going

through in their quest of professional growth.

Positionality of the Researcher

Since I am a PE practitioner myself and I am researching colleagues in the field of PE locally in Hong Kong, I have become the research instrument (Hopkins, Regehr, & Pratt, 2017). A few of the colleagues whom I interviewed have crossed paths with me in the past as professional acquaintances while the others I only knew by name before. Understandably my positionality is an important issue to be discussed as I am approaching the study with an insider perspective (Qin, 2016).

I began working as a physical educator at the post-secondary level in Hong Kong in the early 1990s; and I have been working in the same institution from that time onwards. Not unlike selected physical educators who have worked in HE in Hong Kong since the 1990s, I received my tertiary education and training overseas (in Edmonton, Canada) and returned to Hong Kong after graduating with a bachelor's degree in Physical Education and Sports Studies. I acknowledged that my training and career path as a physical educator would be different from those colleagues who had received their initial training as PE school teachers in Hong Kong. Such differences in early training as educators will have implications on how I versus how my colleagues see and interpret PE and sport in both social and professional contexts.

In 1993, two years after I began working in HE, I was encouraged by my work supervisor to embark on a master's degree, which I subsequently completed in a part-time distance-learning mode in two years. Then fast forward to the year 2014, I started on an online doctoral study program upon strong encouragement from the work supervisor at the time. And now, balancing part-time studies and full-time work, I teach students who major in PE and also students of other academic disciplines such as arts, business, and science. Having the opportunity to be regularly in touch with a variety of students has enabled me to view PE as a specialty in the wider perspective of HE instead of a narrowly focused university subject. Over the years, I have also developed an awareness of how some faculty members – internal and external – of other disciplines (and within the discipline) may see PE as less academically-oriented. Within the field of HE PE, I have also witnessed how difficult it was for PE to achieve a credit-bearing status and how a work unit struggled for bargaining power to fight for "legitimacy" in the university curriculum.

Having worked as a PE practitioner for over twenty-five years contributes to my integral interest in continual learning in the field of PE and sports. In recent years, I began taking on more administrative tasks and I have opportunities to advocate, guide, and counsel junior colleagues in their CPD endeavors. I have become increasingly aware of the diversity of CPD experiences that are possible for PE practitioners who view and treat CPD differently. My chosen research topic is meaningful to me on both personal and professional fronts as my work necessitates dialogues with colleagues on their CPD.

Purpose Statement

My purpose of research was to generate a picture of how HE physical educators make sense of their participation, or lack of, in CPD activities. I was interested in exploring the experiential significance of CPD to HE physical educators in the Hong Kong context.

Research Questions

Based on the research rationale and significance stated above, I constructed the main research question for the current study as follows:

- How do PE practitioners experience CPD in Hong Kong's higher education?

To supplement the main question, three sub-questions had been formulated to guide the research:

1) What motivates and deters PE practitioners to engage in CPD?
2) How does learning take shape in PE practitioners' CPD?
3) How do PE practitioners handle challenges encountered in CPD?

Research Approach

The voices of PE practitioners in universities deserve to be heard so that their professional as well as personal development needs can be addressed alongside those faculty members working on other more "academically-oriented" disciplines in HE. I argue that in order to allow PE practitioners' voices to be heard, and to explore deeply how physical educators experience professional learning, a qualitative approach was deemed more appropriate compared to a quantitative one.

Among various qualitative research approaches, phenomenology offers a unique

perspective for one to learn from the experiences of others (Neubauer, Witkop, & Varpio, 2019). I strive to push beyond a descriptive understanding, thus the interpretative potential of an interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) approach appears fitting. Rationale for adopting IPA will be explained in more detail under the methodology section. As I aimed to vicariously learn from the CPD experiences of fellow physical educators, in addition to colleagues from my own university, PE practitioners from two other universities with similar curricular characteristics were also invited to take part in the study.

Through two rounds of individual interviews with seven PE practitioners from the three universities, I explored their CPD experiences. I investigated how the practitioners viewed CPD and learning in general, what they considered meaningful CPD experiences and why, and how they were affected by supports and challenges they faced in approaching CPD. I collected CPD-related personal artifacts from the practitioners to supplement and counter-check the data from the interviews. In addition, CPD-related documents were also collected from university webpages and through the participants.

Working Definitions for the Study

There are numerous definitions of CPD. Some scholars opt for a broader and more inclusive definition. For example, Coldwell (2017) defined professional development as all "formal and informal support and activities that are designed to help teachers develop as professionals" (p. 189). Some scholars chose to purposely focus on the upholding of "quality, competence and accountability" (Sturrock & Lennie, 2009, p. 12) while others prefer to address the wide-ranging issues of lifelong learning, encompassing elements of both personal and professional learning (Lammintakanen & Kivinen, 2012). Other scholars prefer to strictly distinguish "professional learning" from "professional development" (Webster-Wright, 2009). MacPhail (2011) noted that professional learning is not the same as CPD in the traditional sense, but it consists of learning acquired on a daily basis within the role as a teacher, supported by research and practice-based evidence and sustained by a professional learning community (Berry, Clemans, & Kostogritz, 2007). Such type of "informal learning" is not the same as unintended learning that incidentally happen in the work environment (MacPhail, 2011, p. 437 citing Smaller, 2005). But MacPhail

(2011) also acknowledges that the two terms of CPD and professional learning are often used interchangeably across literature. And these two terms will be used interchangeably in this thesis unless specifically referenced to citations given by scholar(s).

I echo the argument by McMillan, McConnell and O'Sullivan (2016) that it is not necessary or practical to clearly differentiate between professional development and professional learning and to "atomise" personal and organizational needs within the concept of CPD. Following suit of scholars such as Armour and Yelling (2004), I have chosen to adopt a more-encompassing definition of CPD for this study (Craft, 2000). In the below, the working definitions of key terminologies I have adopted for this study are laid out.

Glossary of Key Terms

- Continuing professional development (CPD): "All types of professional learning undertaken by teachers beyond the initial point of training" (Craft, 2000, p. 6).
- Professional learning (PL): "The learning of practicing professionals" (Webster-Wright, 2009, p. 705) that does/does not occur through professional development activities.
- "Physical educators" and "PE practitioners" will be used interchangeably – the former emphasizes the educational aspect of job and the latter includes more broadly all those who work in the field of PE in educational settings.

An Overview of the Thesis

This thesis document consists of six chapters. After setting the research scene in the first chapter, relevant extant literature will be reviewed in Chapter Two. In Chapter Three, I will present the research design and methodology. Then in Chapter Four, major findings will be laid out. In Chapter Five, I will interpret and discuss the findings in relation to extant literature and theory. Finally in the last chapter, I will reflect on my research journey, conclude with the major arguments and make recommendations on CPD related work practices and future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Scholars have noted the significant role CPD plays in ensuring better student learning (Armour & Yelling, 2007) and better engagement in teaching-learning endeavors by teachers (Sum & Shi, 2016). Previously elsewhere I had explored factors influencing views and perception of CPD of university PE practitioners with the aid of a concept map (Hon, 2016; see Appendix A). Through the exploration, an apparent research gap was identified. There are ample of CPD research studies on teachers working at the primary and secondary education levels, but studies on PE-specific CPD (PE-CPD) are less common, especially those focusing on PE at the HE level. Due to this scarcity of prior research and deliberation in PE-CPD for HE in both international and local contexts, the literature review for this study will include selected studies on CPD in HE and also PE-CPD of sub-HE levels.

In exploring the phenomenon of HE PE-CPD, I am interested in knowing whether the PE practitioners in Hong Kong have found their previous CPD experience positive and helpful. To facilitate discussion along that line, I will first summarize and analyze features of effective CPD as revealed by prior literature. The experience of benefiting from a CPD experience will hinge on what makes learning possible and what kind of learning is considered meaningful by the educators. In that regard, the learning process has to be dissected and scrutinized in detail. A review of literature in learning theories is thus called for as a learning theory can inform on how learning actually occurs. There is evidence that prior CPD experiences have motivational implications on future CPD decisions (Rose & Reynolds, 2014). But motivation is not a simple and straight-forward process as it intertwines with various social, circumstantial factors, as well as personal psychological considerations. Therefore, motivation for learning and different types of motives which implicate teachers' professional development will be discussed. The final part of the literature review will focus on CPD support and facilitators as they are not only key ingredients in enabling and shaping successful CPD endeavors among educators, they hold roles that ideally should be taken on by HE practitioners themselves.

Features of Effective CPD

To well-known PE scholars such as Kathleen Armour (2006, 2010), it is obvious that the quality of students' learning in PE depends largely on the quality of teaching; and in an increasingly challenging profession such as teaching, the profession's

integrity counts on teachers who commit to learning continuously throughout their career (Armour, 2006). Effective PE-CPD has proved to deliver promising results such as enriched content knowledge (Makopoulou & Armour, 2011b), improved teacher capacity (Deglau & O'Sullivan, 2006), and empowerment of teachers (Patton, Parker, & Tannehill, 2015). With such positive potentials in mind, it is postulated that teachers should engage in effective CPD throughout their teaching career and CPD should form an integral part of physical educators' professional lives (Armour, 2010).

Cordingley (2015) observed that by early 21st century, there is "a coherent, if challenging, international evidence base" revealing what constitutes effective CPD (p.1). Specific to the PE field, the International Association for Physical Education in Higher Education held an international conference in 2007 on PE teachers' career-long professional learning and its influence on the type and quality of student learning in PE (AIESEP, 2009). Importantly, the AIESEP aims "to raise the profile of PE teachers' career-long professional development as an issue of concern for the PE profession worldwide", to assemble current knowledge on PE-CPD from international practitioners, and to provide supporting rationale for colleagues who have chances to influence policy makers in addressing PE-CPD (AIESEP, 2009, pp. 2-3). The AIESEP concurs with international CPD studies which suggest that effective PE-CPD has a number of features that are actually common for educators of other disciplines (AIESEP, 2009, pp. 5 - 6):

Table 1: Features of effective PE-CPD

Effective PE-CPD
· Is focused on enhancing learning outcomes for students in PE and is assessed against that key criterion
· Draws on adult learning theories
· Begins with initial teacher training
· Draws on theory as a tool in solving practice problems
· Engages teachers by stimulating curiosity, and sustaining enthusiasm for learning
· Is delivered in different formats and modes to meet different teachers' learning needs and interests at different stages in their careers
· Recognizes that teachers need time to learn, to adapt and develop new skills

and knowledge, and to articulate different learning opportunities with their practice

- Meets both the personal learning needs/interest of teachers, and the imperatives of government policies in education and related fields
- Ensures that teachers have the knowledge, skills and confidence to access, utilize and contribute to the research knowledge base in physical education
- Supports physical educators to develop strong communities of professional learners where expertise is collective and developed

AIESEP (2009) acknowledged that effective PE-CPD has some or all of the above features. From the listed characteristics, it becomes obvious that teacher-learners need to be treated as adults having varied personal as well as professional needs. And such needs cannot be adequately addressed without considering the social and contextual contexts that the teachers live and work. In the below, I will first discuss and analyze CPD features that are extensively debated in the literature and have high relevancy to the current study.

Sustained and Short-term

AIESEP (2009) along with other scholars acknowledged that teachers need time to learn (Desimone, 2009), but there seems to be no clear formula for the scope and duration of professional development activities (Postholm, 2012). Over the years, scholars have noted the insufficiency of one-off CPD workshops to affect real teacher change. For example, CPD facilitators in the study conducted by Patton and Parker (2014) noted that one-off workshops with a primary focus on content knowledge and expertise could only serve as a starting point to promoting teacher change. More sustained influence and empowerment in making teachers see themselves as active learners are needed (Patton & Parker, 2014). After all, teacher capacity is not about just a compilation of factual knowledge and ideas (Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2005). In order to ensure teachers follow up with actual change in their teaching practices, a single shot of new content knowledge is insufficient (Armour, 2010; Patton & Parker, 2014).

Armour and Yelling (2002) cautioned about one-off short courses as a form of CPD because they were often offered away from school and at times not necessarily accommodating to teachers, and they typically lacked follow-up support to enable

teachers to apply what they learn in daily teaching. Armour and Makopoulou (2012) also argued that one-day course as a stand-alone activity without a clear focus would not have lasting impact on teaching practices and student outcomes. The study by Makopoulou and colleagues (2019) also showed that short-course CPD can enhance PE teachers' self-efficacy in the short term, but the increased self-efficacy level however was not fully sustained by all participants three to six months afterwards.

On the other hand, there were studies which found positive effects from short-term CDP (Hickson & Fishburne, 2004; Cordingley et al. 2015). For instance, Derri, Vasiliadoua and Kioumourtzoglou (2015) found some encouraging effects of a short-term training program on 32 PE teachers' behavior and students' engagement in learning. The experimental group joined a two-hour lecture followed by a two-hour practicum; they showed significant improvement and learning of all the assessed behaviors and significantly higher performance than the control group. Moreover, students of the experimental teacher group exhibited considerably greater activity time, more practice trials and more successful ones than their control group peers. Derri et al. (2015) argued that even a short-term training program could have immediate results in qualitative teaching elements provided that the teachers get accurate and specific feedback for their performance.

Makopoulou and colleagues (2019) argued that we must not automatically assume that short-term CPD is necessarily ineffective since "the effectiveness of short-course CPD is dependent on a range of individual factors and perceptions on CPD quality" (p. 1). Citing Metzler (1983), Derri et al. (2015) posited that when teachers are able to experience a positive change in their teaching behavior, they would not return to older teaching practices. Careful "tailoring of delivery" is called for to ensure maximal learning for all those involved (Makopoulou et al., 2019, p. 1).

In sum, recent research studies are beginning to acknowledge both sustained and short-term CPD as contributing to the professional growth of PE teachers. But evidence is to some extent equivocal about the lasting impact of short-term versus sustained CPD for PE teachers.

Moreover, short courses targeting content knowledge (CK) of PE teachers will continue to have their place in CPD because different forms of PD activities address needs of teachers in different career stages (Sinelnikov Kim, Ward, Curtner-Smith, & Li, 2016). But it is critical to recognize that specialized content knowledge (i.e.

knowledge on how to sequence tasks and drills, organize conditioned games) (Ball, Thames, & Phelps, 2008) cannot be attained through courses that solely targeting a teacher's performance in a particular sport or skill (Ward, Li, Kim, & Lee, 2012). The continual existence of short courses of targeting CK does not nullify evidence that reveals inadequacies of CPD programs that are not sustained nor of substantial length. Indeed, PE teachers who lack CK in specific topics in PE (e.g. health-related fitness) warrant attention and intervention (Alfrey, Cale, & Webb, 2012; Santiago, Disch, & Morales, 2012). The critical issue here is that teachers may not be able to reap long-term benefits if one-off short courses are all that they have access to.

Collaborative

Similar to students, "teachers learn by doing, reading, and reflecting" and they also learn by collaborating with other teachers (Darling-Hammond & McLaughlin, 2011, p. 81). Such learning necessitates settings with support for teacher inquiry and teamwork (Hastie, MacPhail, Calderon, & Sinelnikov, 2015). Teachers have better chance of improvement when they could engage in intellectual debates which challenge their personal theories of practice in a non-threatening manner (Whitehouse, 2011). In addition, there is evidence that teachers involved in collaborative learning reported using more innovative teaching strategies, and displayed more job satisfaction and self-efficacy (European Commission, 2013). Indeed, examinations of individually-oriented CPD showed only weak evidence of its capacity to influence teacher or student learning (Cordingley, Bell, Thomason, & Firth, 2005).

Collaborative CPD endeavors involving work colleagues (Armour, 2006; Keay, 2006) and the setting up of "community of practice" (CoP; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) have proved valuable for many educators (e.g. Hunuk, Ince, & Tannehill, 2013). Indeed, MacPhail (2011) argued that communities of learners with similar goals could be the key to inspiring professional learning and growth. A CoP is defined as "a group of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly" (Wenger-Trayner & Wenger-Trayner, 2015, p. 1). The main purpose of a CoP is to produce a space for learning that is vibrant, open and greatly interactive. The CoP model emphasizes the collaborative, ongoing, and frequently informal nature of learning (Johnson, Moorcroft, Tucker, Calvert, & Turner, 2017). In a CoP, participants' interests and needs become the attention points; the participants determine what topics to deliberate on without any

directives from higher administration. In addition, CoP underscores that learning is a social process, and that knowledge is best described as proficiency or skillfulness in a socially valued activity (Wenger, 1998). In the initial stage of setting up a CoP, trust is an important ingredient. A candid atmosphere must be there for educators to open up about their concerns and interests. In order to foster success of a CoP, a group of "aggressive learners" is needed (Napier, Clark-Santos, & Weller, 2014, p. 115). Aggressive learners are always looking for ways to improve as professionals; and they yearn for new ideas or perspectives on their work and are not afraid of making changes to their practice (Napier et al., 2014). For the recruitment or gathering of such spirited learners, often a facilitator first needs to be identified or come forward (Johnson et al., 2017).

Despite recent emphasis and interest in teachers' collaboration, some studies have found that the resulting changes in practice are sometimes undiscernible and major changes are rare (Ermeling & Yarbo, 2016; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Hauge, 2019). Gallimore and Ermeling (2012) noted that changes in teaching practices tend to accumulate over time slowly resulting in improved teaching and student performance. The absence of quick, positive effects may, however, deter some teachers from continual collaborative effort, especially when time and personnel resources are scarce. Also, participation in a professional community could reinforce "an ineffective status quo" rather than leading to genuine development (Postholm, 2012, p. 421), especially in cases where a learning culture has not yet been established.

In addition, Romar, Astrom and Ferry (2018) showed that professional socialization of PE teachers tends to vary significantly among individuals, and multifaceted interaction teachers experience in their learning process would have an impact on the content of the teachers' practical knowledge.

Importantly, Johnson and colleagues (2017) noted one common challenge faced by physical educators in schools: "PE teachers are often structurally and geographically isolated from other PE teachers", which can make it difficult to establish PE CoPs (p. 4). Johnson et al. (2017) went on further to argue that without PE CoPs, the social connections that are critical for long-term professional development will become underdeveloped. In nations such as Finland where education is a national priority, teachers' collaborations flourish with convincing results (Niemi, 2015). In other regions of the world, this appears to be quite difficult

to attain (Vangrieken, Dochy, Raes, & Kyndt, 2015).

Relevance and Situatedness

Relevancy can be defined as the degree of significance that the particular CPD program or activity can enhance participants' professional duties (MLTB, 2008). It may seem obvious that the CPD should be relevant to the needs of those engaged in it. But study after study on teacher CPD came to the conclusion that on many occasions either the CPD contents, or the way the content was delivered made teachers feel frustrated or unsatisfied. For instance, Damon (2016) examined the professional development experiences of teachers using IPA; one of the major themes he arrived at was "What does this have to do with what I teach?" In Damon's (2016) study, some teachers noted that they began to "question the need and purpose of professional development" due to CPD exposure that they felt was disconnected from their work (p. 61). And a teacher-cum-administrator acknowledged that irrelevancy would have repercussions on future learning since negative CPD experiences tend to create "a lack of trust and enthusiasm" for further participation (Damon, 2016, p. 62). The teachers also stressed that it is important for the CPD experience to address the relevant needs of the participants so as to achieve effectiveness (Damon, 2016).

Similar sentiments from teachers were also identified in other studies. For example, Flores (2005) found that teachers want to see a connection between their learning experience and their daily responsibilities. Hunzicker (2010) also argued that effective teacher CPD which is job-embedded will make it both relevant and authentic. Quick, Holtzman, and Chaney (2009) noted that CPD within the school context, such as mentoring and study groups, stimulates active learning and fosters coherence. Moreover, Guskey (1995) noted that teachers find CPD relevant when it directly caters for their specific needs and concerns. Dabell (2019) argued that unless CPD content is focused, otherwise it will not be successful in supporting teacher learning in their day-to-day context. CPD is indeed a complicated process which is contextually situated (Opfer, Pedder, & Lavicza, 2011), so any attempt to rely on a single shot of workshop or program without contextual relevancy and without follow-up action is going to be futile (Tate, 2009).

Situating CPD in work context is necessary so that professional learning can become a part of teaching duty and not as an option (Falk, 2001). Scholars advocated for situatedness of CPD activities, noting the importance of having CPD based in the

same school environment that the practitioners are working in (Timperley, Wilson, Barrar, & Fung, 2007). Newly qualified PE teachers may particularly benefit more from school-based CPD endeavors because they specifically lack experience in the actual work environment (Armour & Duncombe, 2004). In a study of school teachers from 388 primary and secondary schools in England, it was found that most teachers at all career stages would prefer more CPD that is ongoing, based in practice, involves their immediate colleagues and is situated in their schools (Pedder, Opfer, Mccormick, & Storey, 2010). But it was worthy to note that the study used self-administered questionnaires as the research instrument and relied on quantitative data mainly; meaning the respondents were self-selected and in-depth responses were lacking and this might lead to some biases in the data.

School-based CPD attempts are not, however, always constructive and straight forward. Rossi, Lisahunter, Christensen, and MacDonald (2015) argued in their book "Workplace Learning in Physical Education," that the school context is neither a simple nor a homogeneous learning space; and it is naive to think that professional learning which occurs in the school is "always relevant and always positive, and allegedly always important" (p. 17). The argument made by the scholars was specifically focused on cases of pre-service and beginning PE teachers. Ostensibly novice physical educators have plenty to learn in their first few years as teachers (Harrison, Dymoke, & Pell, 2006). The induction experience these teachers undergo as their first taste of professional learning may dictate their views on the teaching profession (Maskit, 2013). Meanwhile, due to fast-pace changes that we see in the education landscape in recent decades, it is conceivable that even seasoned educators would meet challenges in adjusting to constantly changing work demands and diversified teaching-learning environments (Tang & Choi, 2009).

Theories of Learning

The job of teaching necessitates professional learning (Falk, 2001), but how much do we know about teachers' learning process? Some scholars argued that part of the reasons why some CPD programs fail is due to a "fractured understanding of teachers as learners" (Armour & Makopoulou, 2012, p. 343). Much of teacher CPD in the past was based on deficit philosophical suppositions, implying current knowledge or skills of the teachers is inadequate, and this is something that faculty tend to resent and resist (Haras, 2018). Armour, Quennerstedt, Chambers, and Makopoulou (2017)

argued that the key may not be what is included in CPD that prompts teachers to learn, rather we must acknowledge and explore the "dazzling complexity of learning" that contemporary PE teachers engage in (p. 804). Since learning theories lay the foundation of how learning occurs and how we can create change, a summary and critique of key learning theories will be laid out.

Learning theories describe and explain how learning occurs (Metzler, 2000). Different learning theories tend to relate to different aspects of the learning process, thus making them useful to explore and examine how educators endeavor to grow and develop in different facets of their career. The link between learning theory and CPD however has not always been explicitly acknowledged (Mugisha, 2015). Depending on views on the relative importance of the mind and the environment to learning, different learning theories abound (Quay, 2002). Three main theories of learning in the psychological and sociological fields are behaviorist, cognitive and constructivist learning theories (Duncombe & Armour, 2004; Gensemer, 1980; Schunk, 2012).

Behaviorist

The behaviorists posit that humans are predictable and they respond to given environmental situations or stimulations in specific ways. Therefore, to produce a particular behavior, all that is necessary is to set up the environment with specific conditions which are known to provide the desired behavioral result (Gensemer, 1980). While reinforcement increases the likelihood that the antecedent behavior will repeat, punishment will decreases that likelihood; both reinforcement and punishment can come in positive and negative forms (Lee, 2016; Watson, 2013). Learning is defined as a change in the learner's behavior (Watson, 2013). The instructional model that corresponds to behaviorism is typically referred to as direct instruction teaching, where the teacher assumes an active and directive role (Palincsar, 1998). Behaviorism is considered a teacher-centered paradigm.

While direct instruction may be quite effective in teaching factual contents in a relatively short time, there is less evidence that such instruction transfers to higher order cognitive skills such as problem-solving and reasoning (Palincsar, 1998). After all, teaching students a behavior by repetition and reinforcement is the basis of "operant conditioning" (Skinner, 1953). Moreover, the behaviorist perspective does not adequately explain the mechanisms that enable learning, i.e. viewing the mind as a "black box" (Ryan, 2019).

For PE teachers who adhere to the behaviorist view, they may focus on reinforcing effort in their students by constantly praising them for trying because effort is one of the desired responses (Rink, 2014); and effort is one of the key factors in student achievement (Pitler, Hubbell, Kuhn, & Malenoski, 2007). In behaviorist terms, regardless of whether the students are struggling or succeeding in a skill, acknowledging their effort would continue to fuel their motivation to learn (Walk, 2011). Moreover, since physical drills and practices can be designed to generate either positive or negative reinforcement (e.g. hitting a target vs. missing a target) or punishment (e.g. being tackled by an opponent vs. successfully dodged away from an opponent), people are believed to be able to learn through practice repetitions. But it is a dangerous assumption to presume that when a learner is involved in a situation that is supposed to enable learning, the learner will be able to learn successfully (Thomas, 2013).

Despite the limitations of the behaviorist instructional orientation, PE teachers may choose to adopt this approach because keeping students engaged in practice would enable better flow and control of a class (Walk, 2011). Thus this perspective can inform us on the day-to-day teaching-learning experiences faced by physical educators. Since PE teachers' CPD is not limited to just attending development courses and workshops, the daily lived experiences are of interest to this study. As emphasized by Eraut (2011), teaching work of educators actually constitutes an important part to the professional learning of the teachers.

Cognitivist

Cognitivist theory views the mind and its internal thinking processes which result in learning as the critical aspect as opposed to the outward exhibition of learning, as advocated by the behaviorists (Rhalmi, 2011). Cognitive perspectives focus on changes in teachers' beliefs or knowledge (Watson, 2013). According to cognitivists, the learner is active in the learning process in the sense that they adopt different strategies to process and construct personal understanding of the materials presented to them (Rhalmi, 2011). Cognitive structures such as schemata and heuristics enable abilities such as problem-solving and transfer of knowledge (Bruner, 1990). Learning involves a change in knowledge which gets stored in memory and not merely a change in behavior (Kelly, 2012). Moreover, learners interpret experiences and information taking into account of their existing knowledge, their level of

cognitive development, their cultural background, and their personal history (Flannery, 1993). All these factors shape how learners organize their experience, and select and transform new information.

Palincsar (1998) noted that basically all cognitive science theories entail some form of constructivism in the sense that "cognitive structures are typically viewed as individually constructed in the process of interpreting experiences in particular contexts" (p. 347). In regard to teaching students, applications of cognitive learning theory include providing structure to a class, linking concepts, discussions, real world examples, and analogies (Kelly, 2012). In respect of developing better teaching, it is critical to acknowledge that teaching is a much more complex process that calls for an emotional commitment in addition to cognitive work (Day, 1999). Thus any teacher CPD efforts not taking into account of the conditions of work, "how teachers learn and why they change" will likely be ineffective (Day, 1999, p. 204). While there is little doubt that cognition is involved in all meaningful learning, viewing teacher learning as a purely cognitive process will be partial and unhelpful. Moreover, some critics have argued that the cognitive theory tends to downplay other factors that may affect behavior such as social setting, culture and moral reasoning (Alahmad, 2020). These factors can indeed assume significant roles in a learning environment and thus affect behavioral change.

Constructivist

Constructivist theories of knowledge and learning focus on developing learners' critical thinking skills and learning competencies (Chen, 2001). Constructivism concerns the ways in which knowledge is constructed, through interactions with others and the environment (Duncombe & Armour, 2004). In other words, learners build knowledge through experiences (Lee, 2016). Applications of constructivist learning theory may include case studies, research projects, brainstorming, group work, discovery learning, and simulations (Kelly, 2012).

Two main strands of constructivism are cognitive constructivism (Piaget's) and social constructivism (Vygotsky's) (Gogus, 2012). Piaget (1973) was concerned with developmentally fitting activities catering students' current readiness for learning and thinking. He believed for true learning to occur, students must personally engaged in the learning activity. Just watching someone completing a task has little value until the learner shows the ability to actually perform the task (Piaget, 1973). He also

described knowledge acquisition as “a process of continual accommodation to and assimilation of information” (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006, p.244). One of the most influential conclusions drawn by Piaget is that learners learn best when they are actively engaged in the learning process and when they seek their own solutions to problems (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006).

Advocating the sociocultural aspect of learning, Vygotsky’s notions of zone of proximal development and scaffolding have relevancy to the exploration of teacher learning. The zone of proximal development is defined as the difference between the current level of cognitive development and the potential level of cognitive development (Vygotsky, 1978). Conceivably a learner is able to reach their learning goal by engaging in problem-solving tasks with the assistance from more competent peers; Vygotsky believed that a higher level of learning can be achieved in this manner (Kurt, 2020). Scaffolding points to the importance of more knowledgeable peers in fostering fellow teachers’ growth. Under the guidance and deliberate setup by more capable colleagues, teacher-learners can learn in a progressive manner, tackling smaller, more manageable tasks one at a time, as they gradually develop more independence in their own learning (Kurt, 2020).

From the constructivist perspective, learning is conceived as a self-regulated process settling internal intellectual conflicts that often surface through actual experience, collegial discussions, and reflection (Brooks & Brooks, 1993). Furthermore, learning is seen as an active process where people act as agents in building their knowledge and understanding through decision-making, critical thinking, and problem-solving (Parker, Patton, & Sinclair, 2016). Knowledge construction is made possible by building upon prior knowledge and experiences. Learners’ past experiences will influence what and how new knowledge is perceived, and whether it will be considered useful and meaningful (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006).

Since learners, based on their prior understanding of certain concepts, may regard some new information as irrelevant and unhelpful upon initial encounter, facilitators in the form of more capable peers can have an important role to play in assisting the deciphering process. In other words, scaffolding could help to mediate the learning process.

The large-scale study on over 4,000 primary and secondary school teachers by Becker and Riel (2000) found that the more extensively involved teachers were in

professional activities, the more likely they were to have teaching philosophies and teaching practices compatible with constructivist learning theory. Similarly, de Vries, Jansen & van de Grift (2013) examined teachers in a Dutch context in which CPD was a professional duty but not mandatory, they also found that higher CPD engagement related to more student-oriented beliefs. However, no relationships were found between the teachers' CPD profiles and their subject matter-oriented beliefs. Conclusions cannot be drawn whether those teachers who participated in more CPD activities were more effective teachers with better student learning outcomes. de Vries et al. (2013) rightly cautioned that they did not know whether the teachers' learning and teaching beliefs were consistent with their actual teaching practices.

All three learning theories above have important contributions to make in understanding and analyzing teaching-learning activities in HE. When designing learning activities, considerations should be given to 1) the level of knowledge of the learners, 2) the thought-processing demands involved, and 3) the nature of the desired outcome (Kelly, 2012). Since teachers have characteristics and motives different from the students they teach, other contemporary learning theories will provide additional conceptual grounding for the current study. In particular, Bandura's (1977) social learning theory (e.g. Thambekwayo, 2012; Watson, 2013), Kolb's (1984) experiential learning theory (e.g. Akella, 2010; Makhele, 2018) and Knowles' (1978) adult learning theory have guided numerous CPD related research (e.g. Puteh & Kaliannan, 2016; Zepeda, Parylo & Bengtson, 2014) as they shed light on critical aspects of working professionals' learning experience.

Social Learning Theory

While Bandura (1977) agrees with the behaviorist learning theories of classical conditioning and operant conditioning, he adds two additional ideas in his social (cognitive) learning theory (McLeod, 2016). First, there are cognitive mediating process between stimuli and responses; second, people's behavior is learned from the environment through the process of observational learning. Observational learning is also known as modelling, or vicarious learning. It involves learning by observing behaviors from a social model, who can be a friend, a sibling, or a teacher. The social model facilitates cognitive processes such as encoding while observing and memories retrieval at a later time (McLeod, 2016). A learner is more likely to imitate the behaviors demonstrated by a model who has similar characteristics as her/him. Also,

when a learner copies a model's behavior and it results in a rewarding experience, the behavior will be reinforced. However, the positive, or negative, reinforcement may have only minimal effect if it comes from the outside and does not match with the person's needs (McLeod, 2016).

Bandura (1977) argued that even with imitation after observation, a learner might not have truly learned anything. In addition to observation, four main components or steps are important for genuine learning under the social learning theory: attention, retention, reproduction, and motivation (Kurt, 2019). First the learner needs to be paying attention; the more interesting or unique a learning situation is, the more likely the learner will benefit from the learning. Second, finding a way to retain what is learned is crucial. Some may choose to record it down using different devices or methods, while others may repeat the newly learned actions multiple times to make it stick. Third, if the first two steps are successful, the third step of performing, or reproducing the observable behavior becomes possible. But ultimately whether the learned behavior would be consistently retained and repeated depends on whether adequate motivation is present. In this regard, reinforcement and punishment would play a role.

Furthermore, Bandura (1997) also posited that self-efficacy, i.e. a person's belief in his/her ability to succeed in performing a task, would affect how an individual approaches goals and challenges. Individuals with higher self-efficacy view challenges as opportunities to develop stronger skills, and they tend to be able to bounce back from setbacks easily. On the contrary, those with lower self-efficacy often avoid difficult tasks and situations, and perceive those challenges as beyond their ability; they also tend to think more negatively about their failures and outcomes from trying (Kurt, 2019). The social learning theory can also help to explain the effects of peer pressure. For people lacking self-esteem and/or self-efficacy, they may not feel that they fit in and thus feel lonely among peers, they may start to emulate the behavior of individuals who appear to be popular in order to be accepted themselves by the group.

Social learning can be seen as a shift away from absorbing information in a linear fashion, i.e. from teacher to student, to an environment where learning and teaching occurs in a multi-directional manner within a group of learners. To elicit active learning among individuals, universities and offices around the world have

taken up social learning pedagogies such as group projects, group presentations and participatory workshops of various kinds (Nelson, 2016). Although individuals can potentially learn a great deal from each other by working together in a collaborative fashion, it is worthy to note that not all individuals have an appetite for social learning (Lopukhina, 2019). Some work environments and work conditions may make it difficult to employ social learning.

Experiential Learning Theory

Experiential learning theory (ELT) provides an all-inclusive model of the learning process and is a multi-linear model of adult development, both of which are coherent with what is known about how human beings naturally learn, grow, and develop (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). Kolb (1984) defines experiential learning as a "holistic integrative perspective on learning that combines experience, cognition and behavior" (p.21). The central role that experience plays in the learning process is strongly emphasized: "Learning is the process whereby knowledge is created through transformation of experience" (Kolb, 1984, p. 38). In order to turn experience into learning, reflection is called for. For example, making sense of a situation, understanding and trying to answer questions, and making necessary personal and social connections to enhance knowledge (Akella, 2010). The four-stage learning cycle, or spiral, of ELT includes 1) concrete experience, 2) reflective observation, 3) abstract conceptualization, and 4) active experimentation (Kolb & Kolb, 2005; Zull, 2002). It is postulated that when a learner encounters a work-related problem, the individual will observe and reflect on that problem to determine its nature and cause. This leads to generation of ideas for tackling the issue and finally implementation of those ideas to see if the problem can be solved (Mugisha, 2015).

Kolb (1985) posits that learners do not necessarily use the entire learning cycle equally, rather they tend to concentrate on one or two stages. Indeed the learning cycle invites learners to see learning as a whole process and to identify any stage that they are dependent on or have difficulties in (Vince, 1998). Kolb's work acknowledges a wide spectrum of teaching-learning activities, and its role in reaching out to students with varied learning styles (Kolb & Kolb, 2005). While the ELT model has often been applied to explore student learning, Akella (2010) argued that educators in HE rarely have opportunities to investigate whether and how the ELT model applies to them as teachers. Akella (2010) further claimed that ELT had helped him to transform from

someone accustomed to "traditional formal lecture-based mode of instruction to a more fluid, instructor able to effectively experiment with more interactive and experiential methods" in the HE setting (p. 110). So it can be argued that the emphasis on direct experience and the reflective process in ELT has good potential in producing a fruitful "disciplined inquiry" (Dewey, cited by Hiebert, Morris, Berk, Jansen, 2007, p. 56) on a teacher's work. Nonetheless selected scholars such as Kayes (2002) argued that the ELT has a number of shortcomings such as overlooking the role of social knowledge, how language could shape experience, and how power relations "construct" and "contain" the learning process (Vince, 1998, p. 307).

Adult Learning Theory

Adult learners do not learn in the same manner or through the same pathways as student learners due to their maturity and life experiences (Trotter, 2006). Knowles (1977) defined andragogy as the art and science of helping adults to learn. In order to create effective CPD for working adults, the characteristics of adult learners must be understood and acknowledged. According to Knowles (1984) and Merriam (2001), adult learners have the following characteristics: 1) independent and have a need to be self-directing, 2) have diverse background, experiences and expertise, 3) relevancy oriented, 4) task and goal oriented, and 5) internally motivated. These characteristics need to be taken into account in designing and delivering CDP activities. For example, learners should be involved in the planning and evaluation processes of their learning. It is important to utilize and leverage the skills, expertise, and qualities that learners bring to a learning situation so that they would feel respected and valued. Moreover, it would be tremendously helpful to inform the learners on the "what" and "how" of intended learning steps or strategies, and "why" the learning is important to them. As adult learners often seek to attain knowledge that offers them immediate solutions to real life problems, case studies or opportunities to apply the newly acquired skills to solve challenges will be meaningful to them (Trotter, 2006). Finally, adult learners are more responsive to internal incentives. Therefore, striving to enhance their intrinsic motivation will help to make the learning process more gratifying (UBC CPD, 2017).

Table 2 below summarizes the key concepts of the above learning theories, and highlights of their implications for CPD.

Table 2: Learning Theories and Implications for CPD

Theory/Proponent(s)	The learning process	CPD Implications	Critique of the theory
Behaviorism (Skinner)	Learning is reflected in observable behaviors (outcome) as a result of environmental stimuli; reinforcement of desirable behaviors through rewards and punishment.	Need to identify outcomes valued by educators and link them to CPD; use certain rewards to cause behavior change.	The theory does not address the mental processes in learning; some people disagree with the use of punishment. Learner is seen as passive in absorbing predefined knowledge.
Cognitivism (Brunner)	Learning occurs as information processing achieved through cognitive structures in the brain.	Newly learned behavior, initially stored as short-term memory, needs positive reinforcement in order to be stored in long term memory.	The theory downplays certain factors that may affect behavior such as social setting, culture and moral reasoning (Alahmad, 2020).
Constructivism (Piaget; Vygotsky)	Learning occurs as mental processes that construct meanings in the mind through discovery and problem-solving.	Aim to build on professionals' preexisting knowledge; encourage self-directed learning and self-assessment. Promotes collaborative assimilation and accommodation of new information.	Its proponents disagree on the extent constructivist learning can occur naturally without structure and teaching. Meaning of reality and truth becomes controversial because individual interpretations vary (Sharkey & Gash, 2020).
Social learning (Bandura)	Learning occurs through observation of relevant models, cognition and expectation of reinforcement.	Aim to enhance individual's self-efficacy, focus on role models and use of demonstration for observation. Integrates learners into a knowledge community.	The theory tends to underestimate the learner's own contribution to her/his development. Problematic when there is no apparent role model in the person's life to imitate for a given behavior.
Experiential learning (Kolb)	Learning is a transformative process that involves a cycle/spiral of experiencing, conceptualizing, reflecting and acting.	Aims to provide as many concrete first-hand experiences as possible to elicit learning. The ability to reflect is desirable.	The theory does not consider the context of power relations (gender, social and cultural dominance), or unconscious learning and higher meta-learning processes (Vince, 1998).
Adult learning theory (Knowles)	Learning rests on learners' motivation, prior experiences and current needs.	Aim to employ professionals' experiences, needs, reflective skills, and ability to transfer knowledge; implicates the need for self-directed learning as a basis for CPD.	Adults have varying levels of experiences and motivations; some may have very limited experience in certain undertakings.

Modified from Mugisha (2015). The typology of learning theories and their

application for continuing professional development on pp. 90 - 91.

In the HE environment, practitioners are often expected to work independently (Wieman, 2019) and as such self-directedness becomes paramount but is often taken for granted (ten Cate, Kusurkar, & Williams, 2011). Self-directed learning is rooted in Knowles' theory of adult learning theory and it will be discussed next.

Self-Directed Learning & Self-Determination Theory

Haras (2018) noted that despite scores of theory and research on cognition and adult learning, there are still many questions on how university faculty keep learning and changing throughout their careers. Since learning, in educational psychology's terms, necessitates successful cognitive, affective and metacognitive conditions (Vermunt 1996), it is important to explore not just the cognition of the mind, but also the desire and willingness to invest effort in learning, i.e. the motivation of learning. Self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 1985) is one of the major theories which helps to explain motivational processes.

Self-Determination Theory

Motivation and engagement are critical to adult educators' participation in learning (Sorinola, Thistlethwaite, & Davies, 2013); and high levels of work engagement are essentially associated with high levels of intrinsic regulation of the teacher (Van Beek, Schaufeli, Taris, & Schreurs, 2012). Self-determination Theory (SDT), originated from the work by Deci and Ryan (1985), aims to explain the broad spectrum of human behaviors from inaction to the most refined self-directed activity (Angeline, 2014). In addition to the commonly accepted notion of behavior being intrinsically or extrinsically motivated, Deci and Ryan (1985) also identified a third category known as "amotivation" or "passivity" when people just act without intent.

It is posited that intrinsic behavior, which springs from and is continued by the individual (or agent), is guided by the psychological needs of the person. Heider (1958, cited in Ryan & Connell, 1989) introduced the concept of perceived locus of causality mainly with respect to interpersonal perception, and more precisely in reference to the examination of how one deduces the motives and intentions of other people. He differentiated between "personal causation", the crucial feature of which is intention, and "impersonal causation", where external environments, regardless of the individual's intentions, yield a particular effect (Ryan & Connell, 1989, p. 749). When

the locus of causality is entrenched within the individual, and not regulated by external stimuli, the individual is seeking to satisfy the needs of autonomy, competence and relatedness (Angeline, 2014; Carson & Chase, 2009). These three basic tenets of SDT are crucially relevant to the examination of CPD because even the toughest work policies, regulations, and social pressure cannot guarantee true engagement in CPD. Moreover, when individuals feel that their basic needs are reasonably fulfilled, they tend to turn their attention to activities that they find attractive or important (Seifert & Sutton, 2009). On the other hand, if the person does not feel contended about the basic needs, he or she will tend to feel coerced by external pressures.

Carson and Chase (2009) used SDT as a framework in examining PE teacher motivation in primary and secondary schools in the USA. They found that "teachers who presented at PE conferences showed higher perceptions of autonomy, competence and relatedness" than those who did not present at such conferences (p. 349). Such findings could be partly explained by noting the kinds of teachers who take part in professional conferences. Ostensibly teachers with better sense of control over their teaching, more confidence in their teaching ability, and more connection to the profession would be willing to present in front of their peers (Carson & Chase, 2009). And upon successful presentation at PE conferences, these teachers' sense of autonomy, competence and relatedness will be further enhanced. Aiming to develop and sustain teachers' motivation, Carson and Chase (2009) thus recommended cultivating PE teachers early on in their career about the importance of attending and presenting at professional PE conferences, and encouraging in-service PE teachers to maintain a network of professional peers and stay active in CPD.

Self-Directed Learning

Under the premise of SDT, self-directed learning (SDL) has been defined as a process where "individuals take the initiative, with or without the help of others, in diagnosing their learning needs, formulating learning goals, identifying human and material resources for learning, choosing and implementing appropriate learning strategies, and evaluating learning outcomes" (Knowles, 1975, p. 15). SDL has been revealed as an important element in numerous CPD studies before (de Almeida Anacleto, Ferreira, Januário, & Santos, 2017; Louws, Meirink, Van Veen, & Van Driel, 2017; Wall, 2013), as it is a key component of the adult learning theory

(Knowles, 1978) and is highly relevant to professionals' continual update of their expertise. SDL is especially pertinent to CPD experiences of practitioners in HE because faculty members in universities typically enjoy more autonomy in CPD as compared to school teachers. Scholars identified the important overlapping component among self-regulated learning (SRL) and SDL – the "self" (Loyens, Magda, & Rikers, 2008). The critical controlling role of the learner and the actions that the learner undertakes must be noted, especially in the case of adult learners. SRL differs from SDL in that for SRL the initial learning task and/or the learning goal can be externally generated and controlled (e.g. by a teacher), but in SDL, the learning task is always defined by the learner (Loyens et al., 2008). Moreover, SDL is more often associated with adult learning contexts, while SRL is mostly concerned with school-based learning (Cosnefroy & Carre, 2014).

SDL is aligned with the constructivist theory of learning. Discrepancies between the learner's current understanding and prior experiences create an imbalance; and such imbalance will lead the learner to examine her or his own beliefs and possibly try out new ideas (Lynch, 2016). Imbalance can promote learning provided that there are other motivating factors at work. Teachers being challenged on their current teaching practice can be motivated to inquire into their current knowledge and skills. But if other motivation or support is not present, the teachers may choose to do the minimal just to avoid failure in meeting institutional expectations and requirements (Kirk, MacDonald, & O'Sullivan, 2006).

Motivation for Learning

Teacher motivation has been highlighted as a critical factor in professional growth and development in numerous studies (Timperley etal., 2007; Kowalczuk-Walędziak, Lopes, Menezes, & Tormenta, 2017). For instance, McMillan at al. (2016) studied 220 qualified teachers undertaking master's level postgraduate courses in two universities, exploring their perceptions and experiences related to CPD and its impact on their practice. The researchers found that teachers are motivated to engage in CPD by personal motivation factors and school-related factors. Personal motivation factors include factors such as career prospects, potential growth and achievement, while school-related factors include factors such as interpersonal relationships, peers' feedback on teachers' CPD, and supportive cultural practice of engaging in CPD. These findings echoed those found by Guskey (2002) on teacher's motivations for

CPD. Meanwhile, Kowalczuk-Walędziak and colleagues (2017) noted there is also some evidence to show that motives for teachers' engagement in CPD would influence its outcomes, although the exact relation is unclear. Guskey (2002), on the other hand, argued that motivation could influence whether teachers choose to implement what they have learned through professional training.

Ng (2010) examined a group of Hong Kong practicing teachers enrolled in a bachelor program of primary education. He found that teachers focusing only on extrinsic career goals in their profile had "a less adaptive pattern of strategy use, weak intention to continue learning similar courses and show less interest in the course" (p. 415). External career goals such as promotion or salary increment on their own did not provide strong motivation for CPD engagement for these teachers. Ng (2010) recommended that CPD policymakers should address teachers' diverse goals and needs for CPD so as to allow teachers to match their personal and professional reasons to the CPD available.

Appova and Arbaugh (2018) explored how teachers' motivation to learn would affect teachers' professional growth. They studied a group of mathematics high school and middle school teachers through semi-structured interviews, and found that teachers were motivated to: 1) influence students and their learning; 2) learn with/from other teachers; 3) become a 'better' teacher; 4) fulfill professional development requirements; 5) constantly seek and engage in learning as a 'habit'; 6) gain knowledge about topics of teachers' own interests; and 7) pursue further learning if funds, time, and resources are available (p. 10). These seven categories reflected that these teachers' CPD motives have come from personal interests, students, other teachers, a quest on learning and availability of support.

Motives as Goals

Seifert and Sutton (2009) argued that motives will differ depending on the source for the motive. And people are motivated by three main types of goals that relates to learning and achievement, they are mastery, performance, and failure-avoidance goals. Mastery goals are considered a form of intrinsic motivation since they are associated with pure enjoyment of learning something. Performance goals on the other hand tend to imply extrinsic motivation. There are no doubts positive effects of having performance goals because the individual strives toward better performance. But there is a risk that those with performance goals may not actually learn materials

as deeply as those who have mastery goals (Midgley, Kaplan, & Middleton, 2001). It comes down to whether the measures of performance reward superficial information or a deeper understanding of materials. Failure-avoidant goals tend to weaken achievement. They are often a byproduct of the competitiveness of performance goals (Urdan, 2004). For example, when a teacher puts excessive emphasis on being the best in class, the interest in learning the materials may suffer if some students perceive that success is beyond their reach or may not be desirable in any case. Simply avoiding failure may appear more feasible and indeed easier (Seifert & Sutton, 2009).

These three types of goals often do not exist in isolation, but in combinations. For example, if you are a PE teacher, you might want to improve your running technique simply because you enjoy running in the best form you possibly could, which is essentially a mastery goal. Meanwhile, you might also want to look competent in front of your colleagues at school, i.e. a performance goal. In addition, deep down, you may wish to avoid looking like a novice in running. One of these motives may be more dominant, but they may all be at work simultaneously.

Adding to the above three types of motives as goals, learners are also motivated by positive social relationships (Seifert & Sutton, 2009). Indeed the abilities and achievement motivation of peers can also make a difference, but the ultimate effects vary depending on the context. In HE, social contacts are likely to come from practitioners' own initiatives. But program coordinators, departmental supervisors can encourage and facilitate these informal contacts, especially when they occur at times that support instead of interfere with learning (Seifert & Sutton, 2009). In addition to promoting collegial exchanges, work supervisors are well-advised to treat CPD of teachers with thoughtful care because CPD is most effective in schools where senior leaders understand its potential for raising standards and enhancing school performance (Pedder, Opfer, Mccormick, & Storey, 2010).

CPD Support and Facilitation

Scholars have long contended that "PE is rarely afforded the physical, curricular, and societal status equal to most other academic disciplines" (Carson & Chase, 2009, p. 349; Hardman& Marshall, 2000). Such constraints make it more difficult for PE teachers to stay motivated in their jobs and feel a sense of belonging in their school setting. Carson and Chase (2009) argued that "encouraging, respectful, and interested supervisors" in the work context would help minimize physical educators' feeling of

isolation (p. 349).

Teachers appreciate freedom and opportunity in setting their own development targets, determining how they could reach those targets, and the necessary space to work along with peers towards professional growth (Patton, Parker, & Pratt, 2013). The school environment and the administration have the duties of providing supportive structures and personnel to foster CPD for teachers (DiPaola & Hoy, 2014). Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) noted that subject matter coordinators, school principals, and even the superintendents of schools they all have significant roles to play in deciding matters related to learning and teaching. School management personnel specifically should help in identifying and recommending CPD courses, accessing financial resources and granting study leave where applicable (Arthur, Marland, Pill, & Rea, 2006).

Poekert (2011) argued that supportive facilitation is an important feature of effective CPD. Helpful facilitation begins with acknowledgement of teachers as active learners creating new meaning based on their prior learning and experiences and recognition of others' influences in a nonjudgmental and social environment (Patton, Parker, & Neutzling, 2012). Teacher-leaders and principals in schools (DiPaola & Hoy, 2008), and departmental work supervisors in university often take up the responsibility of providing facilitation. These individuals "must guide rather than direct, question rather than show the way, and listen rather than tell" (Patton, Parker, Tannehill, 2015, p. 34). Poekert (2011) called the skills of facilitation the "pedagogy of facilitation" (p. 19). Different facilitation techniques can be used by facilitators to question, guide, and redirect educators in becoming responsible, autonomous, and life-long learners (Patton, Parker, & Pratt, 2013). An effective facilitator must assume the simultaneous roles of a leader and a follower (Armour & Yelling, 2007). Such facilitation takes care, effort, and planning, which together implicates significant time investment – the one thing that many teachers, administrators in schools and education practitioners in HE consider as luxury.

A few investigations to date focused on the PE-CPD tutors' (or providers') practices came from Patton, Parker, and Pratt (2013), Patton and Parker (2014), and Makopoulou (2018). In the study by Patton and colleagues (2013), fifteen "active university faculty in Physical Education Teacher Education (PETE) who more often than not voluntarily facilitated PD" and 88 primary and secondary school teachers

from eight selected PLCs in the U.S. and Europe were studied (p. 444). Specifically, they examined the "self-identified pedagogical strategies employed by facilitators in PD", and the strategies contributed to the growth of participating school teachers as learners (p. 441). They concluded that CPD facilitators have important roles to play in helping teachers in becoming self-regulating and life-long learners. Similarly, Patton and Parker (2014) examined an international group of facilitators' collective knowledge and experience with sustained PE-CPD. All but one of the 13 facilitators were active university faculty in PETE with strong knowledge in both PE and teacher education. Patton and Parker (2014) found that the facilitators defined success as being able to support teachers "to engage as learning professionals throughout their career" (p. 60).

Meanwhile, Makopoulou (2018) set out to examine the CPD tutors' perceptions and practices in the context of a short course on inclusive PE. The study focused on two research questions: "What were the tutors' perceptions of effective CPD delivery?" and "How were these interpretations evidenced in practice?" (p. 250). The CPD tutors examined were, however, not university PE practitioners; they were either experienced secondary teachers or CPD consultants. Nonetheless, an interesting and important finding from this study was the variation in tutors' ability to facilitate professional learning. Presumably such evidence can be utilized to inform and model the way CPD facilitators are cultivated to support teachers' professional learning (Makopoulou, 2018). As facilitation skills need to be learned and developed (Hunuk, 2017; Makopoulou, Neville, & Herold, 2019), it is ill-advised to assume that teachers from secondary or tertiary education, experienced and otherwise, are automatically equipped with the necessary skills and dispositions to become successful CPD facilitators. This point is supported by research evidence in the British context as many CPD leaders expressed that they felt unequipped in performing their role – they noted that inadequate experience of evaluation approaches had made it challenging for them to evaluate CPD (Goodall et al., 2005).

In Hong Kong, a limited number of research studies had been done on primary and secondary school PE teachers (e.g. Ha, Wong, Sum, & Chan, 2008; Sum & Dimmock, 2014; Sum & Shi, 2016); and a few have focused on CPD of school teachers. In-service teachers felt that they become more confident and secure about making curriculum changes after a training program offered by university scholars,

successful PE teachers and curriculum officers collaboratively (Ha, Lee, Chan, & Sum, 2004). Moreover, a randomized controlled study was conducted to examine the impact of CPD on teachers' physical literacy and self-efficacy and student's learning outcomes (Sum, Wallhead, Ha, & Sit, 2018). The scholars guided the teachers in implementing an 8-month curriculum intervention for developing student physical literacy. The scholars argued that teachers' physical literacy and self-efficacy could be major determinants of effective PE teaching, which ultimately would impact on students' physical literacy and physical activity participation (Sum et al., 2018).

It is noteworthy that in all examples of university PE practitioners participating as facilitators to CPD endeavors of primary/secondary school PE teachers cited above, the actual personal experiences of the HE physical educators', including feelings, concerns, growth and development, have largely been unstudied. Conceivably, HE practitioners can also develop professionally to a certain extent as "knowledge generators" along with school teachers as they collaborate in CPD partnerships (Lee, 2011, p. 36). There appears however to be very limited emphasis from extant literature on the actual CPD of university PE practitioners and also their teaching, students' learning outcomes, and performance in other work aspects. So on the whole, the continuing professional learning and development of PE practitioners in HE had not been thoroughly examined.

Chapter 3: Research Design and Methodology

Despite an abundance of research on what constitutes effective CPD, a significant portion of CPD around the world has not altered and still revolves around "training" activities that are aimed to "develop" teachers (Webster-Wright, 2009). In order to break that trend, Webster-Wright (2009) advocated looking beyond how best to deliver CPD activities and investigating more deeply into how professionals learned in their situated work context. In exploring along this direction, I had to consider carefully the methodology and methods that I should use for the study. In the next section, I will elaborate on the research paradigms that are common for social science and psychology. Justifications will be provided to support my selection of adopting a qualitative and the IPA approach.

Adapting Guba and Lincoln's (1994) work, Ponterotto (2005) identified four research schemas, they include positivism, postpositivism, critical theory, and constructivism-interpretivism.

The epistemology of positivism is rooted in an objectivist position where the researcher assumes a distant, no interaction with the object of inquiry. The positivist approach of research is deductive in nature and often used to test a hypothesis or theory under an experimental design under controlled conditions (Dieronitou, 2014). Positivism strives towards verifying a priori hypotheses that are typically stated in quantitative propositions (Guba & Lincoln, 1994). Postpositivism grew out of a discontent with certain aspects of the positivist perspective. While positivist emphasizes verifying a theory, postpositivism stresses falsifying it (Lincoln & Guba, 2000). Both positivism and postpositivism stresses cause-effect connections of phenomena that can be examined, identified, and generalized; and both operate on an objective, detached inquirer role. These two paradigms serve as the key foundation and anchor for quantitative investigations (Ponterotto, 2005).

Critical theory typically emphasizes historical methods involving "on-going processes driven by ideological, social, cultural, political and economic forces and values" (Dieronitou, 2014, p.6). The critical theory perspective aims to be transformative by questioning the status quo and helping the emancipated groups by challenging the power relations (Guba, 1990; Ponterotto, 2005). While the critical theory paradigm may not be fitting for the current study purposes, it has potential in exploring power relations and status quo surrounding CPD issues within the HE

environment.

The constructivism-interpretivism paradigm implies that the multiple interpretations of reality are specific to local, historical and social contexts and circumstances (Oxley, 2016; Ponterotto, 2005). According to Guba (1990), relativism is the ontological position of the constructivist paradigm. Schwandt (1994) noted that relativists assume there are multiple and equally valid realities that can be captured by exploration. Epistemologically, the researcher acknowledges that facts and values are inextricably linked; and the knower and the known are inseparable (Smith, 1983, cited in Dieronitou, 2014). Investigations based on constructivism adopt an "inductive logic by arguing from the particular to the general" (Dieronitou, 2014, p.7). Advocates of constructivism-interpretivism strive towards understanding the lived experiences from the point of those who live it (Schwandt, 1994). The constructivism-interpretivism paradigm serves as the foundation and anchor for qualitative research methods (Ponterotto, 2005). This orientation also aligns with the purpose of my research since I am interested in the reality related to CPD as interpreted by the PE practitioners.

Social interactions and operations in HE are typically multi-layered and complicated, and these cannot be easily interpreted through quantitative means which tend to isolate and take things apart in the analysis. People's understanding of the reality is molded by their values and beliefs (Moses & Knutsen, 2007), and thus it is difficult to deeply explore individuals' understanding of their unique CPD experience in a quantitative manner. Moreover, O'Sullivan (2006) warned CPD providers against making simplistic assumptions about teachers' needs and desire to learn, especially considering the amount of resilience and strategic compliance those teachers had honed over the years. Considering the above and that qualitative methods are more suited to investigate "process, meaning, and understanding" (Merriam, 1998, p. 8), I subsequently chose a qualitative approach for this study.

Constructivism-interpretivist researchers strive to take on the participants' perspective and simultaneously acknowledge their own views in the research process (Love, 2019). Just like how constructivist teachers must consciously attempt to see both their own and their students' actions from the perspective of the students (Cobb & Steffe, 2010). As the researcher-interviewer, I would be attending to my own and my participants' questions and responses. Through research interactions, both the interviewer and the interviewees will attempt to make sense of each other's verbal and

non-verbal activity (Cobb & Steffe, 2010). Interpretive accounts from an experiential viewpoint have helped educators and researchers alike to recognize the "multiple realities and socially constructed meanings that mark the many and varied social contexts associated with physical education" (Eatough & Smith, 2017; Pope, 2006, p. 31). Thus I consider the constructivism-interpretivist a suitable perspective to approach the current study.

Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis (IPA)

IPA is one of the phenomenological psychology approaches; it has philosophical and theoretical origins in phenomenology and hermeneutics (Carpenter, 2009; Oxley, 2016), and it draws on main positions from pioneers in phenomenology including Husserl (1913/1982), Heidegger (1927/2005) and Gadamer (1960/1998). Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014) argued that IPA is both descriptive and interpretative because it aims to reveal things as they appear and it acknowledges that there is nothing known as "uninterpreted phenomenon" (p. 8).

IPA is committed to exploring how individuals make sense of their lived experiences of the phenomenon under examination (Neubauer, Witkop, & Varpio, 2019). Characteristically, such phenomena are experiences of private and particular significance (Glasgow Caledonian University, n.d.). Thus, IPA is consistent with the epistemological position of my research question (Smith et al., 2009): "How do PE practitioners experience CPD in Hong Kong's higher education?" as I aimed to explore the experiential meanings that PE practitioners have in regard to their CPD endeavors. IPA adopts an idiographic focus, emphasizing the particulars of an individual case. IPA targets to provide rich, in-depth insights into how a specific individual, in a particular context, makes sense of a given phenomenon (Eatough & Smith, 2017).

IPA differs from other qualitative approaches in its unique combination of "inductive, idiographic, interpretative and reflexive" characteristics (Glasgow Caledonian University, n.d.). In particular, the idiographic emphasis of IPA also distinguishes itself from other phenomenological approaches (Miller, Chan, & Farmer, 2018). Traditional phenomenological approaches emphasize the essence of a phenomenon as perceived by a specific group of people, IPA hones in on the convergences and divergences of perceptions across a sample of individuals (Allan & Eatough, 2016). For example in a hypothetical study, three of six participants may

refer to a feeling of being supported under attentive supervision in their work performance, but two participants may relate to distress from the watchful eye of their "stern" supervisors while another participant may shun away from all supervisory contacts. Research participants can experience components of a phenomenon similarly, but when thematically examined, their experiences may radically differ (Miller et al., 2018).

Table 3 below shows a summary of comparisons between IPA and the traditional transcendental and hermeneutic phenomenological approaches (excerpted from Miller et al., 2018, p. 242-243).

Table 3. Comparing three phenomenological approaches to qualitative inquiry

Category	IPA	Transcendental	Hermeneutic
Philosophy	Understanding how individuals make sense of their experiences is an interpretative activity best accomplished through the detailed examination of particular cases within phenomena of interest (Smith et al., 2009).	There exists an essential, perceived reality with common features that can be identified through the suspension of personal experience (Lopez & Willis, 2004).	Suspension of a personal lens is not possible; interpretation is inevitable and even necessary to get beneath the subjective experience (Lopez & Willis, 2004).
Goal	To make sense of the participants making sense of an experience (i.e. double hermeneutic; Smith et al., 2009).	To uncover and describe essences of phenomena that have not been previously conceptualized (Lopez & Willis, 2004).	To describe the meaning of the lived, embodied experience of a phenomenon (Starks & Trinidad, 2007).
Formulating a Research Question	"How does [a particular person] in [a particular context] experience [a particular phenomenon]?" (Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Smith et al., 2009).	"What is the essential structure of [the phenomenon of interest]?" (Lopez & Willis, 2004).	"What is the lived experience of [the phenomenon of interest]?" (Starks & Trinidad, 2007).
Coding & Identifying	In-depth single-case analysis to identify	Identify descriptions of the phenomenon;	No identified method; focus on application

Themes	emergent themes, leading to identification of superordinate and subordinate themes, followed by cross-case analyses. Initial analysis descriptive; secondary level of analysis interpretative (Larkin & Thompson, 2012; Smith et al., 2009).	cluster into discrete categories (meaning units); taken together, these describe the essence or core commonality and structure of the experience (Starks & Trinidad, 2007).	of the hermeneutic circle leading to identification of themes (Reiners, 2012).
Analyst's View	Preconceptions of the researcher are recorded via reflexive journal, reflexive memos, reflexivity read of data to illuminate and reflect upon; analyst is central to the interpretative process (Larkin & Thompson, 2012).	Bracket views as a way to suspend them from influencing analysis (Lopez & Willis, 2004).	Preconceptions of the researcher are recorded and made explicit; meaning derived from analysis is a blend of the meanings of both the participants and researcher (Lopez & Willis, 2004; Reiners, 2012).

While transcendental phenomenology requires the researcher to totally suspend personal meanings, both IPA and hermeneutic phenomenology acknowledges that suspension of the personal lens is impossible and not helpful in understanding a phenomenon. As compared to more traditional phenomenological research questions, IPA questions are more typically concerned with the "how" than the "what" of a given phenomenon (Smith et al., 2009). And since IPA questions often advance reflection on the total experience of a phenomenon, including its affective, cognitive, and bodily components (Finlay, 2011), they are suited to exploring experiences of professionals in the field of PE where practitioners engage in teaching and development activities which necessitate physical embodiment.

In addition, the double hermeneutic analytic process distinguishes IPA from hermeneutic phenomenology. IPA goes beyond the description of the meaning of the

lived experience which hermeneutic phenomenology typically goes after (Smith et al., 2009; Starks & Trinidad, 2007). IPA requires the researcher to reflexively engage with the interpretation of a participant's accounts – the researcher making sense of the making sense of the researched (Smith & Osborn, 2008). IPA "rejects any claim to meaning or research conclusions that are framed as definitive findings, answers or solutions" (Howard et al., 2018, p. 853), and focuses on what *matters* to the research participants (Eatough & Smith, 2017). It is thus considered legitimate to "go beyond what the participant says to make sense of their account" (Shaw, 2019, p. 187).

There are similarities and differences between IPA and other inductive qualitative approaches, and some of these differences are due to discrepancies in underlying assumptions (Carpenter, 2009). For example, grounded theory (GT) presumes that there is an objective reality that can be known through repeated exploration and theory building until a point of saturation is reached (Charmaz, 2008). But since people sometimes hold beliefs and values about social reality which have conflicting assumptions and implications (Fries, Schmid, Dietz, & Hofer, 2005), GT may not be able to attend to those aspects successfully (Carpenter, 2009). GT aims to produce mid-level theoretical accounts of psychosocial phenomenon while IPA focuses on the micro analysis of personal experience, with textured and nuanced details of the lived experience of a small sample of participants (Smith et al., 2009).

Also, both IPA and thematic analysis (TA) can be used to study participants' experiences, and both methods employ themes and sub-themes to represent groupings of codes. But IPA anchors firmly within a phenomenological framework, whereas TA can be used within a range of theoretical and epistemological positions (Shaw, 2019). Since I am interested in the experiential significance of the CPD engagement for PE practitioners, IPA's roots in phenomenology is of critical importance in my methodology consideration.

Site Selection and Sampling

Among the eight government-funded universities in Hong Kong, five have mandatory policies for undergraduates to fulfil some form of PE/physical activity/sports. These five universities either offer classes in PE/physical activity/sports under General/Liberal Education or a "Healthy Lifestyle/Living" umbrella. Two other universities offer PE/physical activity/sports courses as recreational courses or electives; and one university only caters to PE-teaching major

students and do not offer PE classes to students in other academic disciplines.

For the purpose of IPA, typically a relatively homogeneous sample is sought "for whom the research question will be meaningful" (Hefferon & Gil-Rodriguez, 2011; Smith et al., 2009, p. 49). As I am interested in gathering deep insights from the participants, limiting the sample size was necessary. Pietkiewicz and Smith (2014) suggested small sample sizes of five to ten relatively homogeneous participants. Thus I adopted purposive sampling in seeking physical educators who are considered typical of a broader group of HE PE practitioners (Smith & Osborn, 2008). Such purposive homogeneous sampling however is not about treating members of the sample as "identikit" (Smith et al., 2009, p. 49) (i.e. a composite picture made up of transparencies depicting different facial features of a person). Rather, in seeking a seemingly uniform group according to apparent social factors, a researcher can then investigate the detailed convergences and divergences among group members (Smith et al., 2009).

Smith et al. (2009) cautioned that too large a sample size can be worse than one that is too small if one were to strive for meeting IPA's commitments. Initially I aimed to recruit a total of six participants, two PE practitioners from each of the three selected universities I had chosen. In order to allow insights to my own full-time work as a physical educator, I selected two other universities, in addition to the one I work in, based on comparability in PE-related curricula and general educational approach (i.e. universities with general/liberal education in their curricula). Same as in the researcher's work setting, students need to fulfil certain credits/hours of PE/physical activity courses as graduation requirements in these other two universities. Students taking the PE/physical activity courses are typically students in their first or second years of undergraduate study, but third-year or final year students can also enroll in those courses. In one university, a small portion of those courses are taught by part-time instructors instead of full-time teaching staff in the other two cases. Moreover, PE practitioners from all three universities in this study shoulder teaching and varying amount of administrative duties depending on their years of service and specific job allocation; most practitioners also handle coaching of sports team/team management.

I knew the persons in charge of the PE-related unit/department in the two targeted universities professionally, and I first emailed them to express my interest in inviting their colleagues for research participation. Through these persons-in-charge, I

was able to obtain some suggestions on prospective research candidates and their contact information. PE practitioners who were in the first professional life phase (as defined by Day & Gu, 2007) or the "novice" and "apprentice" stages (as defined by Steffy & Wolfe, 1997), were not selected in order to downplay the issue of coercion. Then I approached six potential participants initially through their work emails. Both men and women participants were invited. After the initial round of invitations was issued, one invited participant quickly declined and another one did not reply before my suggested deadline. I subsequently sent out a second round of email invitations inviting another two potential participants. Eventually, I ended up with seven participants instead of the originally planned six. Like noted in the introduction, I knew some of the research participants as professional acquaintances prior to this study, but others I only knew by name. I considered the total number of seven as acceptable since the additional participant could serve as a safety buffer in case of a dropout.

Selected scholars argued that "there is not a prescriptive number of interviews recommended in IPA" (Finlay, 2011; Miller et al., 2018). Multiple interviews, however, may help to build a better relationship between the researcher and the researched (Finlay, 2011). Moreover, focused and in-depth phenomenological interview protocol advocated by Seidman (2006) recommended three interviews for each individual – the first focused on providing life history context, the second aimed at reconstructing the experience, and the final one allowed the interviewee to reflect on the meaning of her/his experience (Bevan, 2014). I originally planned for three rounds of semi-structured interviews but eventually I conducted only two rounds. The decision to limit the amount of interviews was mainly based on two reasons:

1) Participants' queries on the necessity of three rounds of interviews – more than half of the participants mentioned that they thought two rounds of interviews were adequate in covering what they would like to share in their CPD experiences; and

2) There were prior successful examples of IPA studies with less than three rounds of interviews. For examples, Holland (2012) investigated the lecturers' experiences of teaching in HE with one pilot round of interviews and one round of interviews with 13 participants; Clemens (2017) examined the experiences of eight birthmothers relinquishing a child with one round of in-depth interview; and

Smith and Rhodes (2014) studied seven participants' experiences of first episode of major depression with one around of semi-structured interviews.

Thus I took heed of research participants' sentiments, and noted the above research on IPA. In deciding to conduct two rounds of interviews, I worked to include guiding questions and prompts in the interviews so that the three objectives of establishing context, reconstructing the experience, and reflecting on the meaning of the experience were covered.

Data Collection Methods and Sources

Semi-structured Interviews

Vygotsky (1987) argued that putting experience in language is making meaning of that experience. In seeking a better understanding of physical educators' personal feelings and experience in CPD, interview was deemed a more fitting method than questionnaire as personal understandings and interpretations can be explored more thoroughly in a face-to-face interview (Denscombe, 2010).

Despite that an unstructured, open interview offers a great degree of flexibility and may reveal more about the participant due to its unrestrictedness, it has the disadvantages of posing difficulties to replicate and concerns in reliability. Thus, I chose to adopt the semi-structured mode which permits a reasonably great range of coverage and tends to generate rich data (Smith & Osborne, 2008) and more comparable data across interviewees (Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 2008). While cognizant of the advantages of the semi-structured interview, I was also mindful of its disadvantages: 1) difficult to ensure total honesty of participants, 2) causal effect cannot be established, 3) answers to open-ended questions can make analysis challenging, and 4) can be time-consuming (Digital Learning for Wales, n.d.; Seidman, 2006).

In deciding to use the semi-structured interview mode, I reckoned its advantages outweigh its potential problems. Moreover, by following an interview guide (see Appendix B), I was able to keep reasonably focused on the phenomenon of CPD in the interviewing process (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006b).

In designing the interview questions, I aimed not to ask for what I would like to know directly since addressing issues explicitly tends to encourage socially desirable responses (Coar & Sim, 2006). During the interviews, I paid attention to moments when I heard expressions that I thought might have different meanings as defined by

the participants (i.e. their conceptions versus my own "definiteness") (Vagle, 2014, p. 81); participants' clarifications were sought for such cases (Quinney, Dwyer & Chapman, 2016).

When conducting interviews in the IPA methodology, communication and language are important elements. The non-English speaking research context had to be dealt with. In order to make the Hong Kong local participants feel at ease, I had chosen to use their (and my) mother-tongue Cantonese as the interview medium. At times, English terminologies commonly used in the context of HE and PE were also used to supplement and clarify ideas in the dialogues.

All individual interviews were audio-recorded using two digital devices simultaneously upon participants' consent. Brief notes of unique phrases (e.g. a noun or descriptive which the researcher had never heard of before) and special moments (e.g. when the interviewee suddenly stopped herself/himself from continuing a particular sentence) were jotted down but extensive note-taking was avoided so as not to impede the attention and ease for both parties.

In the interview phase of IPA, the ultimate goal is to have the participants reconstruct their experience within the topic of CPD (Seidman, 2006). I acknowledged that the task of managing the interview environment, my own emotions, and perceptions of the participants could prove challenging, especially in the initial few interviews. There would be risks such as "familiarity in relationships" and "unintentional intrusion of hypotheses", which might temper with my ability to listen and clarify certain unique expressions of meaning (McCormack & Joseph, 2018, p. 6). In order to curb those from happening, I applied structure to the interview to enhance "consistency and increased trustworthiness" (Bevan, 2014, p. 138) by addressing the three areas for "in-depth, phenomenologically-based interview" (Seidman, 2006, p. 15), namely contextualization, seeking details of the phenomenon, and clarifying/reflecting on the phenomenon. I first situated the experience in a person's context before seeking further details of the targeted phenomenon of CPD. This approach borrows from the life-history approach (Seidman, 2006). In the first round of interviews, I asked the participants how they initially became PE educators. I also sought to explore what a physical educator did on a daily basis at work so as to provide important contextualization. And I sought to reveal experience details, i.e. "apprehend the phenomenon", by asking descriptive and structural questions (Bevan,

2014, p. 140). A structural question is used to unpack or expand on what results from a descriptive question. For instance, when an interviewee described that she thought that her colleagues were very professional, I followed with a structural question "When could you see them being professional?" And finally, I sought for enhanced clarity of the phenomenon and asked participants to reflect on what the phenomenon really meant to them (Seidman, 2006). For instance, a physical educator noted that she would share news about CPD programs with her colleagues through social media. Then I made further prompts to explore how the physical educator actually felt when she chose to, or not to, participate in CPD activities alongside her colleagues. Emotional responses were also of significance and noted because affective display often reflect deeper yet not always consciously recognized meanings (Bevan, 2014; Seidman, 2006).

As stated earlier, two rounds of individual semi-structured interviews were conducted, which resulted in a total of 14 interviews with the seven participants. Duration of the interviews ranged from about one hour to one hour and a half. The first round of interviews was conducted from mid-November 2017 to early January 2018.

After each interview, data were listened to and transcribed as soon as possible so that necessary modifications can be made in subsequent meetings (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006a). The second round of interviews was conducted in May 2018. Originally I had planned to conduct the second round within three months after the first round. The 4-month gap was not considered ideal but a result of three practical reasons:

1) there were two long public holidays in the months of February and April in Hong Kong when most of the participants were not available for interviews;
2) transcription and preliminary analyses of the first round interviews took longer than originally anticipated;
3) all universities were nearing the end of the academic year in the month of May, and participants could arrange their time for interviews more easily.

Most of the second round interviews were longer in duration compared to those in the first round mainly due to verbal sharing on personal artifacts in the early part of the interviews. Since the personal artifacts were selected by the participants themselves, the items may hold unique personal meanings to them. As such, the sharing of personal artifacts served as a warm-up and lead-in to the rest of the second interview;

and this would hopefully lead the participants' to reveal deeper personal meanings or reflection on their CPD experience.

All the individual interviews were scheduled to be held at times and locations which were considered convenient (i.e. offices or meeting space arranged by the participants in six cases or by the researcher in eight cases) and which also offered an adequate amount of privacy for the interviewees.

CPD Personal Artifacts

I have asked participants to share with me CPD related artifacts (CPD artifacts) of their own choice so as to delve more deeply into the educators' affective domain. "There is an emotional experience inherent in any learning situation" (Harland & Kinder, 1997, p. 74) and lived experiences of the learner cannot be thoroughly explored without attending to this omnipresent domain. Towards the end of the first round of interviews, each participant was verbally reminded to bring for the second interview a number of CPD personal artifacts that they deemed memorable, or significant to their prior CPD experiences, and/or meaningful to their teaching work. I did not specify the exact number of items that the participant must bring; it was totally up to the participants' volition.

The CPD artifacts shared by the participants included trophies and numbered cloths from sports competitions, photographs of specific events, certificates and training manuals from CPD programs, and hand-written notes resulting from learning episodes. The artifacts added authenticity to the research data and served as a starting point of conversation on specific CPD experiences that the participants would like to share more in depth, bringing the exploration closer to the gist of my main research question. In this regard, the CPD personal artifacts served not as a separate data source, but rather as tools to facilitate a deeper exploration of personal meanings during the interviews.

CPD Related Documents

The other source of data was CPD related documents accessed through websites and through the participants. Multiple data sources helped to "corroborate the interview data with other sources of information on the topic", thus the interview data was not taken at face value (Denscombe, 2010, p. 189). In addition to this triangulation effect, CPD related documents importantly helped to generate a more thorough understanding of the work environment and the participants being studied

(Westfall, 2007). Such contextualization of physical educators' CPD experience within institutional approaches and policies on staff training and development helped to ground subsequent interpretative work. Information posted on university websites and official documents submitted for financial subsidies were of interest. To differentiate CPD related documents with personal CPD artifacts shared by research participants, the following definition has been adopted for this study:

> "CPD related documents" refer to official documents produced for, during, and/or after CPD participation where the producer of the document is not the sole target audience.

Following advice from Gibson and Brown (2009), I started with brainstorming of potential documentary sources that might shed light on my research questions. It soon became clear that many documents that I would consider useful and meaningful for analysis had to come through the research participants – they are not accessible through institutional webpages. Most information on detailed policies and funding support for staff training and professional development is restricted to university staff access. Subsequently, I invited all participants to assist in the data collection. They were invited in person (towards the end of the first interview) and through email to help to gather CPD related documents from two sources: 1) university webpages with restricted access; and 2) their personal collections. Meanwhile, I stressed that the sharing of CDP related documents was completely on voluntary basis, and the participants were free to share with me any CDP related documents that they thought might be of interest to my study.

Two of the interviewees printed out selected restricted-access CPD related documents and university web pages for me. Those documents included information on the criteria for applying and amount of CPD financial subsidies and reimbursement procedures for staff development expenses. In addition, three of the interviewees responded to my verbal reminders and sent me soft copies of the CPD related documents they had located, such as progress and completion reports of CPD programs.

Data Management and Analysis

Creswell (2009) noted that data analysis for IPA is iterative, complex, and creative. As anticipated, among the types of research data that I had to handle, analysis of the interview data took the greatest amount of time and effort.

Managing and Analyzing Interview Data

I conducted translation and transcription of the interview dialogues simultaneously to generate verbatim transcripts. I decided to do the translation myself because I have had some success in translating/transcribing interview data previously for my master's study and a number of doctoral study assignments. Since those prior translation-transcription experiences were encouraging and positive, I decided to take on the tasks again on my own.

In addition to verbal words, selected prosodic elements (e.g. pitch, stress, loudness, and pace) of the interview dialogues which came across as striking were also noted. Since semantic recording is desirable for IPA, I used transcribing/ recording sheets with margins for commenting and notes (Smith et al., 2009). In cases where literal translation did not suffice due to discrepancies between languages (Filep, 2009), I adopted non-literal translation so as to maximize truthfulness in transcribing (Skukauskaite, 2012). Where deemed appropriate, original Cantonese characters were also kept in the transcripts for future references.

Meanwhile, since all three universities involved in this research use English as their official documentation medium, I made the assumption that all research participants could read and understand English quite proficiently and therefore be able to help with the transcript validation procedure. Drafts of interview transcripts were sent to individual participants for verification of accuracy, that is, whether what was said had been accurately represented. Creswell (1998) noted "member check" as one way to safeguard the participants' meanings were truthfully portrayed in the interview transcript. Indeed, a number of participants had replied with suggested amendments to the transcripts.

While most revisions were of minor scale, one participant in particular had asked to have a short segment of the transcript taken out. Respecting the participant's specific concern, the short segment was deleted from my transcript records permanently. All participants' input had been incorporated after mutual agreement between the participants and me as the researcher.

Interview data analysis began as soon as I finished each interview. I listened to the recording at least twice from the beginning to the end before I actually started to transcribe the initial draft. From my previous experience in translation-transcription, I found that such repeated listening would be helpful in the translation (i.e. choosing

fitting words and terminology) and identifying tone variations in the conversation.

Importantly, the practice of writing is inseparable from a phenomenological enquiry (van Manen, 2014). My inner thoughts on research-related actions, decisions, and feelings had been recorded in a reflective journal (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), including ideas that suddenly popped up while doing everyday things (van Manen, 2014). I also strived to turn attention inward to explore and acknowledge my biases and personal assumptions in the journal (Quinney et al., 2016). As such, my reflexivity had contributed to the investigative and interpretive processes and in a sense became part of the research data (Gray, 2014).

My analytical steps for the interview data largely followed the guidelines suggested by Smith et al. (2009) and Smith and Osborne (2008): reading and re-reading of the transcript, initial coding, developing emergent themes, searching for connections across emergent themes, moving to the next case, and identifying patterns across cases. Transcripts of the two rounds of interviews were worked on a case by case basis adhering to the strong IPA characteristic of idiographic analysis, starting with detailed analysis on particular examples and then gradually working towards more general claims (Smith, 2004).

In addition to the drafts of interview transcript, I also constructed documents for each case focusing on: 1) listing of initial emergent themes, 2) summarizing themes and super-ordinate themes 3) highlighting potential key verbatim quotes, and 4) personal narratives. Altogether these documents had helped me to organize my analytical thoughts and interpretation more systematically.

Reading and re-reading. I approached the analysis process by reading the transcript holistically in the first instance. Spending time to get familiar with the data was necessary to orient myself for the subsequent analytical steps (Vagle, 2014). Then I proceeded to write down initial exploratory comments upon repeated line-by-line reading of the text (Ballad & Bawalan, 2012; Vagle, 2014). I deliberately took time to note any initial, striking or otherwise, observations I had on the transcript (Smith et al., 2009). Some comments were simply paraphrasing, others were associations that came to mind, and others were tentative interpretations (Smith & Osborne, 2008).

Initial coding. The next step of noting was focused on three types of codes, namely descriptive, linguistic, and conceptual ones (Smith et al., 2009). My approach in writing these three categories of codes was to concentrate on a section of the

transcript and work on one type of codes at a time, then go back and proceed with the second type, and then repeat for the third.

Descriptive codes focused on what the participant had shared in the dialogue, for examples, about key events, people, information, and feelings, etc. “A role model” and “squeezed dry” are examples of descriptive codes. This type of codes is focused on “objects which structure the participant’s thoughts and experiences” (Smith et al., 2009, p. 84).

Linguistic codes are concerned with language use. Elements such as tone, repeated words, degree of articulation (whether hesitant in speaking or pauses), and pronoun use were noted. Use of metaphors (e.g. comparing a teacher to a salesperson) is a linguistic tool that may connect descriptive codes to conceptual codes (e.g. professional roles of teacher) and thus also falls within linguistic codes.

The third type of codes involves interpretation at a conceptual level. According to Smith et al. (2009), “there is often an element of personal reflection in conceptual coding” (p. 89). Thus, I asked a lot of provisional conceptual questions by referring to my own pre-understandings based on my experiential and professional knowledge, and the newly surfacing understandings of the participant’s experience (Smith et al., 2009). For example, where the text had been noted with “helplessness in not knowing what to do”, I considered whether I had felt that way before in my career and I thought about the circumstances that had led me to such feelings. In this way, a number of provisional meanings could surface (e.g. “the significance of self-efficacy”, or “coming to terms with own inadequacy”). My feelings and experiences had entered the exploration essentially as a tool for attending to the participant’s words; the analysis remained primarily on the participant and how the participant made sense of her/his world. Upon completion of initial coding for the entire transcript, conceptual comments were revisited to ensure that the interpretation was substantially grounded in the research data (Shaw, 2010).

Developing emergent themes. In developing emergent themes, I shifted from primarily working with the original transcript to working with the exploratory comments and codes I had made. I looked for patterns, connections, and interrelationships among the codes. The goal was to transform codes into emergent themes (Jeong & Othman, 2016). Thus I worked to formulate concise phrases at a slightly higher level of abstraction which may correspond to a more psychological

conceptualization (Smith, 2004). Here a hermeneutic circle with the "whole-part-whole" idea was at work since by then I had already made codes for the transcript as a whole; my interpretation of a part was thus in relation to the whole and vice versa (Pietkiewicz & Smith, 2014; Vagle, 2014).

Then I proceeded to map out how the emergent themes fit together. I strived for sustained engagement with the text and thoughtful interpretation so as to reveal participants' meanings of their mental and social engagement in their CPD endeavors (Smith & Osborne, 2008). Some of the themes were dropped at this stage due to weak evidence. Please see Table 4 below for a summary of initial themes and corresponding interview script excerpts for one participant.

Table 4: A summary of initial themes for one participant

Themes	**Key Words from Original Script**
Dealing with Physical Limits and Injuries	
- Always come back after injury	a ten-year case
- Doing sports through pain	clenched my teeth
- Weighing pros and cons for surgery	you could walk
- Torturing self	could not feel my own hands
- Enduring injury	staggering and jogging
Disillusionment	
- Barely winning in the so-called competent events	could not measure up
- Giving up on useless CPD courses for coaches	waste my time
- Previous work supervisor discouraged staff from further studies	would not endorse
- Unenjoyable study process	swallow them whole
- Materials learned not applicable to teaching	benefits were too small
Professional Pride & Credibility	
- Earning the right to preach about sport	I do sports
- Teachers as professional presenters of knowledge	pedagogical steps
- Establish self as a knowledgeable teacher	may challenge a teacher
- Improving sports skills to protect professional esteem	cannot slack off
- Sportspersons as artists	passion for your profession

- Novice vs experienced practitioners	do not know any better
Insights from Good Coaches and Other Athletes	
- Inspiration from female athletes	most optimal angle
- Inspiration from table-tennis coach	relaxed state of the body
- Enhancement in sport techniques more applicable to teaching students	student could feel
- Asking students for advice on advanced skills	approach them and ask
- Appreciating people's years of experiences	not wasting their effort
Coming to Terms with Aging	
- Signs of aging	had to sit down
- Past and current physical conditions	time stops for nobody
- Being told that you are old	My wife said
- Not accepting the aging body	such simple stuff?!
- Poorer memory	watched this before!
Pursuing Higher Degrees	
- Further studies despite discouragement from work supervisor	could not prevent me
- Academic credentials for enhancing competitiveness	still on contract
- Master's degree a must for working in HE	need to have one
- No required to do research	do not pursue

As shown above, there were six initial themes for this one participant. Then I proceeded to look for connections between the initial themes as so to further reduce the data. Some of the methods I used for developing super-ordinate themes from the emergent themes included "abstraction" and "subsumption" (Smith et al., 2009). In clustering the themes, I thought explicitly about what I would like to tell about this participant's experience in CPD. Using the same participant's case for illustrative purposes, I arrived at the clustered themes as shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Clustering of initial themes for one participant

I clustered the themes this way because of the participant's strong emphasis on his physical conditions, his attempt to enhance professional credibility through further studies, and the insights and inspirations he got through professional development, teaching and sporting activities. After grouping the themes together, I also gave titles to each final overarching theme. See Figure 2 below.

Figure 2: Super-ordinate themes for one participant

Identifying patterns across cases. In sorting out my thoughts, I had written super-ordinate themes on adhesive notes and posted them on the wall to better visualize the connections and patterns across cases. This had helped me to see more clearly which themes were stronger and which were less potent in representing the essential lived experiences of the seven PE practitioners. I continued to rely on the "whole-part-whole" analysis method by continually thinking about central meanings of specific events in relation to the broader context (Vagle, 2014, p. 96). And in this

process, I rearranged and relabeled some of the themes (Smith et al., 2009). Eventually, I arrived at five tentative super-ordinate themes (see Table 5).

Table 5: Tentative super-ordinate themes

· The Battle of Credentials – Academic versus Professional
· A Person before A Professional
· A Climb for Professional Self-Esteem
· Realization of Learning: Evidences of Learning
· Riding it Solo: Laissez-fare Approach in CPD Support

These super-ordinate themes were then worked on further taking into account of participants' sharing on their CPD personal artifacts and the other source of data, the CPD related documents.

Handling and Analyzing of CPD Personal Artifacts

A summary report on the types of artifacts the seven participants had shared with me in their second interview is presented below in Table 6. Selected pieces of the artifacts that participants had shared were photographed for my records and references upon participants' verbal consent. Not all of the artifacts presented by the participants were photographed due to the repetitive nature of the artifacts (e.g. Eli's large number of hand-written notes); and in those cases only a representative sample of the artifacts had been photographed.

Table 6: Summary of types of personal CPD artifacts

Participants	**Artifacts (no. of individual pieces of items)**
Addison	- A collection of numbered cloth from previous athletic competitions (over 110 pieces in total)
Chris	- Photos of participation in sports/PE related conferences (4) - Photo of graduation ceremony (master's degree) (1) - Graduation certificates (2); certificates of attendance (2); sports credential certificates (2) [These were shared electronically as pdf files in advance of the second interview.]
Eli	- Graduation certificates of master's degrees (2) - Certificates of Achievement/Participation (5) - Trophies/plaques from previous sports competitions (3) - Pocket-size notebooks with hand-written notes (7)* - A4-size handwritten notes on different sports skills (a pile of about half an inch thick)*
Jo	- Photo from a volleyball coach training program (1)
Mirror	- Photos of the sports administrator exchange program in the US (3) - Photos of the master's degree experience (2)

Sunny	- Conference entry pass (1) - Assignment samples from master's degree (3) - Data analysis sheet from doctoral studies (1 large sheet)
West	- Training manuals from CPD programs (2 sets) - Certificates of Attendance/Participation/Completion (7) - Certificate of Appreciation (1) - Letters of Completion (2)

*Note: These items are treated as CPD related artifacts and not CPD related documents since there are loosely crafted notes mainly focusing on the content knowledge of the CPD activities for personal reference only. See under an earlier section "Collecting CPD Related Documents" for a definition adopted for this research.

Some participants had chosen to share more personal artifacts from their past CPD endeavors than others. It is unclear whether it was due to a difference in their effort in digging out past artifacts or their degree of willingness in sharing this type of memorabilia. Nevertheless, all participants had shown considerable enthusiasm in sharing in person their behind-the-scene stories and feelings on the CPD activities symbolized by the artifacts. To facilitate the part-whole-part analytic steps, I wrote down analytical remarks for the personal artifacts shared by each participant. The analytical remarks were based on juxtaposition of participants' comments on the artifacts with what they shared in the two rounds of interviews. The intention of asking for those personal objects was to foster richer descriptions from the interviewees, so that they could give me a "guided tour" on selected CPD experiences (Everett & Barrett, 2012). Detailed analysis on the artifacts per se was not considered meaningful nor necessary (Clemens, 2017) since I am more interested in how the participants interpreted their experience behind the artifacts. More detailed interpretations and discussions corresponding to participants' personal artifacts and their CPD experiences will be made under related themes in later chapters on discussion of findings.

In summary, the personal artifacts had added extra authenticity to the research data. At least five participants commented that they had not reviewed many of those artifacts for quite some time before the interviews. They appreciated the chance to share their feelings and views on the CPD activities they had gone through. All participants noted that they had never discussed about CPD or their learning experience so deeply before. For at least five participants, digging out the artifacts and considering what items to share had heightened the participants' memory of their past

CPD endeavors and awareness of feelings associated with those endeavors.

Analyzing CPD Related Documents

I was able to obtain a number of restricted access official documents related to CPD policies through selected research participants. I had also collected a number of open access documents from university webpages. In addition, four out of the seven participants provided me with documents they had prepared for or after they had completed CPD activities in the past. Please see Appendix C for a summary of the main categories of documentary I collected according to the channel of access. Individual record sheets were made for all CPD related documents collected and included three sections in each record sheet (Gibson & Brown, 2009):

1) General questions to be asked of all documents and the answers;

2) Specific questions to be asked of that document and the answers;

3) New questions that surface through analysis of that document.

General questions asked of all collected documents included elements such as "time', "authorship", "purpose", "audience", and "access" (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 71).

Choosing channel of access as a categorization tool helps to highlight the openness and transparency with which the three concerned universities handle matters related to staff training and development. There are substantially more similarities than differences among CPD related policies and funding supports of the three universities. Nevertheless, university authorities apparently regard those items sensitive and private to the university community.

In general, information focusing on teaching and learning development and/or support was abundant in the university webpages. I had disregarded documents that appeared not helpful in informing my research questions. Other webpages of information had also been screen-outed or "analytically filtered" using this irrelevancy criterion (Gibson & Brown, 2009, p. 66).

Key functional units in the three concerned universities responsible for matters related to staff training and development included personnel offices, centers for teaching and learning, and a research committee. Relevant pages with information on staff orientation and induction, professional development in teaching and learning, and available grants for short-term and long-term staff development programs were collected and analyzed. In addition to the three general questions to be asked of all documents and document-specific questions, references were made to data gathered

from the two rounds of interviews whenever possible. This process was not purely for triangulation purposes, but it also enabled a different perspective in examining the primary source of interview data (Gibson & Brown, 2009).

A number of meaningful insights surfaced as a result of the documentary analyses; these points only became particularly interesting when juxtaposed with the interview data and the personal artifacts. The CPD-related documents were particularly helpful in informing the research sub-question "how do PE practitioners handle challenges encountered in CPD?" For example, based on the CPD-related documents I collected in regard to all three universities, there were no specific guidelines on writing completion reports for non-degree type of staff development programs, but there is more detailed guidance for such reports for conference grants and completion of further degrees. There appears to be biases embedded in policies in treating staff development programs of different nature, downplaying the value and importance of non-academic type of staff development endeavors. Another example involves Chris' missed timing in asking to proceed from his M.Phil. studies to the Ph.D. program, which I will elaborate on in more detail in the findings chapter.

Finalizing Key Findings as Major Themes

In this step, interpretive remarks I had prepared for the CPD personal artifacts and the CPD related documents were juxtaposed with the five tentative super-ordinate themes. Since verbal elaborations on the artifacts also formed part of the interview data, I specifically looked for signs where the actual act of bringing and sharing particular artifacts and/or contents of artifacts itself contradict what the respondent suggested or revealed in the rest of the interview dialogues. For instance, one participant remarked that he was not very active in engaging in PD activities, but he went on to bring a number of artifacts which suggested otherwise. Seemingly contradictory data between the interviews and CPD related documents were also specifically examined. For example, one participant opined that she did not learn anything from a CPD program, but she wrote a completion report (i.e. that she shared as a CPD-related document) which suggested that some learning might have occurred. These "seemingly contradictory" evidences necessitated additions and/or revisions of selected sub-themes and even super-ordinate themes. Selected themes were re-worded to better encompass the widened scope of evidence while some themes were dropped due to lower ability in reflecting the essence of the practitioners' lived experiences.

In addition to the above interpretive steps, narratives of individual participants were constructed to assist in the data analysis and as a counter check for the super-ordinate themes and sub-themes. In constructing the narratives, inevitably more mental juggling and filtering occurred, and this had helped in consolidating the key findings based on all data sources. Please see Appendix D for the personal narrative of one participant. With the aid of the participants' narratives and all the aforementioned analyses for the seven cases, I finally arrived at three major themes and seven sub-themes as shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Major themes and sub-themes for the PE practitioners' lived experience in Hong Kong's higher education

Major Themes	Sub-Themes
Realization of Learning	· Learning from Individual Peers
	· Self-Directed Explorations
A Person before a Professional	· Integrating Interests
	· A Changed(ing) Body
Navigating the Work Environment	· Seeking Professional Credibility
	· Being Mindful of Colleagues
	· Missing Guidance and Support

Ethical Issues

My research proposal was first endorsed by my thesis supervisors and then I subsequently obtained ethical clearance from the "EdD Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee" (VPREC) of University of Liverpool on October 10, 2017 (see Appendix E). Approval for research was also granted by the "Committee on the Use of Human and Animal Subjects in Teaching and Research" of the researcher's university (Appendix F). After double-checking research approval practices of the other two targeted universities, persons-in-charge of department and work unit concerned also gave their consent by signing an "Authorization Letter" (see Appendix G for a sample).

I clearly explained my intention and background of the research to all research participants in the invitation emails with the aids of a "Study Information Sheet" and an "Informed Consent Statement" (see Appendix H). The issue of voluntary participation was highlighted and withdrawal rights were also clearly spelt out in the documents. All participants gave their informed consents by signing the related

documents willingly prior to their participation in the first round interviews.

Since asking physical educators with little working experience to take part in the research might present a perceived power difference, I purposely chose to exclude PE practitioners who had worked three years or less in HE. Teachers in the first three years of teaching may not have confidence in their abilities (Steffy & Wolfe, 1997) and their level of thinking may be limited to the descriptive level and not a reflective level (Yost, Sentner, & Forlenza-Bailey, 2000), I thus considered those budding educators not ideal candidates for this research.

All participants were assigned pseudonyms at the stage of interview data transcription. To further ensure anonymity, the exact age of the participants and the names and scale of the universities involved were not specified. All the individual interviews were conducted in mutually agreed offices or meeting space which offered an adequate amount of privacy for the interviewees. All research data including interview recordings, photographs of artifacts, and CPD related documents were stored and secured in double password-protected computer files. Hard copies of transcript paperwork were stored in a secured filing cabinet in the university office of the researcher; the office was locked when not in use. As stipulated by the requirements of the ethical approval of my full-time work university, all data collected for this current study will be kept securely for seven years (see Appendix F).

As rightly noted by Gibson and Brown (2009), building of trust is important in gaining access to documentary sources from research participants. Research participants who had shared CPD documents with me indeed demonstrated a high degree of trust as some documents contain evaluative comments on their past teaching performance and personal statements they produced as a result of selected CPD activities. In return, I had notified one participant that I would not be examining some of the documents being shared with me due to privacy concerns. It was because after a rough glance, I judged that documents in question might contain sensitive personal remarks that were out of the scope of data I needed for my research.

The gathering and sharing of personal CPD related documents were done entirely voluntarily by the research participants, I could only access and work with documents that the research participants chose to disclose to me. Subsequently the amount and categories of documents I had gained access to were limited to a certain extent. But in order to uphold the respect of privacy and rights of the participants, I refrained from

posting repeated requests for more documentary data from the participants. I deem such practice was in line with my ethical considerations.

Researcher's Subjectivity

Being a long-serving PE practitioner myself and researching fellow educators in my own university and colleagues from other universities, my researcher role was more of an insider (i.e. emic) than an outsider (i.e. etic). As such, absolute objectivity throughout the investigation (i.e. getting rid of all pre-understandings) was hard, if not impossible, to attain and maintain (Qin, 2016). In the process of researching, I had repeatedly reflected on my researcher's role, presumptions and behaviors during data collection so as to make needed adjustments when appropriate (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006a).

In order to embrace my researcher subjectivity, I had kept a reflective journal in which I continually interrogated and stated explicitly the ways I had shaped and had been shaped by the research process (Glesne, 2011). Taking reference of Peshkin's (1988) writing on subjectivities, I acknowledged that at least three subjective-I's might have impacted on my research, they included the *Overseas Educated I*, the *Collegially Eager I*, and the *Professionalism Advocating I*. These subjective-I's had "the capacity to filter, skew, shape, block, transform, construe, and misconstrue" what went on from the beginning to the end of my research project (Peshkin, 1988, p. 17). Firstly, the Overseas Educated I opined that overseas CPD activities or programs would be superior in terms of value and potential insights than local CPD endeavors. This subjective I also biased me towards a degree of ignorance of what implications local PE teacher training could have on participants' view on CPD. Secondly, the Collegially Eager I had sprung from a lack of collegiality in my full-time environment which led to a strong desire to seek connectivity with colleagues in PE-teaching. This subjective I was indeed one of the reasons why I had designed the research the way I did – using a qualitative approach with personal interview as the main data collection method. Moreover, the Collegially Eager I had led me to dwell on relational issues more intensely during interviews. I presumed that learning and teaching are activities that necessitate collegial efforts to flourish. Thirdly, the Professionalism Advocating I presumed that CPD is a key ingredient in ensuring physical educators' professionalism. In order to put the research participants' meaning ahead of my own, I guarded against judging participants' approach to CPD but rather focused on the

"what" and "how" in their CPD experience. My reflexivity, or the ability to acknowledge and use the above presumptions (Hopkins et al., 2017), had allowed me to temporarily suspend my judgements in gathering data (i.e. 'bracket' myself). I was able to curb or tame my subjectivity by acknowledging it in advance (Peshkin, 1988; Savage, 2007).

Power in discourse is always negotiated and built between parties involved in a social process (Thornborrow, 2002). Interviewees often perceive the interviewer as having more power (Anyan, 2013). All the teacher participants were cognizant of their rights to ask questions and their rights to share or withhold information as they wish in the process. The power dynamics which occurred in interviews was ever-present and importantly noted by me. For instance, I became aware of the respondents' wish to obtain more CPD-related information from me. Ostensibly, the respondents did so as a "countermeasure" to offset power asymmetry (Anyan, 2013, p. 2). Thus even when I had the "agenda setting power" in initiating questions as the interviewer, the power dynamics was not lopsided but shifted back and forth (Anyan, 2013, p. 3). I worked to maintain a healthy rapport with the respondents by offering to discuss issues not directly related to my data collection at another time. And I did talk to selected participants afterwards either in person or through email about further studies matters.

Trustworthiness of Findings

IPA acknowledges the capability of a phenomenological approach in examining an individual's experience which is of significant meaning to that individual. It is important to note that phenomenology is not about people's opinion (van Manen, 2014). A phenomenological investigation can be considered valid when it truly looks to explore and comprehend how a phenomenon is experienced through analysis conducted on "experientially descriptive accounts" rather than just opinions and beliefs (van Manen, 2014, p. 350).

My assumption in the study was that PE practitioners who had willingly chosen to take part in the study would also be willing to share their thoughts on and experiences in CPD related endeavors to a certain extent. Such assumption was not to say that all participants would actually choose to reveal all that they had in their mind and all that they experienced because individuals could behave intentionally and

unintentionally in the act of conversing. Also it is possible that individuals may choose to only reveal information that puts them in a favorable light (Lavrakas, 2008). Such tendency can be curbed if a high degree of trust is established between the researcher and the researched. Based on the participants' enthusiasm in the two rounds of interviews and their willingness to share verbally about personal collections, I judged that a reasonable amount of rapport and trust had been established for the main data collection through interviews.

Throughout the research process I had maintained regular conversations and shared my writings with two critical friends as a way to enhance research trustworthiness (Koo, 2002). One friend was a HE practitioner in a non-PE-related discipline while another was a long-time colleague in my university. These critical peers provided me with provocative comments and interrogations that assisted me in adhering to ethical research practices (e.g. mindful of not pressurizing research participants in revealing sensitive details in CPD experiences; Anyan, 2013) and open-minded analysis (e.g. purposely scheduled break time to attain a degree of "freshness" in analysis; Sanders, 2003, p. 296).

Moreover, by using two data collection methods and two data sources, I had enhanced the credibility of my research through triangulation (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The second round of interviews with the same participants also provided some triangulation effect (Merriam, 2009). "Member check" or respondent validation of the interview transcript also improved credibility (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In soliciting feedback on the translated verbatim transcripts from the interviewees, I had reduced the risk of misinterpreting the meanings and perspectives of the participants (Maxwell, 2005).

Researcher's integrity has been identified as a critical element influencing credibility of a qualitative research; and one way to illustrate researcher's integrity is to locate "data that support alternative explanations" (Patton, 2002, p. 553). Merriam (2009) refers this as "negative case analysis" (p. 219). A research participant's responses or experiences can deviate from the majority of evidence. For example, while six of the participants deemed that teaching is a professional line of work, one respondent indicated that he thought teaching is not professional. In my data analysis, such negative cases were highlighted and interpreted based on what the respondent revealed in the two interviews. Rather than going straight to conclude PE

practitioners' view on the teaching profession, I sought to demonstrate authentically what really made sense for the individual physical educators (Patton, 2002; Whitehead, 2004). By elaborating on the uncommon case, the reason for the more common cases can be reinforced (Hsiung, 2010).

Limitations

Limitations are matters and occurrences that arise in the research which are mostly out of the researcher's control (Simon & Goes, 2013). Limitations of the current study are three-fold. Firstly, language is a notable limitation of any studies conducted in non-English contexts. There were cases where different English terminologies could be used to translate an idea shared by the interviewee in Cantonese, and it was up to the researcher-translator to decide which exact English words to use to best convey the interviewee's meaning. And more likely than not, the participants' understanding and interpretation of certain English words may be different from mine. Through the process of member checking, a number of words in the transcript drafts had been amended upon participants' feedback. Nevertheless, I must acknowledge that I did not know whether the English medium had presented any difficulties to the participants' validation process.

Secondly, time was an inherent limitation to my research because the data that I gathered was specific to the research time frame. If I happened to interview a particular research participant right after she/he finished a CPD activity, the data might center on that particular single CPD experience more than otherwise. In addition, the subsequent data analyses and interpretations I made were also bound by a particular temporal background.

Thirdly, participants' willingness to gather and share CPD personal artifacts and CPD related documents was a limitation in the data collection methods. For instance, not all participants were equally motivated to dig out CPD related documents from their personal collection, and this had affected the richness of those documents as a data source.

Summary

In this chapter, I delineated on my epistemological inclination towards constructivism-interpretivism and explained why an interpretative phenomenological approach appealed to me as an approach to examining the lived experience of physical educators. By following footsteps of prior scholars who have embraced IPA, I

conducted data collection, analysis and interpretation systematically. I ensured proper ethical conduct by following strict guidelines as stipulated by relevant authorities and prioritizing the research participants' rights and privacy. I also took necessary steps to enhance the trustworthiness of the study. Despite a number of limitations to my research, I believe that I have arrived at some meaningful findings and insights which I will elaborate on in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 4: Findings

By means of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), the lived experience in CPD of seven PE practitioners from three universities were explored. In this chapter, three major themes that emerged from detailed analysis of the interview transcripts and the CPD-related documents will be reported. To contextualize findings for the main research question "How do PE practitioners experience CPD in Hong Kong's higher education?" I will first describe the participants' demographics and some key job-related observations of these university PE practitioners.

The Seven PE Practitioners

Biographical experience as a student has played a significant role in the participants' decision in entering the teaching profession. Six out of the seven participants stated explicitly that they were influenced by their secondary school PE teachers one way or another in deciding to become PE teachers themselves. Each of them being a sports lover, the physical educators all shared common goals of arousing student interests in taking part in physical activities and sports, in developing a healthier lifestyle, and in finding joy and satisfaction in performing physical skills. Among these goals for PE, the first two were in line with stated targets of the three researched universities, while the last one was a consensus among the researched participants.

The participants' age and years of work experience were interpreted as having some bearing on their CPD experiences, thus these factors are included in the Table 8 below. Age of the participants was only shown in broad ranges to maintain a degree of privacy:

Table 8: Age and years of work experience of research participants

Pseudonyms	Age Range	Work Yrs. in HE	Work Yrs. in Secondary School	Work Yrs. in Primary School	Work Yrs. in Other Settings
Addison	30 – 40	5	--	4	--
Chris	40 – 50	14.5	--	3	0.5
Eli	50 – 60	21	4	1	--
Jo	30 – 40	6	4	1	--
Mirror	30 – 40	8	--	--	1
Sunny	50 – 60	17	15	--	--
West	40 – 50	11	8	--	--

Having worked in more than one university was common among the seven

participants; six of them had work experiences in two HEIs. In terms of teaching, these educators carried out many different tasks: they illustrated and corrected movements, facilitated interactions, challenged thinking, observed, gave comments, and assessed students' performance. In addition, the PE practitioners also coached, managed sports teams, and organized student recreation activities. All seven research participants shouldered teaching and administrative duties while some also handled coaching chores for sports teams representing the university or student bodies. The job titles of these PE practitioners varied due to the functional units they belonged to: "PE Officers", "Lecturers", and "Student Services Manager". At least three of the participants stated explicitly that they either disliked or were not proficient in their administrative duties; they would prefer teaching over administrative work.

All the PE practitioners recognized that they were facing and dealing with young adults who had essentially acquired specific attitudes and orientations towards physical activity by the time they enter HE. The three universities in this study all had PE in their core curriculum; the physical educators concurred that many students they encountered regard PE simply as something that they must fulfil. Only a small proportion of students would develop a genuine interest in learning more about physical activities and knowledge related to sports, as Addison noted that the majority of students "pay attention to really the grade only at the end." Addison added that students do not necessarily appreciate teachers pushing them hard in developing better physical fitness and sports techniques since "physically they need to work hard in order to do well, but not many people are willing to give effort." This point was echoed by Eli. Such student mentality presented a challenge to physical educators in teaching: they must find ways to motivate those students who were not self-motivated to take part in their classes. That explains to a certain extent why Addison, Jo, and Chris found more satisfaction from their work in coaching sports teams in university or elsewhere. As Jo described, "I would spend time chatting with these students, about the sport, daily lives, as well as studies," thus she got to know students in a sports team on a deeper level.

Even though not often working collaboratively with other work units in the HE context, most PE practitioners acknowledged that colleagues from other departments appeared to respect their expertise in the field of PE and sports. But as Chris indicated, since senior management of the universities did not always put PE and

sports on the same par with other academic disciplines in terms of importance and resources allocation, he and his colleagues periodically endeavored "to bring those senior people to see sporting events…so that they would understand what sports is all about."

As the data analysis progressed, it became increasingly clear that the physical educators' work and CPD experiences were importantly shaped by whom and what they encountered in daily work. Adhering to the protocols of IPA, excerpts of the interview transcripts will be presented below to give authentic voices to the research participants. The three major themes emerged are: 1) realization of learning, 2) a person before a professional, and 3) navigating the work environment.

The findings under the first major theme relate firstly to the participants' perception of "how does learning take shape in PE practitioners' CPD?" and secondly "what motivates and deters PE practitioners to engage in CPD?"

Realization of Learning

All the PE practitioners engaged in both formal, structured and informal types of CPD throughout their teaching career, but not all of them linked the concept of continuing development with actual learning achieved while they were on the job. Under this theme, the word "realization" is used with a double meaning. First, it refers to the state of becoming aware of learning; and second, it refers to the achievement of learning desired or expected.

Under the first meaning, realization of learning implicates the scope of activities that the participants defined as CPD. Jo, among all participants, offered the broadest definition of CPD:

> Such as right now I am responsible more for administrative things…In every stage of your career, when you try to get things done better, and we act to make that happen, to me that is already continuing development.

To Jo, CPD was a step beyond problem-solving in the work context, i.e. getting things done better. While Jo was highly sensitive and reflective about the growth and development she was going through, findings below will reveal that the awareness of practitioners of their own learning had shown fluctuations across cases.

There are two sub-themes: 1) learning from individual peers, and 2) self-directed explorations, detailing what and how the PE practitioners gained through learning

from peers both inside and outside of work context, and how they behaved as self-directed learners.

Figure 3 below shows the major theme "Realization of Learning" and the two sub-themes.

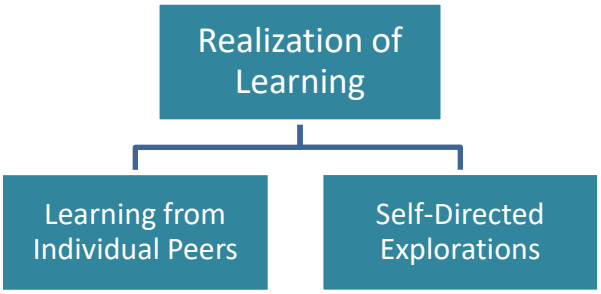


Figure 3. Major theme: Realization of learning

Learning from Individual Peers

Learning from peers, especially non-work peers, emerged as a practical channel for professional learning and development among most of the PE practitioners. Gathering insights from fellow coaches in the sports arena was common for the five participants with coaching work. Jo, Addison, Eli, and Chris explicitly shared stories where they gathered considerable knowledge and insights just by observing a skillful coach or athlete performing a specific sports technique (e.g. speed, force, angle, and flow of the movements involved). These learning episodes demonstrated an awareness of such learning possibilities and sensitivity to potentially useful information.

Illustratively, Addison gained valuable discovery and clarification of his own understanding of a training approach from an informal sharing session with a Chinese national athletics coach:

> I think I have learned something; and I have also tried some stuff. I have discovered that my direction is correct. Perhaps I have had similar thinking before, but fairly vague, so vague that it was impractical, and I did not know how to carry it out. But after listening to him, and I put the ideas together and I achieved a clearer picture.

Even though the expertise of the national team coach was in long-jump rather than Addison's specialty high-jump, Addison posited that the two events actually have a lot in common and therefore same training principles could apply. This demonstrates that Addison's thorough understanding of his own specialty had enabled him to see commonalities across athletic events. Such cognizance could come from Addison's

previous experience in decathlon (i.e. an athletic event consisting of ten track and field events). Knowledge and experience in different track and field events had enhanced Addison's sensitivity to learning related to his high-jump expertise.

More importantly, Addison's realization of learning (i.e. obtaining desired insights for his training) occurred not during the face-to-face encounter with the coach but afterwards. After the informal sharing session, Addison did further explorations; he researched on the Internet for the materials shared by that Chinese national coach. And in reviewing all the resources he found, he became more knowledgeable and more convinced about what he thought was correct:

> Actually I spent more time afterwards digging on related information because he had mentioned certain books and certain individuals, so I went to search on those…so I feel that it was in the last few months that I got lots of materials into my pockets.

The initial learning from peers had subsequently led to further, and prolonged SDL which eventually led to valuable insights for Addison. The intricacy and interconnectedness of different pathways for learning was realized by Addison. Judging from the way Addison recollected and shared his story, I interpreted that his awareness was only validated during the interview process. In sharing his learning experience with the researcher, Addison was presented with an opportunity to analyze and assess his own previous learning more concretely. As a result, Addison became more aware of his own post-event learning and he had thus achieved meta-cognition about his learning behaviors. As success tends to fuel passion, it is likely that Addison would continue to be enthusiastic about future CPD opportunities as they would present a probability of potential valuable insights.

In contrast, Chris appeared to be much less conscious of the significance of his learning from peers. Chris considered himself proficient in a number of sports skills, but he was missing some important ingredients when first started teaching at university. As Chris put it, "I did not have the knowledge of breaking skills down to let's say, eight to ten classes. I can handle the hitting strokes, but I was lacking what I could do for exact contents in a class." So Chris sought help from his colleagues; and he attended a colleague's class to observe how the colleague went about conducting a session. These steps that Chris made were very tangible on-the-job training or, an induction for him. He would not have been able to conduct his classes successfully

without such learning of pedagogy from his peers, but Chris did not quite consider such learning a type of CPD:

> …it was not formalized and it was not under pressure. And you do not get a certificate or something concrete…It is however helpful in structuring your mind in how you teach in a class, the procedures and all. I think it is a form of further development, but I think it is a little abstract.

Chris's concept of learning and CPD appeared to be narrow and rigid as compared to Jo's and Addison's. To Chris, a physical certificate was a "concrete," "formalized" way to demonstrate learning that he had gained. The above excerpt reflects some ambiguity in Chris's concept and purposes of CPD. Meanwhile, Chris' association of CPD with not just formalization but also with "pressure" was not unique. Mirror also associated great stress to a specific kind of CPD strategy:

> … I don't think I need it, I don't need it. And I would not want others to observe my teaching, so I would not go to observe others neither. Each individual would have his or her own methods in teaching, in observing another person you may end up learning that individual's ways, and not developing your own ways….[…] I think observation would create tremendous pressure.

Mirror's distaste for peer observation as a CPD approach was almost to the point of fear; just discussing it brought a sense of unease in her response. This indicates that Mirror had considerable insecurities about her own teaching practice. Also, Mirror appeared to have completely forgotten that when she initially started her job in university teaching, she once observed a colleague's fitness class and that helped to orient her work. It was possible that Mirror's perception and appreciation of peer observation had changed over the years. The above quote also suggests that Mirror might not be experiencing a very collegial working culture at the time. Nonetheless, for both Chris and Mirror, learning from peers served as an essential in-service CPD pathway early on in their teaching career.

Comparatively, West took advantage of peer observation more regularly than Chris and Mirror. West attended her colleague's yoga classes every now and then to upkeep her own skills in yoga:

> Sometimes when I have a class, she would come to attend and participate in my class. Taking lessons and teaching a lesson are two different things. When you are teaching, you cannot practice the moves with full concentration. So,

occasionally I would go to her classes too.

In the process of teaching, West identified her CPD needs. As importantly argued by West, full concentration on techniques may be difficult to achieve when the role of a teacher is assumed. Through the reciprocal arrangement, West noted that both she and her colleague benefited from ongoing sharpening of skills in both execution and instruction. West explicitly acknowledged that she and this one colleague of hers enjoyed good working and social relationships, and thus they were fine with sitting-in in each other's classes. This implies that West values trust and good relationships among work colleagues but those qualities were hard to come by. Indeed, on the whole, interactions with work colleagues for the purpose of learning were actually uncommon among the seven participants.

In addition, group endeavors as in an organized learning community for CPD were rare in the PE practitioners' experience. One borderline case would be West's example. West had travelled to mainland China with a group of her colleagues for a training program on tennis skills. It was one of West's more seasoned colleagues who initiated the planning and organization for the trip. Even though West's colleagues had developed the pattern of going for sports training together annually, there seemed to be no systematic effort in relating what they learned from the training to their work at the university. There was no critical reflection (e.g. teaching journal entries reflecting on attempts in new pedagogy) and no follow-up action (e.g. analysis on changes in teachers' knowledge or learning outcomes of students) resulting from their sports skill training. So strictly speaking the endeavor was not a formalized learning community. Nevertheless, the self-initiated nature of the above group based CPD activity was unique among the researched cases.

Finally, learning from peers sometimes happened in an unplanned manner, such as Jo's observing a peer's undesirable way of handling work conflicts involving colleagues: "In such a process of talking to the senior colleague, I am already learning how to handle things in a more productive way. I have learned that saying things in certain ways would upset the junior colleague." Jo's manner in sharing the above relayed a sense of pride and achievement – Jo was pleased that she was able to seek out things that she could learn from daily encounters with others.

Learning from peers had benefited the PE practitioners regardless of their awareness of the significance of their learning. For those practitioners with a broader

definition of CPD, they recognized and acknowledged what they had learned more clearly and explicitly. But even for those perceiving CPD in a narrower sense, they still gained important and practical tips for their job, especially in their early teaching career.

Self-directed Explorations

When an individual goes about exploring a topic or task without formal instruction from another person, but with an aim to acquire certain new knowledge or skills, self-directed learning (SDL) has occurred. For the PE practitioners, the process of SDL sometimes involved reference materials such as videos, reference books or articles, and websites, but sometimes it also occurred without such materials and only implicated previous experience and knowledge of the practitioner.

Addison illustrated his "reflection-on-action" through his hands-on self-directed exploration in enhancing high-jump techniques:

> I think there would not be only one way of doing things. It might be hard to compare which way is better sometimes...Then it might be that you should be doing different things at different times. So it really needs to be tested out, which one works better under which circumstances. So I aim to try many different approaches.

As Addison deemed that different approaches to training could fit different circumstances, he was motivated to explore the best combinations. This urge of trying different things out were shared by other participants (i.e. Eli, Chris, and Jo), so a convergence of SDL behaviors is evident.

Addison assumed both the roles of a coach and an athlete simultaneously for himself and the role of a coach when he was training his students. His SDL could potentially benefit not just himself but also the students he trained. As such, it was likely that Addison had experienced different sources of motivation for CPD – striving to improve his students' and his own sports performances.

A genuine interest in and liking of a sports activity were strong impetuses for the participants to engage in SDL. For participants who are competitive athletes, mastery-oriented goals appeared to critically enhance their intrinsic motivation. In the case of Addison, it was mainly high-jump; but for Eli, it was table-tennis, swimming, basketball, running, windsurfing and more. By piecing together Eli's descriptions on

his various sports learning and training episodes, I was able to come to the tentative conclusion that Eli had to rely more on SDL in enhancing his skills because it would be virtually impossible for him to go for formal, instructional CPD for all his sports interests all the time.

A clear indication that Eli had long been adopting a SDL mode was the extensive and comprehensive hand-written notes he had accumulated over the years, i.e. personal artifacts he shared during the second interview. Attempting to capture insights and discoveries through various professional activities, Eli had developed a habit of jotting notes on physical skills, techniques, and sports game strategies over the last decade or so. This act was initiated solely by Eli and had been sustained over a long period of time. Such persistent behavior would not be possible without intrinsic motivation. Eli had also been watching YouTube clips, writing down notes and gathering valuable understandings. Eli expressed a sense of achievement of himself and also strong respect for his contemporary sports experts:

> …those who made the clips also went to great lengths in preparing the footage…They went to such great lengths in making them, I should not be wasting their effort. They have analyzed all those key points for you. That really takes accumulation of many years of experience to achieve. They wrote the summary and if you don't even write that down, it would be disappointing those behind the clips.

Eli managed to turn watching YouTube videos from a one-way, superficial type of communication into a more active and engaged type of learning. The above extract suggests that Eli was putting himself into the shoes of those sports experts behind the YouTube clips. Exploration in the mass media can be time-consuming, Eli projected his own dedication and investment (in time and effort) in honing sports techniques onto his YouTube viewing experience. He did not want to "disappoint" the sports experts he was learning from, just like he did not want his own students to disappoint him. I arrived at this interpretation because as noted earlier, Eli found that not many students were willing to train hard for improving physical skills. Eli might not have experienced much control over his students' learning behaviors but he had control on his own. The acts of regular notes-taking of learning points and also his analysis of YouTube videos fulfilled his desire of a deeper type of learning and a desire to connect with like-minded peers and sports experts elsewhere.

On the one hand, Eli shared a relatively narrow concept of CPD similar to Chris'. Even when he had all this hard evidence (i.e. his pile of hand-written notes), he disagreed that he had kept busy in further developing himself as he proclaimed, "No! I have not attended that many courses actually. Some people were far more proactive than I am." On the other hand, Eli had long since established his self-directed mode of continual explorations on various sports skills. This just goes to show that even within a single physical educator, the degree of realization of learning could vary depending on the exact nature of the CPD activity as perceived by the practitioners, or in other words, how CPD was defined in their mind.

Across all narratives, the PE practitioners recognized reading as a self-directed form of CPD, particularly for the purposes of updating oneself and preparing for a class. Mirror shared that whenever she got assigned in teaching a new course, she had to spend considerable time in preparation:

> …each course would be different, so I need to prepare specifically for certain aims. I have a base, but I could not remember all the details, things left unused would be cast aside. You have to dig out stuff from memories and read further on different materials.

Reading acted as an important strategy of retrieving prior knowledge for Mirror. Mirror acknowledged that learning from the past would not suffice new demands. This cognizance and acknowledgement of teaching needs importantly preceded Mirror's subsequent learning activities. Mirror was motivated to read new materials and build on her previous knowledge. Mirror considered such SDL a must in preparing to teach and she did not think any CPD programs or courses would be helpful in enhancing her ability to teach other than those enhancing her subject-content knowledge. Such thinking suggests that Mirror regarded subject content as the main or even the sole focus in her teaching-learning endeavors. And this may have implications on the nature and types of CPD activities that Mirror would lean towards.

Meanwhile, West also engaged in reading as she went about her daily teaching:

> In the case of yoga, as I write teaching materials, as I conduct classes, as I read books and other stuff, I find that there is truly a lot to learn…It is not only a sport, it is also a life philosophy and thinking.

West was motivated to learn even more after engaging in SDL because she surmised the potential of more learning, including knowledge beyond sports. West's continual

SDL in yoga had indeed generated further desire in upgrading her knowledge in yoga (i.e. learning from peers, going for further formal yoga certification training) as she affirmed. So again, SDL as intertwined with other forms of CPD (i.e. learning) was illustrated.

While selected PE practitioners were shown to struggle with realizing their learning through CPD under the first major theme, they were all quite frank in admitting that personal considerations featured heavily in their CPD-related decisions. The second major theme captures findings in this regard.

A Person before a Professional

Based on the participants' sharing, individual factors such as addressing personal interests and grappling with one's physical conditions featured more prominently than professional factors in PE practitioners' decision in CPD activities. While the PE practitioners were eager to establish professional credibility (a sub-theme which will be discussed under the third major theme), they were more often and initially motivated by personal interests in CPD choices. Moreover, physical demands of certain CPD activities appeared to have significant bearings on CPD-related decisions.

There are two sub-themes under this major theme: 1) integrating interests, and 2) a changed(ing) body. Findings under this major theme addressed the two research sub-questions "What motivates and deters PE practitioners to engage in CPD?" and "How do PE practitioners handle challenges encountered in CPD?" Figure 4 below shows the major theme "A person before a professional" and the two sub-themes.

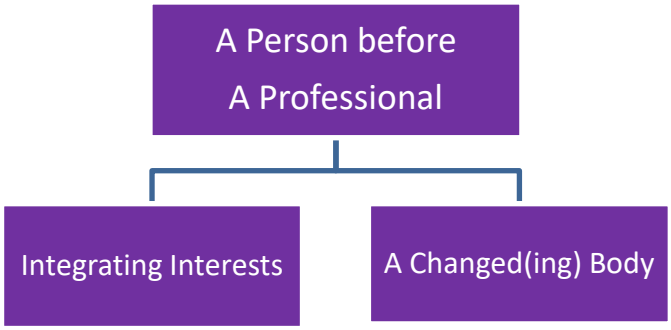


Figure 4. Major theme: A person before a professional

Integrating Interests

All participants agreed that CPD endeavors were a highly personal matter. There

were no strict rules on the nature and amount of CPD activities an in-service staff must fulfill each year except for newly recruited staff. This was confirmed by data gathered from the CPD related documents collected.

Other than family concerns and job-specific demands, personal interests had served as an important determinant to the practitioners' decisions regarding CPD. The participants had either knowingly or otherwise aligned their personal and professional interests; in a couple of cases, they rationalized why they had chosen the types of CPD the way they did retrospectively. In terms of CPD programs of a hands-on nature, Eli, Mirror, and West had knowingly followed their personal favorite sports and topics. Eli had chosen to train with a personal coach in table-tennis, Mirror had focused on dance, while West enrolled in a nutrition course because of personal concern in weight management:

> I wanted to enroll because for one thing, I would like to learn how to lose weight…[snickers…] And we have fitness training courses, and we would talk about nutrition information, also sometimes in yoga courses too, we would touch on nutrition because many students would like to lose weight and keep fit.

West was snickering at her own statement out of embarrassment. But she was forthright in admitting that the key reason why she wanted to take the nutrition course was her personal wish to learn how to lose weight as she enthusiastically highlighted contents in the training manual she received from the program. Here the CPD personal artifact – yoga training manual – helped to illuminate the emotional aspect of West's learning vividly. West argued that the nutrition knowledge she gained would also come in handy when she taught classes in the university. That latter rationale was, however, more like an add-on to support her choice of CPD program. Since West's personal desire to learn something useful for herself came before her consideration of potential benefit to her full-time work, she felt the need to justify her CPD choice. West was rationalizing her CPD choice by aligning and integrating her personal and professional interests retrospectively.

As for Mirror, she had done some dancing on and off ever since her primary school years, so she was following that interest initially when she first started out as a physical educator in HE. As a combined result of job necessity and personal interest, Mirror had gradually developed a focus on aerobic dance as a rhythmic fitness activity. Her personal interest in dance had morphed to become her work interests. I

was surprised to learn Mirror's story since it bears an uncanny resemblance to mine. I only developed an interest in aerobic dance after I began working in HE. While I continued to pursue my dance passion with sporadic performances, Mirror basically stopped her engagement with other forms of dance due to prioritization of family and job-related needs. My personal knowledge of dance focused activities had led me to interpret Mirror's choosing as a compromise.

Eli has always enjoyed sports training and competition; and he argued that the finer details of sports techniques can never be learned through a DVD or from reading a book; and he had chosen private coaching as his form of CPD in selected sports techniques. The flexibility of private coaching in table-tennis had also enabled him to bring his sons along to training and this added an extra overtone of personal interest in Eli's CPD endeavors. Since Eli had so many different sports interests, he strived to allocate his time strategically otherwise he might risk losing touch with his family. Furthermore, since Eli's wife also liked sports, Eli had once brought his entire family to a racket sports tournament overseas. Eli strived to integrate his personal interests together with professional interests. Simultaneously addressing both sets of interests appeared to be important to Eli.

Personal interests also featured prominently in academic pursuit for Chris, Jo, and Sunny. Chris' initiative in approaching a study supervisor for his master's degree went like this: "I kind of jumped a step; as I became interested in this topic [i.e. nasal dilator] and I had searched on others' studies from Hong Kong on this topic, I discovered that he had supervised another student before on the same topic." Chris showed evident excitement as he described his self-initiated action in emailing the potential supervisor well before official program registration. Addressing his desire to study at the time and tending to his personal interest obviously left a lasting impression for Chris, as he marveled at his own self-initiative in learning during the interview.

Jo, on the other hand, had quite a different impression of her first master's degree. She was led to work on a topic related to shoes which was not something that particularly interested her, but she acknowledged that "sometimes those things you are interested in may not match the research gap." And through her M.Phil. studies, Jo discovered that she could not bear long laboratory works. She resented having to do so much laboratory work, especially working on a topic that she was not particularly

fond of. Having thought really long and hard and dug deep in self-reflection, she decided to do a second master's degree in sports medicine – a subject that was much closer to her personal interest of medicine. It was only in her second master's degree that Jo was able to address her personal interest more successfully. Both Jo and Eli did two master's degrees but their motives of doing so differed. Jo was aiming to address her personal interest more directly while Eli was essentially trying to enhance his competitiveness in the job market.

In sum, having opportunities to address their personal interests in specific sports skills and further study topics provided a range of different motives for the participants to engage in CPD. Changes that occurred in the physical body due to injuries or aging, on the other hand, emerged as a uniquely different kind of motivation for CPD among the practitioners.

A Changed(ing) Body

In teaching and coaching tasks, the PE practitioners noted that they typically performed physical demonstrations. Selected participants, for instance Eli, recognized that there are general expectations within and also outside the field of PE that physical educators should be physically fit. In order to enhance professional life, all PE practitioners worked hard in caring for their bodies. For those who had suffered the agony of physical injuries or illnesses, grappling with the changed, and changing, conditions of the body turned out to be challenging yet necessary.

Sunny learned the hard way that she must let go of some of the things she was hanging on to as she found herself struggling in conducting her doctoral research:

> I had in fact, thought about quitting. Right, right. And then I got sick later. And my sickness was due to a number of factors. One had to do with hormones. And then there was work stress. My kids were getting older, and they had to face public exams and grade exams. […] So it was all these things adding up.

Sunny was unable to handle all those competing priorities concurrently and her body eventually crumbled. The fight with serious sickness had led Sunny to re-examine her priorities and she was forced to suspend her doctoral studies for a period of time. Sunny had relied on her religious faith in fighting off her illness: "When I fell sick, except for the physical pains in the body, I really enjoyed the break. I thought, since I did not take a break voluntarily, God is asking me to break now." Her thoughts of quitting subsided after carefully considering implications for her supervisors (i.e.

poor records and reputation). When Sunny initially decided to begin doctoral studies, she was strongly encouraged by her work supervisor, so she was also externally motivated to endure and persevere in her unforgiving study journey. So it follows that Sunny was not particularly excited about completing her Ph.D.: "I did not think it was something to be proud of…I felt I had persevered...I do not feel that I have become smarter…" Knowing the context under which Sunny got started on doctoral studies helped me to understand how she attributed her decision of not quitting even when she felt so sick. Although Sunny never used the word "disappointed" to describe her doctoral studies experience, her disappointment could be discerned from her narrative quite strongly.

For a few other physical educators, they experienced acute and overuse injuries in their quest for better sports techniques. The risk of getting injured became an increasingly serious concern the longer the practitioners stayed in the profession. Understandably, dealing with sports injuries takes patience and care. Some participants found themselves not having the fortitude to wait for full recovery:

> Perhaps at that time I did not know how to really take good care of the injury, or I felt it was not that serious; the recovery took quite a long time…after the sprain, almost recovered, just when I could resume training and jumping a little bit higher, I sprained it again [snickers…].

Addison laughed at himself for not having known better, and for not having waited longer before he resumed training. As a result of that second sprain, Addison's high-jump ability was compromised for almost two years. From the way Addison spoke about his incident, two years was perceived to be a long time for him. Addison's injuries had led him to take caring for his body more seriously. He began to focus more on strengthening his muscles to protect himself against injury. Addison came to terms with his repeated injuries and gradually refrained from doing full-out demonstrations in coaching high-jump at university. Addison's ability to reflect on his injuries and laugh about it is an indication that Addison had accepted his changed body.

Similarly, Jo also experienced repeated injuries like Addison but her second injury came after a surgery. Jo first injured her knee right before she graduated from her M.Phil. studies:

> I was scheduled to compete the next day, and then it was also around the time I

had to submit the paper, the thesis. And I told my friend that I was feeling really tired and also mentally I felt a lot of pressure.

Jo was feeling tired from all the laboratory work she had done and the writing of the thesis paper for the M.Phil. degree. Jo's friend indeed warned her against playing under such highly stressed conditions. Finally, she ended up tearing her anterior cruciate ligament at the knee. Jo then underwent surgery and refrained from playing volleyball for one year. Due to her impatience and strong desire to play again, she injured herself again. Jo deemed that the pressure from her M.Phil. studies might have some bearing on her first injury, but she did not think that her involvement in studying had affected her sports performance negatively as she maintained "Hm… No, not really, not really. I don't think those things were related; it was just due to my low ability." Both volleyball playing and studying for a master's degree were forms of CPD to Jo. It appeared that Jo tried not to associate the negative aspects (i.e. time and energy intensive) of these two forms of CPD endeavors together. Thus, she tried to attribute her injuries solely to her own physical inadequacy and not blaming the pressure from her master's studies.

Eli was also no stranger to physical injuries as he struggled with a bony spur at his heel for a decade, he recently and finally decided to undergo surgery. He really hesitated about doing surgery some years ago: "I asked the doctor whether I could still run after the surgery. He told me 'One hundred percent that you could walk'." That prognosis from the doctor had led Eli to procrastinate his decision in having surgery on his bony spur. Instead Eli had tried numerous treatment modalities to alleviate his physical pain for ten years. Based on that knowledge I could interpret Eli's perception of the weightiness of the decision of having surgery as extremely high. Just like Addison and Jo, it was very important for Eli that he could come back from injuries. Being able to compete and take part in sports at an advanced level constituted part of the professional and personal identity of these physical educators. They sought to re-affirm their long-held views of themselves as quickly as possible because psychologically a lot was at stake in both the personal and professional perspectives.

In addition to injury, aging also alters the body and it could make physical educators more susceptible to injuries. The PE practitioners were mindful of their bodily changes. Coming to terms with the decreasing capability of the body was difficult for Eli, as he found himself dumbfounded one day:

> I had to sit down, in the middle of the sea to rest a bit. In earlier years, I didn't have to do that, no. […] Before it was like going out and returning and then reaching home you would then feel tired. But this time, very tired. My arm was limp; I could not hold on to the sail. It was fairly windy that time. And it was cold too. I felt a lack of strength…tsk! I began to truly feel that time stops for nobody.

Eli vividly compared how he felt in his changed body with how he felt in the past. He tried to reason and explain his lack of strength under the "windy" and "cold" conditions. Eli was both disappointed and annoyed as he realized that his muscular strength and endurance had deteriorated considerably over time. He was not impressed but acknowledged that he must adjust his exercise patterns and competition choices so that he could prolong sports participation, similar to what Addison did. In the process of coming to terms of his declining physical prowess, Eli managed to gain inspiration and motivation for further learning:

> …because you have the strength, or like we have the body weight, and we would just force it. […] But for those ladies, they do not have the strength, so they must find the most optimal angle in order to surf alright…so that inspired me that I must strive towards techniques and aim for enhancement that way.

Finally, the choice of CPD programs was also influenced and/or limited by the physical conditions of the physical educators. Sunny had contemplated on different CPD programs offered by fitness related organizations and she noted that for some programs, participants "have to be fit to enroll" but she recognized that she was not fit anymore. Sunny used to compete in sprints and long-jump when younger. Now Sunny confessed that she was not motivated to train physically because she believed no matter how hard she trained, she would not see great results. Age and the subsequent changes in the body had become a demotivating factor to Sunny's engagement in intense physical training as a form of CPD. Sunny no longer had a lot of confidence in her physical ability – diminishing teacher self-efficacy in the physical sense. Ostensibly, the previous ordeal with serious illness also added to Sunny's feeling of vulnerability.

The PE practitioners' concerns and struggles with physical conditions of their bodies had affected their approach to further CPD in significant ways. They became more motivated to explore alternative ways to prolong and enhance their physical

well-being and sports skills. Such endeavors had led selected practitioners to new CPD directions. But for one participant, the bodily changes due to illness and aging had deterred her in pursuing CPD programs that are physically demanding.

The third and final major theme implicates the HE work environment and expectations of those people the participants encountered in work.

Navigating the Work Environment

All seven participants had five years or more HE working experience, presumably they were not novices trying to fit into university culture. However, the expectations that came with working in HE continued to exert pressure, and thus also brought an external source of stimulation and motivation for the participants to engage in CPD. Based on the participants' stories, the interpersonal relationships with colleagues and supervisors also presented significant deterrents and obstacles to their CPD endeavors. This major theme provides insights mainly to the question "how do PE practitioners handle challenges encountered in CPD?" and the three sub-themes are 1) seeking professional credibility, 2) being mindful of colleagues, and 3) missing guidance and support. Figure 5 below shows the major theme "Navigating the Work Environment" and the three sub-themes.

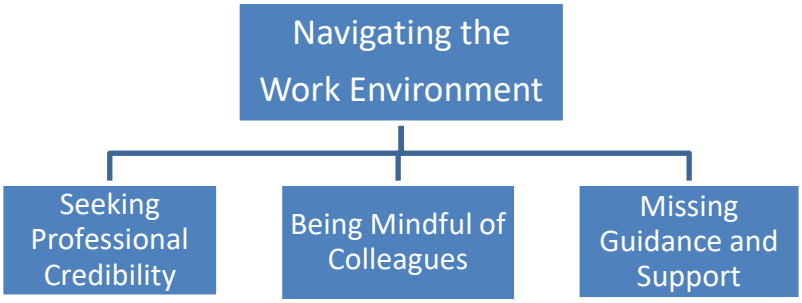


Figure 5. Major theme: Navigating the work environment

Seeking Professional Credibility

All participants consistently looked for ways to convince themselves, students, and all those they came into contact with that they were competent HE practitioners. In terms of convincing work associates, Sunny offered a pragmatic way of looking at academic credentials:

> When you go out for presentations, or when you are being introduced as a person-in-charge of your program, if you have Ph.D., then people are more

> convinced. If you asked me, I don't think you become much smarter. But it really does bring convenience to my job.

Sunny did not perceive that she had grown much intellectually by studying for a Ph.D. She deemed, however, that the higher academic credentials had made her work as a HE practitioner easier. While Sunny was the only research participant with a doctoral degree in this study, Eli and Addison also shared similar views on how their master's credentials helped to make them more credible as university practitioners.

But when it comes to how daily work in university benefited from their efforts in further studies, Eli did not hide his frustrations: "Tsk! I deemed that the benefits were too small. And all the stuff that I learned actually I do not get to apply it much in my classes." The disapproving sound Eli made in the above quote reflected the emotional response aroused in him when he spoke on the topic. Despite the fact that Eli had completed his master's degree some 17 years ago, he reacted with such an emotional undertone. This suggests that Eli's frustration towards this aspect of his master's studies experience had never been resolved. He elaborated further, "In teaching required PE, you just don't go measuring VO_2 max with students, right?! There aren't any chances and it would not make any sense to talk to them about those anyway." To Eli, the teaching of compulsory PE involves essentially physical drills and practices; thus, theoretical information seems unhelpful. Practitioners like Eli and Sunny acknowledged that higher academic credentials help to enhance their credibility as HE practitioners on the surface, they also looked to other forms of CPD to establish credibility in their teaching endeavors.

All PE practitioners attested to wanting to demonstrate to students that they were knowledgeable and proficient in their subject area. Eli described how he endeavored to convince his students:

> Boys may challenge a teacher. If they realize that you don't know the stuff but are just buffing, then they may make troubles in class…[…] But if they know that you are knowledgeable, they would not act like that. So that's why knowledge in technical skills is important, especially when we are teaching compulsory PE.

Eli noted that the above was true especially when the students involved were highly skilled athletes. Eli is highly competitive when it comes to sports. Knowing that he might never truly be on par with student-athletes who trained full-time in terms of

physical performance, he strived to out-perform his students in concepts and theories behind the technical skills. Eli proudly declared, "I'd say to them, 'I learn from you, but you also learn something from me too'. They could perform certain skills, but they do not understand why." Presumably, such exchanges with students were foreshadowed by mutual respect, and thus would be helpful in enriching the teaching-learning experience. Eli's regular contact with students with advanced sports skills had motivated him to continually upgrade his sports knowledge.

Moreover, Eli had repeated experiences in being challenged by sports-loving colleagues from other departments:

> Staff members from other departments, they specialize in one event only. Let's say he is into tennis and he plays four times per week. He would not care about or discuss details with you, as long as he could beat you... They are eager to compete against us, they really like to… So it is important to, for personal reasons as well as to protect the professional esteem, keep certain level of skills…[…]…we cannot slack off.

Eli interpreted that non-PE colleagues in the university had certain expectations on the level of physical skills of PE practitioners. For him, it is crucial that he could demonstrate his competence in sporting skills in front of these colleagues so as to establish his professional credibility. This reflects that views and attitudes of various stakeholders in the HE could have influence on how a PE practitioner sees and treats her/his CPD.

Similar to Eli's work ethics, Addison believed that education by role-modeling is important, and that had motivated his continual participation in local and regional athletic competitions, as he sought to back up his preaching with concrete actions. Making reference to the 110 pieces of competition numbered cloths he shared as CPD artifacts, Addison explained:

> Right now, what I aim to do is to portray myself as a role model. The way I have continually participated in sports, I am saying to them that you could do it too. It does not matter if you just aim to keep fit, or go competitive; either way is possible as long as you are willing to put in effort.

Even though Addison did not start collecting competition numbered cloths (as evidence) on purpose, I could sense that he was proud of his own sporting achievement from his speaking manner. His sporting achievement was one of his

powerful ways to be "a role model" and to demonstrate professional credibility.

West and Eli both noted that university students often did not acknowledge the good teaching performance and efforts of their PE teachers when they filled in end-of-semester teaching evaluations. Still Addison, along with Jo, attested to feeling tremendously happy when they got "to see them [the students] through the years and see their progress in achieving certain things." Students' learning outcomes, as in enhanced physical performance that could be seen and assessed by the physical educators, did provide a source of motivation for some practitioners to advance their professional performance.

Due to a change in job, Jo had to acclimatize to a new culture in her work environment. The students in her current job are not as elite-oriented in sporting achievement as in her previous university as Jo described:

> As an educator myself, I want to see students with confidence…I once said to them 'Hey, I think you guys have got a chance in this match…' but they responded with like a 'Sigh!' I feel that all along they have been bearing a lot of negative feedback, because they kept losing non-stop. So I reflected, is it really necessary that I send you out to lose?

Being unable to deliver students with positive learning experience bothered Jo because it disrupts her sense of professional credibility; and that triggered her thinking and action. Jo went on to plan a pre-season orientation session to facilitate students' goal setting. Jo actively sought ways to address the inadequacy she spotted in her work endeavors.

Chris, among all participants, experienced a different type of motivation for his CPD. Chris was the only participant who did not regard PE teaching as professional. Revealingly, Chris talked of witnessing very unprofessional behaviors from a lecturer in his bachelor study experience. While listening to Chris, I got the impression that his past experience as a student-learner had significantly impacted on his view of the teaching profession and also perhaps how he saw himself as a teacher. In fact, Chris shared that,

> I do not feel that I am very professional, but I do not feel that I am incapable. Or even I am incapable, I would find ways to make it easier for myself…[…] So I could feel more at ease and that's how I could convince myself.

In order to be credible and convincing to others, Chris first aimed to establish

credibility to himself. At times, Chris said he would study late into the night to prepare for classes. This suggests that Chris was motivated by a desire to avoid becoming or repeating the poor example of teaching he witnessed and experienced first-hand as a student in the past. By engaging in SDL, Chris could achieve a sense of "ease" inside.

Being Mindful of Colleagues

The PE practitioners all worked quite independently on a daily basis, a scarcity of professional dialogues was evident based on what had been shared. West indicated that increasingly she felt the distance among colleagues had been growing due to a change in departmental meetings frequency, a decision which was made by her current work leader. West noted that she and her colleagues seemed to be working "in some kind of a secret agency," not knowing what each other was working on. West's use of the metaphor "secret agency" highlights a sense of isolation that West was experiencing within her work environment. Although in an earlier extract we learned that West enjoyed a trusting relationship with one colleague, the "secret agency" metaphor here revealed a different glimpse of the work climate West was perceiving.

Similarly, Addison also indicated that he and his colleagues tended to work quite independently and separately as they "… only work together when big events are being organized, … may not even see each other all that much really." Ostensibly, the lack of regular contact and the subsequent distancing feeling would make communication and thus understanding among colleagues more difficult for these practitioners.

Despite infrequent contacts with their colleagues, the PE practitioners all noted that their professional life was influenced by their colleagues to a certain extent. Most of the participants were mindful of views and relative CPD engagement of their colleagues. West deemed that her coworkers were more active in upgrading themselves as she opined that "They are all quite professional in their respective areas. And I think I am quite behind here. That's why I often have thoughts about further studies. I feel I am a bit behind." So professionally, West felt that she had not been doing enough or as much as her peers; and such feelings had led her to consider what steps she could take in order to catch up. But we would see later from another extract that West actually was not seriously thinking about doing further studies.

Mirror had also been comparing herself against her colleagues, as she described

"Staff colleagues at that time were fairly aggressive…So I felt that I could not just sit there." She further argued that she was lacking a "specialty" as a physical educator:

> They all have some ball games as their specialty, or a particular sport as specialty. Sometimes, people would say that fitness could not be regarded as a specialty. [*chuckles awkwardly*][…] When people ask me what my specialty is, I would not know what to say.

In Mirror's opinion, "people" as in PE peers in HE, would not regard fitness training as a specialty; but when probed further, she noted that she had not actually heard others' specific comments per se, and it was her own thoughts and view on the issue. Due to Mirror's perception however, she was unsure of her professional identity as a physical educator among colleagues in HE:

> In the university, you could not tell people that you are a group fitness class instructor. […] If I were to tell others in the commercial setting that I am teaching this kind of classes, they would think that it is very high-level stuff. It is quite an odd feeling.

Mirror argued that the kind of tasks that she was doing may be considered highly professional in a commercial setting but not so within the university – and that is what Mirror perceived. In switching from a commercial setting (i.e. her first full-time job) to an educational setting, Mirror had brought along her previous understanding of what constitutes a professional. Mirror thus found herself navigating through "odd" feelings after she began to work in the HE environment.

Among all participants, Chris appeared to be most concerned about colleagues' views when it comes to CPD related issues. Chris tried not to discuss his CPD endeavors with his peers unless the situation necessitated it:

> Maybe it's just my invertedness. It's fine for people to come to me and chat about these if they want, but if I approach someone and start talking, it would be kind of like bragging about it. Or as if you are showing off, now you have got the chance to go and do this and this.

Chris expressed concerns multiple times throughout the two interviews that he was unsure of his colleagues' views on his actions and opportunities in work related and CPD related endeavors. He appeared to be especially fretful when he said:

> I think this world is quite evil…there are many different people who would talk behind your back. […] …people could say whatever they want, and you would

not know what could happen. This in a way constitutes a type of pressure that I am facing now frankly.

Possibly due to a specific CPD credential that Chris had earned some years ago, he was able to secure his current job. He was worried that his peers might speculate on why his job position matched his previous CPD engagement so well. Similar to Mirror's worries, Chris had actually never heard his colleagues giving nasty comments directly or indirectly, but still he was feeling the pressure from his worries.

The interview extracts above highlighted a considerable degree of apprehension that these PE practitioners were experiencing as they endeavored to grow professionally. The pattern of being mindful of colleagues' views and actions in CPD was evident even though what each individual physical educator experienced was not exactly the same. The PE practitioners made social comparison between themselves and their colleagues, they experienced pressure and worries because they perceived colleagues' feedback as negative. They were second-guessing their peers because they lacked habitual professional dialogues with their colleagues. The frowns on faces (i.e. Addison, West) and stress (i.e. Chris, Mirror) in the participants' voices hinted at why they had not ventured out to proactively seek for more collegial CPD-related interactions, because such action would expose them to further potentially hostile judgement.

Missing Guidance and Support

On paper, all three universities in this study had systematic structures and provisions in place for promoting CPD. Units titled "Centre of Learning and Teaching" or "Centre of Learning and Research" offered a formal schedule of professional development courses, talks, and activities. West however was not impressed by the "how-to-teach" workshops she attended in the beginning of her university career. West recalled she had to complete thirty hours of staff development program in order to get her job contract renewed, but she found the program "rather useless": "I felt that those people did not know how to teach…Those people were not teachers, I think." Such harsh comments reflect that West was questioning why she was made to participate in so-called CPD that she perceived as "useless."

Conferences, workshops, and talks by external and internal scholars were also common staff development activities that were conducted within academic departments and faculties as evidenced by the collected CPD documents. Indeed, all

physical educators had been encouraged to participate in PE or sports-related conferences organized by their respective units or departments. But instead of feeling motivated to engage in such activities, Sunny and West perceived such participation as job obligations rather than learning experiences. Practices such as "checking attendance" at seminars and "being notified in very short notice" about conference events caused practitioners like Sunny to feel that "those occasions are mainly parties that [they] demonstrate [their] respect." This reveals that Sunny did not feel being respected or supported as an adult learner in those occasions.

In regard to support, not all participants viewed the amount of CPD financial aids provided by their university as adequate. See the Table 9 below for monetary subsidies to staff pursuing degree and non-degree CPD programs/courses by the three universities:

Table 9: Financial subsidies to staff pursuing degree and non-degree CPD programs/courses by university

	University A	University B	University C
Degree Programs	Maximum support: · Bachelor degree: $30,000 · Master degree: $20,000 · Doctoral degree: $30,000 Budget holders could top up sponsorship amounts to the same limits using private funds.	Local Full-time/ Part-time Programs · Not more than 2/3 of tuition of the course (2 grants for master's degree and 3 grants for doctoral degree) Overseas Program · Study leave (1 year) without pay: $75,000 plus a travel allowance of $18,000. Distance-Learning Programs · Up to 1/2 of tuition	$10,000/year at university level The university may contribute 30% of the tuition fees subject to a ceiling to be approved. Support Duration: · For local studies and distance learning: 3 years for PhD & 3 years for master's programs. · For full-time overseas studies: 3 years for PhD & 2 years for master's programs.
Non-Degree Course/Activities	· $10,000/year (max.) at university level	· $10,000/year (max.) at departmental level Staff could also apply for staff development grant at the faculty level simultaneously (amount subject to yearly budget allocation)	For short courses/programs (costing up to $3,000), 30% of the tuition fees max.

All amounts are in Hong Kong Dollars (HKD; 1 USD = 7.8 HKD) in the above table.

While Chris recognized the financial subsidies were good even just as a token gesture, Eli, West, and Sunny all expressed that the financial support from their universities was not sufficient when it comes to encouraging CPD. Sunny stated, "Frankly, if you go to an overseas conference, what is $10,000 [Hong Kong dollars]? Registration could take half of that money, and your plane ticket…Do I get such big motivation to go? Not really!" It is unclear whether Sunny was aware of additional financial support which might be available to her as well. It is however obvious that Sunny did not feel very motivated by the amount of financial subsidies that she knew of. Similar sentiments were shared by Eli and West. It is noteworthy that all these three participants were married with family and children. So, their family obligations might have made them more sensitive to the amount of available financial support.

In addition to financial subsidies, work conditions and organizational support also influenced the participants' lived experience in further studies while working full-time. Chris shared that alternative work arrangements such as "a switching of time slots for work duties" did help to alleviate some of the resulting pressure. But apparently not all participants were fortunate enough to benefit from alternative work arrangements as Sunny testified:

> …they keep squeezing us from all directions…in teaching, university teams, where do we find the time really? An individual could be squeezed dry and become demotivated. It is not that we do not want to improve, but if pushed too hard, asking me to do things that I am not comfortable with….

A feeling of over-worked and displeased of not being consulted on new job responsibilities became a demotivation of CPD for Sunny. Undeniably Sunny also experienced frustration and resentment as she continued:

> I don't think here we are being supported for continuing professional development, I don't think so, may be just talking about it…You cannot just urge people to go for further studies and you keep on piling up work duties on them. Saying to a colleague, 'You should not be staying so late in office, you should head home earlier.' It is really contradicting, if you asked me.

Sunny had invested substantial amount of time and effort in her doctoral studies. Based on the above extract, it appears that Sunny might have experienced having extra work being dumped on her and thus came to a conclusion that there was no genuine CPD support from the work environment. Sunny perceived that work

supervisors were not genuinely understanding, or making effort to understand, the difficulty faced by the employees; the lip-service nature of CPD support appeared hypocritical and was not appreciated by her.

Meanwhile, West was reluctant in starting on a doctoral degree despite obvious encouragement from her work supervisor:

> Our boss is a "doctor"; she is strongly encouraging colleagues to go for further studies. So, some colleagues have subsequently embarked on further studies, one by one...And you realize what's going on, and I do not want to be mistaken as one of those colleagues.

West was negatively motivated by what she interpreted as pretentious CPD endeavors of her colleagues. She did not want to relay a message that she was trying hard to please her boss too. This no doubt has something to do with the specific work atmosphere and office politics that West found herself in, and it could also be related to the work experience she had accumulated thus far.

West also commented that "none of the women colleagues have thought about taking that step as she suggested. We feel that it would be too harsh. The few of us do not want to take on the world." The phrase "take on the world" reflected the level of anticipated difficulty West had in mind regarding doctoral studies. West's choice of words here was commensurate with her metaphor of "secret agency" described earlier, as secret agents in movies often take on seemingly unsurmountable tasks. In sum, the high costs and anticipated difficulty in doctoral studies coupled with challenging office politics and isolation all acted to deter West from pursuing a doctorate.

Meanwhile, Chris experienced a dip in his self-esteem and self-efficacy when he asked his study supervisor whether he could proceed to the doctoral level:

> …what I did back then was only scratching the surface, it was so superficial that later I was in a way kicked out…[snickers…]. I had asked my supervisor whether I could go further with my studies, but he did not answer my question. That means I did not have what it takes.

Chris thought what he investigated in his M.Phil. study was very superficial and he attributed that as a reason why his supervisor had not responded. Chris also made the assumption that he did not have what it takes to advance to the doctoral level, so his supervisor had not proceeded to make him an offer. According to the CPD-related documents, "transferring of candidature from a M.Phil. to a Ph.D. program is possible

provided that the candidate had fulfilled general requirements of a Ph.D. candidature and completed the first year of M.Phil. program." In other words, there is a specific timing when the transfer of candidature should, or could occur. In fact, Chris' supervisor did ask Chris once earlier whether he was interested in pursuing a Ph.D. And Chris responded negatively that time because "at that instance I (he) felt that I (he) was not ready." So it was not so much that Chris did not have what it takes to pursue a Ph.D., it was more of a missed timing and inadequate communication between Chris and his supervisor on the issue. Unwittingly, Chris had to a certain extent convinced himself that he did not have the essential qualities for making a Ph.D. candidate.

Here the hermeneutic circle was at work again, as I related Chris' disappointment in trying to pursue a Ph.D. to his overall sense of insecurity in relationships with work colleagues. Chris might have projected his lack of self-efficacy in further studies to other aspects of his professional life. I understand more deeply that doubts in self-efficacy had made substantial impact on Chris' experiences both in CPD and his teaching career.

Participants on the whole did not have very systemic planning in terms of taking part in certification types of CPD and workplace learning. But some participants, such as Mirror, would sporadically look for different CPD opportunities because she did not want to become stagnant as she noted "people would think that you are out of date. So you need to develop along with the passing of time." In trying to keep herself updated and trendy however, Mirror was not entirely sure whether she had made the "right" choices:

> I do not know whether the continuing professional development activities I have chosen are the most fitting for me. But at least I would not be wasting my time; I could spend time learning something. I do not think the programs I picked are bad, but were they the best? I do not know.

As Mirror reflected on her CPD choices, she sounded like she would appreciate some feedback on her CPD endeavors. But then, Mirror also confessed embarrassingly that she would "worry" if her work supervisor actually read her annual activity report in detail. Mirror's avoidance mentality may be working at a subconscious level, i.e. she did not realize that she had actually shunned from seeking CPD guidance from her supervisor.

CPD as a topic was seldom brought up. Chris and Addison also noted that they typically did not discuss matters related to CPD with their work supervisors during annual appraisals or other meeting occasions. The PE practitioners experienced little to none CPD facilitation from immediate work leaders and supervisors; but perhaps this was not only due to the work leaders' lack of action. Discussions among colleagues on CPD matters appeared to be sporadic and superficial. Mirror mentioned that she and her colleagues sometimes wrote messages in social platforms to alert each other on CPD opportunities. But Mirror rarely discussed with her colleagues about what she did in CPD. So meaningful exchange on professional learning was nonexistent for Mirror. As for the two more seasoned PE practitioners, namely Sunny and Eli, they had both observed their junior colleagues' performance. But only Sunny could recall having once talked to a colleague about pursuing a higher degree. As for Eli, he tended to limit his CPD-related conversations to one long-serving colleague who shared a similar degree of devotion to physical training as his. With this one colleague, Eli could discuss in detail about his physical CPD endeavors; the same applied to West, she also had one really close work colleague. On the whole, however, CPD guidance and support among fellow PE practitioners was scarce.

In addition, Eli commented that many junior colleagues might not be very engaged in work:

> Most colleagues would make just enough effort to fulfil what the courses necessitate them to do and just enough to deal with the students. Perhaps they already have a lot of other duties…They may not have such room…that's my observation. The majority of colleagues are interested in sports, but would they have room to do further development?

Eli's observation pointed to the heavy workload and the need to attend to non-academic matters such as issues related to student campus life and institutional developmental activities faced by PE practitioners. Similar disincentive concerns were also noted by West and Sunny.

In ensuring positive impact from CPD, monitoring of the process or results of CPD endeavors are needed. But judging from the collected CPD-related documents and the participants' narratives, this aspect did not get much attention from the HE administration. Four practitioners noted that they had been requested to write completion reports after receiving financial subsidies from their universities. Based on

the CPD-related documents collected from participants, some completion reports appeared to be just a formality to "close the file". A few documents prepared by PE practitioners with titles such as "Staff Development Grant Reflection Report" contained nothing remotely related to reflection. The reports were at best a summary of topics and activities covered in the CPD programs. Apparently, no feedback had been given to the physical educators concerned after submission of such reports, and no subsequent follow-up of any kind was conducted by the department or work unit.

Ironically, one of the more reflective pieces of completion report type documents was prepared by West. It is ironic because West wrote the report in order to fulfil the CPD requirements for her contract renewal, the very same mechanism coercing CPD participation that she said she despised so much. Conceivably, it was partly due to the perceived significance of the report that West had invested more effort in writing the reflective document, and partly it was due to the more specific guidelines on report contents and structure given that a more comprehensive report could be produced. But since West clearly stated that she did not find the mandatory CPD useful in the interview, I interpreted that what she wrote in the completion report was mainly for the purpose of fulfilling the requirements rather than a genuine reflection of her CPD experience.

Furthermore, a related issue is worthy of attention here – whether the practitioner is familiar with the concept of reflection and equipped with the necessary reflective skills. The benefit of the doubt should be given to the practitioners who had prepared those not-so-reflective reflection reports. It could be that they simply did not have the time to write reflectively, or they knew that the CDP completion reports would not be assessed and thus became unmotivated to dig more deeply in reflecting and writing. Either way, the "requirement" and the act of having to submit a written report did not have significant meanings to the practitioners because it did not contribute anything meaningful to their CPD experience.

Summary

The findings presented in this chapter responded to the three research sub-questions and helped to reveal the CPD lived experiences of the seven PE practitioners in Hong Kong's HE.

Regarding motives for CPD, a genuine love of sports importantly fueled motivation for CPD endeavors of a physical nature among the physical educators.

Concurrently, a desire to seek professional credibility provided impetus for the PE practitioners to take part in CPD. Some participants attained higher academic credentials to address job expectations while others went to great lengths in enhancing sports skills so as to convince themselves and their students. The feasibility to integrate personal and professional interests also prompted the PE practitioners to explore various CPD topics and programs. Work colleagues' participation in CPD motivated the participants to take part in CPD in some cases but not in others. Interpersonal relationships with co-workers and office politics appeared to be the influencing factors in this regard. Finally, while some participants viewed CPD monetary subsidies provided by the university as a good gesture, other participants found the amount of CPD support they received at work demotivating.

Learning through CPD was achieved and recognized differently among the seven physical educators. Firstly, the physical educators strived to address their personal liking and desire of learning various sports skills and job-oriented PE knowledge by integrating personal and professional interests. Secondly, the PE practitioners recalled helpful episodes of learning from peers both inside and outside of the HE context. Learning was achieved as the physical educators consolidated their prior knowledge base simultaneously as they went searching for new insights. Thirdly, self-directed explorations beyond formal CPD enabled selected participants to achieve deeper level of learning during and sometimes after a CPD exposure. However, not all PE practitioners directly linked the concept of CPD with learning. They demonstrated a range of depth and awareness in recognizing their own learning. Some participants were able to combine and took advantage of different pathways of learning (e.g. workshop and SDL) to arrive at new knowledge and understandings. Other participants learned important teaching points from their work peers without perceiving it as CPD.

In the HE work environment, the PE practitioners had not experienced much guidance and evaluation in their CPD; infrequent professional dialogues with work colleagues had created a vicious cycle leading to the feeling of not being supported in CPD. Under the current administrative policies of the three HEIs, the physical educators were left to their own devices in approaching CPD despite that nominal financial supports were available in all cases. Group CPD collaborations were basically non-existent, most participants revealed personal efforts in learning from

individual peers inside and outside their work context.

Finally, the physicality of selected CPD presented considerable challenges to the physical educators, some of them had to come to terms with compromised health and repeated injuries. But the physical educators persevered as they dug deep from their personal philosophy and drew inspiration from different sources of motivation.

The PE practitioners' narratives and the emerged themes point to the necessity of better support to CPD and acknowledgement of the physical educators' continual learning despite various challenges. The following chapter compares the findings with prior literature and explores contribution to knowledge made by this study.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The IPA approach does not aim to test hypotheses and is not typically used to build theory per se, but the resulting analytic outcomes can lead to insightful dialogues with extant theory (Larkin & Thompson, 2012). In this chapter, I will synthesize and interpret the main findings with respect to prior literature and the theories espoused in the literature review. Specifically, I will make reference to relevant theories of learning and motivation principles in deliberating the practitioners' lived experience in CPD. In addressing the main research question "How do PE practitioners experience CPD in Hong Kong's higher education?" I will present a discussion that explores insights under the themes and sub-themes described in the previous chapter.

Contribution to Knowledge

1) What motivates and deters PE practitioners' CPD engagement?

Judging from the findings, the PE practitioners did not get most of their motivation to develop as PE professionals from the daily teaching in PE classes. Some participants were driven by autonomous motivation to enhance personal development whereas others were driven by controlled motivation in their CPD pursuits. According to Deci and Ryan (2008), people driven by autonomous motivation will feel a sense of self-directedness and autonomy; whereas those driven by controlled motivation will feel pressured to act in certain way, and thus experience little to no autonomy. In the following discussions, references will be made to these two and other types of motivation when applicable.

Seeking professional credibility. Regardless of years of experience as a PE practitioner in HE, all practitioners in this study were mindful of their professional duties and CPD was an important pathway to make them feel more credible, relevant, and updated as physical educators. In particular, the PE practitioners were intrinsically and socially motivated to engage in CPD focused on sports skill enhancement (i.e. Addison, Chris, Jo, Eli). Sports competitions outside of university, challenges from sport-loving colleagues of other disciplines, and students with more advanced sports skills all provided added incentive for selected physical educators to continually upgrade themselves. These sources of motivation had further enhanced the preexisting mastery oriented goals in the participants. Knowing that their mastery in sports skills have channels to be validated generated added incentive.

In addition, the interactions that the practitioners had with people inside and outside the university community can be considered evidence of "disciplinary expertise" (Wieman, 2019) that help to define the field of PE. As posited by Wieman (2019), "disciplinary expertise is a necessary part of good university teaching, (but) it is far from sufficient" (p. 47). He further argued that widespread recognition of expertise in university teaching is desirable because it will bring about a more collective and coherent endeavor among the teaching faculty. Such recognition nonetheless appears to be lacking in the cases of all seven practitioners.

Possibility of gaining valuable insights had driven the PE practitioners towards coaching certification programs, sports seminars, and private/peer sports training. This implicates motives of both mastery (intrinsic) and performance (extrinsic) oriented goals. Private/peer sports training was chosen by selected participants (i.e. Chris, Eli, Mirror, and West) because of its high relevancy, effectiveness and efficiency. Regardless of whether the CPD is formal or informal in nature, revelation type of insights was longed for by the PE practitioners. And when such revelations emerged, they were gratefully cherished, thoughtfully assimilated with past knowledge, and disseminated to students at opportune times. This reflects the cognitive and constructivist modes of learning adopted by selected practitioners (e.g. Chris, Eli, and Jo); they assumed an active role as learners in their development as educators. Jo, in particular, went through processes of deconstructing and reconstructing her experiences interacting with students of different mindsets and different sporting cultures (Mugisha, 2015). Facing a new student culture, Jo was prompted to construct new meanings (e.g. not winning does not equal to failure) and new competencies (e.g. motivating students to set realistic and meaningful goals) in her professional endeavors. Jo's learning occurred in a highly constructivist fashion.

Episodes of such valuable learning were revealed in this study; they had not been recognized by and shared among fellow practitioners as routine work practices. This lack of recognition is an important, even if a discouraging, finding from this research. It also importantly ties in with the major theme of "realization of learning" and sub-theme of "being mindful of colleagues", which I will discuss in later sections. Meaningful, valuable learning of the PE practitioners need to be acknowledged and celebrated among colleagues to promote relatedness. Relatedness to the teaching community was under-developed among the physical educators as much of the CPD

was rarely visible and discussed among colleagues (ten Cate et al., 2011). Relatedness is one of the three requirements needed for enhanced intrinsic motivation according to the SDT. Without proper recognition (i.e. to reflect competence), the educators' intrinsic motivation and enthusiasm may not be continually fueled and sustained. Moreover, better collegial connections will generate more possibilities for meaningful learning under the social learning principles. Meanwhile, based on what I gathered from the participants, it seems highly probable that their work environment and culture is not conducive to social learning (Lopukhina, 2019).

According to Heidegger, a person's conscious experience of a phenomenon is not separate from the world, nor from the individual's background understandings (Neubauer et al., 2019). The practitioners' steadfast interest and engagement in sports and PE ever since they were young, and their admiration of their school PE teachers, had laid the foundation for what they viewed as good and professional sports and PE instructional practices. This adds to findings from prior research showing that "preservice teachers' personal school PE experiences as students and a physically active background were linked to their perceived competence and attitudes" (Romar, Astrom, & Ferry, 2018, p. 116). In seeking and sustaining professional credibility as teachers, the seven practitioners were motivated to engage in CPD. Sunny shared how her Ph.D. made her administrative work easier, Jo explored ways to enhance her students' goal-setting, while Eli, Addison, and Chris shared stories how their advanced sports skills helped to convince students they encountered. But the types of motivation at work seem to be different among these cases. For Sunny, Jo, and Chris, their motive appeared to be directed towards performance goals, but for Eli and Addison, they seemed to be motivated from both mastery and performance orientations. Sunny also presented a failure-avoidance tendency when she noted how she was no longer willing to train hard physically. As argued by Urdan (2004), the failure-avoidance orientation of individuals could be a result of the learner perceiving success as beyond their reach. And the presence of a combination of motives within a single PE practitioner agrees with arguments from prior literature (Seifert & Sutton, 2009).

The PE practitioners had worked towards higher academic credentials as a formal type of CPD because they were externally motivated by expectation of subsequent reward such as competitiveness in job-hunting (Swain & Hammond,

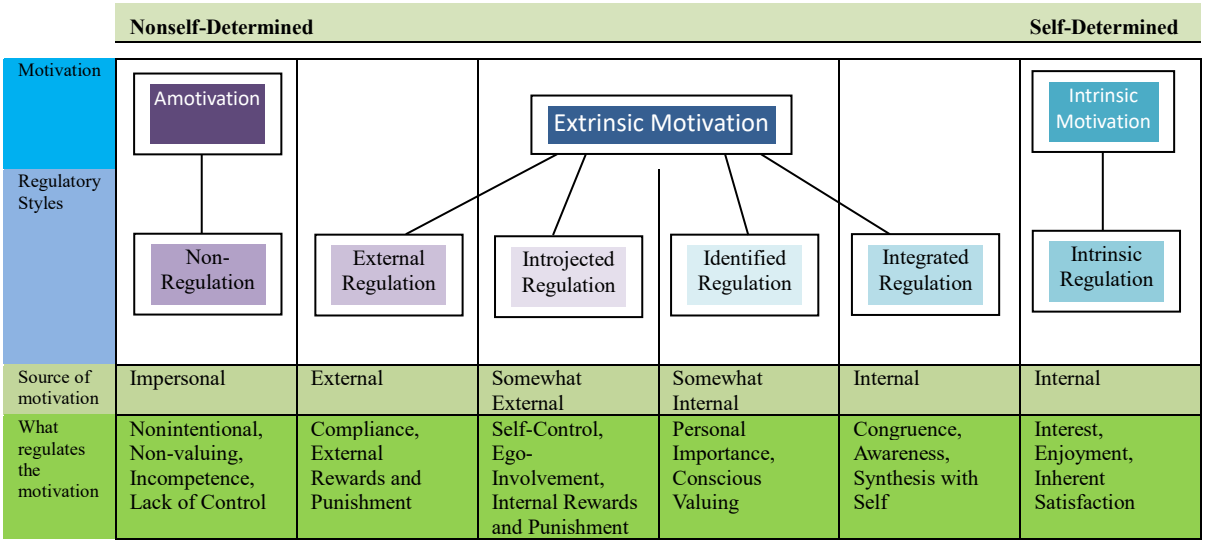
2011). This finding is in line with "learning through reinforcement" in behaviorist terms (Mugisha, 2015, p. 87). Since outcomes such as job security and promotional opportunities are viewed as important and valuable by the practitioners, they are reinforced to undertake specific CPD programs that are linked to these outcomes (Mugisha, 2015). Ideally, studying for a further degree will bring insights and growth in both personal and professional fronts. Indeed, the practitioners found postgraduate higher level qualifications helpful in enhancing job security and employability (Neary, 2016). Scott, Brown, Lunt, and Thorne (2004) also found that gaining professional credibility was one of the motives alongside accelerated promotion for holders of a doctoral degree.

But five of the physical educators experienced decline in their self-esteem in the process; and such dips in self-esteem had not been compensated by gains in perceived personal and professional growth afterwards. The PE practitioners had not found further studies a very positive experience due to a number of reasons: difficulties in handling course materials (Addison & Chris), not being able to set own research agenda (Mirror & Jo), a lack of support from their full-time job (Sunny & Eli), and an irrelevancy between teaching work and their newly acquired academic knowledge (Eli, Jo, Addison, Mirror & Chris).

Hunzicker (2011) argued that professional development becomes relevant and authentic when it relates to the teacher's daily work. Such relevancy and authenticity was lacking, there was a mismatch between what the participants studied academically and what they were assigned to do as full-time university physical educators in the Hong Kong context. This finding echoes those in Damon's (2016) study as the physical educators felt the disconnectedness between knowledge they newly acquired but never got to use in their daily teaching. The seven PE practitioners were mostly involved in physical skills instruction, sports coaching, and administrative duties. As the practitioners noted, further development in terms of academic knowledge and research skills had little relevancy to their job assignments; the relevancy was essentially an external expectation which came with working in HE (Megginson & Whitake, 2007). Through the analytical steps of IPA, I came to the tentative conclusion that the HE work context had molded the practitioners' thinking by means of 1) relatively more financial support for higher academic endeavors, 2) the more detailed guidelines for completion report for CPD of an academic nature, 3)

verbal encouragement from work supervisors, and 4) participants feeling pressured by colleagues' pursuit of higher degrees. Subsequently the practitioners perceived as expected to do further studies.

When the participants were essentially motivated by controlled motivation, they felt pressured and experienced little to no autonomy (Deci & Ryan, 2008). But instead of experiencing absolute extrinsic motivation, I contend that some participants had experienced different sources of motivation and regulatory styles in their CPD behaviors; such were the cases for Sunny, in her doctoral studies, and Eli, in his first master's degree studies. See Figure 6 below showing the continuum of self-determination cited in Ackerman (2020).



Based on Ryan & Deci (2000, p. 72).

Figure 6. The continuum of self-determination

For Sunny initially, she was fearful of upsetting her work supervisor for not opting to go for doctoral studies but she might also desire the acquisition of a higher academic credential. Later on, she might have shifted towards an "introjected regulation" of motivation where she had partially internalized values such as avoiding shame and seeking approval since she indicated she did not want to leave poor records for her study supervisor. Whereas for Eli, his motivation I reckon actually shifted from more intrinsically motivated to more externally motivated as he experienced difficulties in catching up with course materials and no longer enjoyed his master's level studies, i.e. from identified regulation to introjected regulation or even external regulation. To a certain extent, the source of motivation had changed over the course of these participants' specific CPD experiences.

In order to ensure positive learning and CPD contributions, external incentives such as financial subsidies and verbal persuasion by work supervisors are not going to be effective, since they only represent external motivation and do little to help learners to internalize the significance of why it is important for them to continue to learn (ten Cate et al., 2011).

Integrating interests. All PE practitioners concurred that CPD is a highly personal matter, and addressing personal interests and growth were deemed crucial considerations. The unmistakable feasibility of integrating personal and professional interests for these PE practitioners can be succinctly elucidated by one comment made by Addison: "Hobbies are also sports." This finding echoes results from Damon (2016) and McMillan et al. (2016) where teachers preferred both to seek out and to take part in CPD activities that they valued for their own personal reasons and that addressed their personal and/or professional needs. As there is much overlap in topics being covered in PE and sports, participants could rationalize their CPD choices by noting the potential use of knowledge in their daily teaching. The dual possibilities of personal growth and professional achievement were thus highlighted. In rare cases when participants could not align their personal and professional interests in their attempted CPD, they made further attempts to enhance better alignment of the two sets of interests. That I contend may partly explain why Jo and Eli chose to study for a second master's degree.

Rather than acknowledging their personal preferences up front, the practitioners at times retrospectively aligned their personal and professional interests. Practitioners such as Chris, Mirror, Sunny, and West all made comments that imply they felt the need to rationalize their choice of CPD programs and activities. To these participants, integrating their personal interest with professional interest appears to be a paradox. My interpretation is that they felt that others might consider their CPD choices non-legitimate when those choices matched their personal preferences so well but were funded by public resources. The perception of having to justify one's choice of CPD activity had made it more difficult to bring this topic into discussion among fellow PE practitioners. But prior literature has clearly demonstrated that addressing personal growth and needs is just as important, if not more important, than addressing professional demands when it comes to CPD (Bolam & Weindling, 2006; Crockett, 2010). As Day and Hadfield (2004) argued, learning at its best should and will have

both personal and professional significance to teachers. There is nothing inappropriate in addressing personal needs through CPD, especially when the CPD also has relevancy to the practitioners' work. But a lack of trust or a sense of belonging among colleagues seemed to have cast a "secrecy" shadow over the CPD lived experience of these physical educators. This nuanced, secretive attitude and the accompanied behaviors of the practitioners' lived CDP experience was particularly evident in cases of Chris, Mirror, and West. These practitioners' narratives were infiltrated with remarks that suggest suspicion, speculation, doubts, and worries about what fellow colleagues or work supervisors might think about their CPD related decisions and actions. This also ties in with the sub-theme "being mindful of colleagues" as distrust among co-workers undermines likelihood of professional exchanges.

2) How does learning take shape in practitioners CPD?

Learning from individual peers. The PE practitioners had participated in a myriad of sports-related workshops and seminars to earn professional certificates as evidenced from the CPD artifacts they shared. They had recalled active engagement in CPD provided by external professional bodies mostly, whereas formal CPD provided internally by the university was not perceived as helpful at all. This implicates the practitioners' perception of the significance and the need of discipline-specific CPD for catering their professional needs. This resonates with prior literature in the field of PE arguing that relevant and content-focus CPD is needed to ensure meaningful outcomes (Damon, 2016; Makopoulou et al., 2019).

Typically, in-service staff development programs offered by university are not discipline-specific as they are targeted at a broad spectrum of faculty members. It is however still possible that the physical educators could gain useful insights in pedagogy or other teaching-related ideas. But based on what the participants shared, they did not seem to value too much about CPD provided by their universities. Part of the reason for such ambivalence, I contend, was the source of their motive in attending those programs. The PE practitioners were merely trying to avoid failure in meeting the work requirements or expectations from their supervisors. Such a failure-avoidance orientation will undermine the sense of achievement (Urdan, 2004), even if something was learned, they may not be readily acknowledged. This may partly explain West's writing of a good reflection report after completing her mandatory for-

contract-renewal professional development workshops but verbally claiming those workshops as "useless" in the interview.

Meanwhile, selected physical educators (i.e. Eli and West) were able to learn from or share CPD insights with individual colleagues whom they shared good relationships with. But such learning episodes among university colleagues were infrequent among the participants overall. Also, the mode of learning from peers assumed by the participants in this study was not the type of learning involving "learning communities" or "Community of Practice" (CoP) as described in numerous CPD related literature (e.g. O'Sullivan & Deglau, 2006; Wenger, 1998). The only case resembling a CoP was when West and her colleagues made a trip for tennis training. Such endeavor could potentially create a sense of team work and support for those involved (Makopoulou & Armour, 2007). But since West did not take part in such collective CPD participation regularly, there was little sign that West had experienced a sense of being supported collectively by her colleagues. As Keung (2009) argued, it is beneficial for teachers in a practice community to observe and reflect upon each other's practice, as such act of learning from peers can enhance teachers' professionalism. So, while selected PE practitioners had successfully reaped some benefits from learning from individual peers, most had been missing out on learning collaboratively in CPD. Social learning in the form of CoP was basically non-existent in the PE practitioners' lived experience.

Successful learning from peers necessitates a degree of awareness of potential learning and also an ability to reflect on the learning process. Early on in his teaching career, Chris had observed a colleague's class instruction but did not recognize that experience as a form of CPD. This is in stark contrast to Jo's all-encompassing definition of "continuing development." To Chris, CPD might require a degree of formalization and physical evidence. Comparatively, Jo viewed professional learning more broadly as she put it, "when you try to get things done better, and we act to make that happen, to me that is already continuing development." Chris' learning can be considered as an example of "implicit learning", a sub-category under informal learning, which occurs without an "explicit understanding of what it is that has been learned" (Eraut, 1994, p. 250). Eraut (2011) cautioned that informal learning is typically overlooked by individuals in a work setting. Chris' narrower concept of learning and CPD would lead him to underestimate and under-perceive the amount of

learning and growth he has been or could be experiencing. Ostensibly Chris had not reflected upon what he actually gained from his observation of a colleague's class.

In contrast, Jo was more able to take advantage of observing her peers. Jo pictured in her head on how a heated discussion among her colleagues might have been handled differently as she engaged in "reflection-on-action" (Schön, 1983 & 1987). Reflection-on-action "is the retrospective contemplation of practice in order to uncover the knowledge used in a particular situation, by analysing and interpreting the information recalled" (Burns & Bulman, 2000, p.5). Instead of just seeing how a senior colleague rattled a younger colleague over a conversation, Jo was able to gain insights through "observational learning" (Kurt, 2019). The social model observed by Jo had similar job duties as Jo's thus making her/him a fitting model to learn from. Jo viewed interpersonal communication as an integral component of her job duties. Therefore, the negative reinforcement (i.e. upsetting another colleague) Jo observed would likely have an effect on her because it matches Jo's professional needs (McLeod, 2016).

This type of observational learning behaviors was rarely mentioned in the seven participants' narratives. Though it cannot be concluded that observational learning was uncommon among the participants, it can be said that the participants did not articulate this type of learning often in their sharing. Since Jo was able to identify the learning achieved through interactions with her peers, the learning falls within the scope of "professional learning" noted by MacPhail (2011). Jo was able to construct professional knowledge in leadership and management thanks to her existing skills in observation, communication and critical reflection. Such learning is in line with the constructivist perspective and agrees with the observation that adult learners often bring with them previously acquired knowledge and experience to new learning scenarios and that they construct new knowledge by building upon their existing base (Knowles, 1990). The reflection undertook by Jo is instrumental in fostering professional growth by heightening Jo's sensitivity to similar learning opportunities presented by peers in the future.

Self-directed explorations. No matter how good a teacher is, he or she could not make the students learn. Some scholars argued that it is indeed the obligation of the student to do most of the work necessary for meaningful education (Russell in Knowles, 1978; Nelson, 2014). If students do not assume responsibility for their own

growth and development, they cannot really learn much. Developing the capacity of self-transformation is arguably the most important ability to have for meeting challenges of our fast-changing world (Nelson, 2014). The same applies to educators when they assume the role of a teacher-learner, that is, being a teacher professionally and also a learner striving towards new knowledge and skills at the same time. As such, self-directedness becomes critical to the success of learning and subsequently the transformation. As stated in the literature review, the learner defines the learning task in self-directed learning (SDL) (A Learning Journey, 2017; Loyens, Magda, & Rikers, 2008), just like how Eli defined his learning tasks in watching YouTube videos posted by sports experts around the world. This helps to enhance the sense of autonomy in Eli, that is, the feeling that he is in control of his own learning (Ackerman, 2020). It was also Eli's way of getting connected with professional sports experts around the world. This behavior fulfilled Eli's need of "relatedness" as posited in the Self-Determination Theory (SDT, Deci & Ryan, 1985). According to SDT, human has an innate need to connect with and relate to other people (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Such relatedness together with competency and autonomy are postulated to be the three universal psychological needs that must be fulfilled for human growth and development (Ryan & Deci, 2000). Using the "whole-part-whole" strategy in analysis here revealed that Eli was always striving towards a greater sense of relatedness with other sports experts due to a lack of it within his work environment. Eli did not feel a great connection with his work supervisor nor his younger colleagues; most of the time, Eli limited his professional sharing with one single fellow physical educator. Thus, his motivation of viewing YouTube goes beyond the mere acquisition of advanced sports techniques. It was one of his ways of establishing professional connections with peers whom he considered praiseworthy.

All but one of the participants had a deep-rooted belief in attending courses as a sure proof form of CPD. This difficulty in conceiving CPD opportunities in formats other than traditional training or workshop is referred to as "cognitive constraint" (Kelly & McDiarmid, 2002). Cognitive constraints are not just mere rules but also implicate "the social construction of actors, as well as their interests" (Kelly & McDiarmid, 2002, p. 421). In the HE context, the constructed identities include certain definitions or interpretations of the work environment and the actors with which the PE practitioners come into contact with. For example, the necessity to

provide official evidence that such and such CPD programs had been completed would accentuate the cognitive constraint. Since educators need to provide proof of completion (e.g. certificates) in order to make successful reimbursement for CPD expenses, CPD becomes defined as courses or workshops. The less concrete types of learning where one could not provide official evidence had not been fully recognized (i.e. realized) by the practitioners. Fullan (1995) argued that CPD "defined too narrowly" tends to become "artificially detached from 'real-time learning' and would ultimately fail to create "a sustained cumulative impact" (p. 253). So while Eli succeeded in making his own learning happen, he did not succeed in acknowledging fully his actual learning. Meanwhile, Eli's choice to share his hand-written notes as artifacts was indicative of the significance he attached to them. All the key points and notes he had made over the years meant a lot to him as those were concrete evidence of his continual professional learning. When Eli got the chance to showcase this evidence, he enthusiastically did so at the interview.

Piaget (1973) argued that watching somebody completing a task has little value until the learner demonstrates the ability to actually perform the task. Addison had on many occasions observed carefully how top-notch high-jump athletes cleared great heights and he realized that many of these athletes do not follow theoretical principles of physics and aerodynamics. In such a cognitive-constructivist discovery, Addison went through a journey of continual adaptation and incorporation of information (Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). Piaget argued that learners learn best by actively engaging in the learning process and seeking their own answers to problems (cited in Rovegno & Dolly, 2006). After reflecting on and updating his cognitive knowledge, Addison proceeded to "test out" his new ideas. Such actions helped him to verify his conceptual thinking and materialize his learning in concrete, physical form. Addison's learning is indicative of the four stages of experiential learning where he engaged in "reflective observation," "abstract conceptualization" and "active experimentation" and "concrete experience" (Kolb, 1984). Simply having a wealth of cognitive knowledge is not enough in the sporting arena and in the teaching of PE. Addison concluded that he must work out the details of what technique works best for him and under what specific conditions. He would only consider his learning successful if it is contextually specific and tested out. The four self-directed stages that Addison had undertaken enabled him to meaningfully benefit from his experiential learning.

Realization of learning. Meanwhile as Kwakman (2003) observed, teachers do not always perceive professional learning that occurs in their daily work as CPD, the participants in this study certainly varied in terms of their awareness of learning that had taken place. While Jo considered all endeavors towards better job performance as CPD, Chris did not regard his learning from peer observation as in-service CPD. This finding was also in line with Eraut's (2011) observation that most professionals do not describe informal learning as learning, despite informal workplace activities may provide 70 to 90% of the learning. Activities such as actual teaching and pupil interaction were often not recognized as part of the practitioners' learning. The lack of acknowledgement of actual learning appeared to be a combined result of poor awareness and a narrow definition of learning and CPD.

Making informal learning more visible and concrete was a concern for the PE practitioners, despite that they had not identified it as such. Prior scholars have noted that legitimacy of CPD activities often implicates formal training courses associated with work or gaining a qualification (Fraser, Kennedy, Reid, & Mckinney, 2007; Neary, 2016). Such perception and treatment of CPD is problematic. The findings indeed revealed that essentially only formal types of CPD were emphasized and recognized by university management and immediate work supervisors. Thus the PE practitioners were compelled to take part in even not-so-productive certificate-earning courses, as Addison explained how he would consider taking part in sports coach certification programs, "at least considering the outcome, if not the contents, it is worthy." But in Eli's case, he did not want to put up with poor-quality CPD: "I lost that credential, fine! Originally I had wanted to keep the Level 3 credential… but I did not want to waste my time anymore." The resentment was obvious in Eli's narrative. Eli's choosing to say no to ineffective CPD was perhaps substantiated by his work credentials. Comparing to Chris, Eli was more experienced and secured in his job, therefore Eli might be more unyielding towards low quality CPD.

Typically hard evidence of learning does not exist for many informal types of CPD, such as verbal discussion with colleague on class instruction and reading sports related journals. There will be implications on staff appraisals unless a broader definition of CPD is adopted by university administration, or more pragmatic and innovative ways to demonstrate impact from informal learning are implemented. For example, summary or reflective notes and documented actual changes in teaching

practices as a result of CPD exposure will be good CPD evidence (Patton & Parker, 2014). But these need to be gathered, compiled, and presented systematically in order to be retrievable and of value (Bransford, Brown, & Cocking, 2001). CPD certificates and diplomas only offer superficial evidence and was not indicative of actual learning and growth. The danger of embracing only the superficial CPD evidence is a limited scope and perspective of professionalism.

Relatedly, regular reflection and discussion about teaching ideas and good practices were not a significant part of the CPD experience lived by the PE practitioners. But based on prior research and insights from scholars such as Armour and Yelling (2004, 2007), and Deglau and O'Sullivan (2006), we know that "understanding professional development as the development of differentiated and well-founded views on PE practice" is central to building successful CPD programs (Reuker, 2017, p. 18). As such, the PE practitioners had not been taking a proactive role in formulating and ensuring that they have access to high quality CPD. Having the ability and the motivation to reflect on CPD endeavors were issues inferred from the findings. Teachers are diverse in their understandings and assumptions of what is valued knowledge (Timperley, et al., 2007). In order to enable educators to benefit more fully from their daily learning opportunities, educators need to develop the capacity and habit to reflect deeply and thoroughly on their own actions in CPD. Learning in the workplace is often "involuntary, imperceptible and inarticulable" (Eraut 1994, cited by Mitchell, 2013, p. 391), and not all practitioners in this study demonstrated good ability in reflecting on their own learning. It is also probable that selected practitioners might not be conversant in articulating their reflective endeavors. In regard to motives for reflection, the PE practitioners had to find their own because existing university CPD policies failed to address – by ways of monitoring and evaluating – CPD participation in a sustained and qualitative manner.

3) How do PE practitioners handle challenges and obstacles encountered in CPD?

Being mindful of colleagues & learning from individual peers. Collaborative learning was not a common approach to CPD for the PE practitioners examined. Social connections vital for long-term CPD were underdeveloped for the PE practitioners (Johnson et al., 2017). Most of the positive CPD experiences identified

and revealed in this research were individual-oriented. This highlights a concept of professional learning as an individual rather than a social process, which is in stark contrast to the significance allotted to collaborative learning in prior research both in PE and education in general (e.g. Keay, 2006; O'Sullivan & Deglau, 2006; Patton, Parker, & Tannehill, 2015; Voogt et al., 2015). Scholars such as Bell and Gilbert (1996) also noted that learning isolation is problematic and does not take into account that learning is enhanced by social support (Fraser, Kennedy, Reid, & Mckinney, 2007). Structural and geographical isolations similar to those identified by Johnson et al. (2017) had affected the physical educators in this study. They were meeting increasingly less often, their job duties were mostly individual-based, and some of their work stations were located far and apart. A distancing feeling and distrust among staff members as experienced by practitioners such as Chris, Mirror, Addison, and West had also contributed to the scarcity of collaborative learning. As cause and effect often work reciprocally, without attempts to conduct learning as a team, teachers would increasingly feel more distanced from each other, and vice versa.

Chris, for instance, was experiencing a rather extreme case of mistrust towards his colleagues, he hesitated to even discuss his CPD endeavors with them. Chris recalled his participation in a specific CPD program which had profoundly changed his course of career (i.e. he switched back to his original job after three years working in another university) and at the same time led him to become suspicious of colleagues' gossip. That CPD program was a "critical incident" that could only be identified retrospectively, and yet something that changed Chris' thoughts and professional actions subsequently (Day & Sach, 2004, p. 225). Such significant influence from a CPD experience must be understood from its situatedness in the temporal context – it is impossible to isolate such an incident from its biographical context in order to predict its impact (Day & Sach, 2004). The hermeneutic characteristic of IPA had enabled me to tease out such nuances of Chris' CPD lived experience.

An "ongoing and interactive support" for professional learning in PE (Hastie et al., 2015) would be difficult to implement under work atmosphere that does not champion a collaborative culture. Cordingley and colleagues (2005) noted that individual-oriented CPD showed only weak evidence of its capacity to influence teacher or student learning. Due to the individual focus then, the CPD endeavors made

by the PE practitioners would thus be limited in affecting change in them. Additionally, I argue that the individual-oriented CPD had also weakened the sense of being supported in the work setting. While the simple act of bringing teachers together may not necessarily suffice to break down the experience of teacher isolation, it is nonetheless an essential precursory step in building collegiality and fostering a collaborative form of CPD (Smyth & Garman, 1989). Back in 1990, Hargreaves and Dawe noted that "teacher isolation" and the accompanied "individualism" appeared to be in decline, but perhaps in the neglected corner of HE PE-CPD these still loom large at present. Especially in the Hong Kong context where collaborative work culture in education and in PE is "still in its infancy" (Ha et al., 2008). It was encouraging nonetheless to learn of selected cases (i.e. West and Eli) where the physical educator managed to solicit social and psychological support from a single dependable colleague within their work environment.

Missing guidance and support. "Disincentive" concerns such as heavy workload and having to handle many non-teaching duties have previously been noted by scholars in the context of Asia HEIs (Jacob et al., 2015, p. 3). Similar disincentives were observed by Eli, Jo, Sunny, and West in this study, so Hong Kong's HE practitioners appear to be no exception. A lack of support in alternative work arrangements might have made CPD less of a priority when competing against other personal, family, and financial concerns for them.

Moreover, Hemmington (2000) noted that even when time and cost were not significant barriers to CPD participation, practitioners-learners could struggle without proper guidance and help in approaching CPD. Findings of this study concurred with Hemmington's argument. Overall, the PE practitioners did not receive much guidance in CPD except being verbally encouraged to go for further studies. It was stipulated in more than one CPD-related documents that "job-relatedness" is a critical consideration for securing sponsorships for staff development programs. Job-relatedness is typically determined by the work supervisor of the staff concerned; and as stated in the CPD-related documents, the work supervisor must provide written support to explain anticipated benefits to the work unit. The work supervisor thus plays a critical role in supporting an appointee in making further development plans. Unfortunately for the participants in this study, they all seldom discussed development plans with their work supervisors.

As shown in the literature review, HE practitioners sometimes work as CPD tutors or facilitators for school PE teachers (e.g. Patton & Parker, 2014). In this study, West also noted that her colleagues had acted as CPD facilitators for secondary school PE teachers in the past. Perhaps it is now time for practitioners to turn their attention to fellow physical educators in university. Judging from the findings, these PE practitioners are in need of helpful CPD facilitation. Supportive facilitation can enhance the effectiveness and sustainability of CPD (Patton et al., 2013; Poekert, 2011), hence making CPD a more meaningful experience for all those involved. Importantly, supportive CPD facilitation benefits those who assume the facilitating role too (Makopoulou, 2018).

There was also an apparent lack of systematic monitoring and evaluation of CPD experience in the three universities examined, leaving physical educators to their own devices in reflecting and assessing their CPD experience. Reflection-on-action (Schön, 1983 & 1987) can enhance an individual's understanding of how learning takes place; it can also guide teachers in their CPD (Pitsoe & Maila, 2013). Eraut (1995) noted however that there are some prerequisites for reflection to take place, for example, the availability of time and the disposition to reflect when obligation for assessed work is missing. The first prerequisite – time – was mentioned as a challenge by most of the participants. The second prerequisite – the disposition to reflect – implicates the practitioner's individual motivation and learning habits. Even when some of the participants were equipped with reflective skills and habit, not having time, as attested to by a number of participants, might have made it difficult for them to benefit more deeply from their learning episodes.

Ample prior studies and government policies have highlighted monitoring and evaluation of CPD as critical elements for ensuring CPD effectiveness (e.g. ACTEQ, 2003; HEA, 2016; Makopoulou & Armour, 2007). But still, HE administrators in this study had not followed suit in making monitoring and evaluation processes happen. Scholars argued that these two "neglected areas" are difficult to tackle and studies investigating impact of CPD on teacher behavior and students' outcomes are relatively few (Bubb & Earley, 2007, p. 65). Receiving feedback is a critical component of experiential learning in the workplace, as it is essential to build a self-image of strengths and weaknesses (Teunissen at al., 2009). Regrettably, without constructive feedback on CPD endeavors, PE practitioners are less likely to grow into more

capable autonomous learners – the kind of learners that is taken for granted to be working in the HE context.

Prior literature suggests that support from both administrators and colleagues are important in implementing teacher change (Hagwood, 2007; Ward & Doutis, 1999). In addition to offering CPD opportunities, work supervisors can show support by providing empathy and feedback to teachers on their PD endeavors (Hagwood, 2007). Physical educators in this study had experienced polar extremes in terms of supervisors' attitude and support in their CPD journeys. While Eli was once sternly discouraged by his immediate work supervisor from enrolling in a master's program offered by their university, West had been constantly encouraged to embark on doctoral studies. Meanwhile, due to suspicion on colleagues' motives, West was negatively motivated to follow suit in her colleagues' further study efforts. So even when role-modeling of lifelong learning was evidently portrayed by the teacher-leader (MacPhail, 2011), the potentially positive impact on fellow teachers did not materialize in West's case. In an ideal collegial work setting, learners can be actively stimulated to seek feedback (Teunissen at al., 2009). Instead, Mirror's unconscious act of shunning away from dialogues with work supervisor on her CPD endeavors hinted that something was amiss in the collegial relationship.

Meanwhile, Sunny tried very hard in adhering to staff development advice given by her supervisor but received very little support during her actual doctoral research journey. Sunny was not within her zone of proximal development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978) and the scaffolding she needed badly never came. Her Ph.D. study supervisor had not provided the kind of scaffolding Sunny needed. So instead of making progress one small step at a time (Kurt, 2000), Sunny struggled badly in her doctoral research. Sunny's past knowledge had not prepared her well enough to tackle research work, thus she was not able to proceed to new learning in a more progressive manner. What Sunny needed, as she rightly identified herself: "The method that I had adopted for my research actually necessitates attending some courses" that were offered in another university. Sunny was aware that she was lacking in cognitive knowledge but she never took those courses. Based on Sunny's narratives, she might not be genuinely engaged in her doctoral studies as she proclaimed, "So I became lazy. And I considered if I took that summer course…, the amount of time left for me to do other things would not be adequate." Also, there are signs that Sunny might have

considered the research endeavor beyond her ability and simply tried to escape from the situation since she stated,

> I think that was the hardest part. Doing something that I was not familiar with. If it was something that I know…, then I could put in more effort and get it done no problem…I can't help it. Like I always say, I do not have great abilities. I can't help it.

Such a case would fit a low self-efficacy profile, where an individual try to avoid difficult tasks and situations (Bandura, 1997). Additionally, Sunny admitted feeling guilty towards the supervisor because she was not able to finish her studies sooner. It reflected that for Sunny, her locus of causality was external and she experienced an "impersonal causation" (Ryan & Connell, 1989) in her doctoral pursuit. On the one hand, Sunny did not want to let her study supervisor down but on the other hand, she was avoiding tackling her study problems head on. Either case, it appears that Sunny did not see "why" learning research-related techniques is of importance to her, thus she responded negatively. Establishing the "why" is key to successful and meaningful learning for working professionals as adult learners often pursue knowledge that offers them opportunities to apply the newly acquired skills (Trotter, 2006). In sum, Sunny was lacking in both motivation and support, and resorted to doing the minimal just to avoid failure in meeting institutional expectations (Kirk et al., 2006).

Despite the probability that PE practitioners at the HE level are self-determined and self-directed learners, a lack of guidance in CPD endeavors is still problematic. A lack of CPD-related support can affect the overall sense of collegiality and job satisfaction, thus will not be conducive to sustaining motivation for ongoing CPD. In the meantime, if long-serving PE practitioners (e.g. Eli and Sunny) failed to see themselves as mentors and leaders in CPD, they might also be doing a disservice to their younger colleagues in terms of professional aspirations. Furthermore, as facilitation skills do not necessarily comes with teaching experience, they have to be learned and developed (Makopoulou et al., 2019); therefore, even seasoned physical educators like Eli and Sunny might not yet have the fortitude or be equipped to be effective CPD facilitators.

A changed(ing) body. "People are physical and psychological entities" (Shinebourne, 2011, p. 28). They may reflect on what they do physically or what happened to them physically, and those acts will have meaningful, existential

consequences (Smith et al, 2009). The phenomenological emphasis of IPA in this study had helped to bring to light the physicality of the PE profession and also PE-CPD. Sharing of profound memories by Sunny and Eli revealed how they struggled and lived the changes in their aging bodies. Vivid descriptions by Addison, Jo, and also Eli illustrated how they grappled with repeated physical injuries. Meanwhile my own experience with a changing body as a PE practitioner had enhanced my sensitivity to the respondents' accounts in this regard. The resulting changed or changing body surfaced as a significant factor (and theme) affecting the physical educators' approach to and experience in CPD. While health problems have been identified as a constraint in other teacher CPD research in the HE context (e.g. Swain & Hammond, 2011), aging and physical injuries were findings relevant to those educators whose work involves physical exertion, physical demonstrations and physical image. Educators in dance (Wanke, Schmidt, Leslie-Spinks, Fischer, & Groneberg, 2015) and music (Fjellman-Wiklund & Sundelin, 1998; Fjellman-Wiklund, Brulin, & Sundelin, 2002 & 2003), for example, have similar concerns regarding the physical status of their body. These educators all bore the risks of getting injured; and such risks would escalate as the practitioner ages. So, these teachers all look for ways to prevent against or deal with the physical workload (Wanke et al., 2015). Comparatively, PE teachers tend to "suffer more physical complaints than other teachers" and these complaints may even compromise their emotional well-being (Brouwers, Tomic, & Boluijt, 2011). Indeed, what happens to the physical body may manifest its impact in a more holistic fashion than what is often acknowledged.

As Smith (2019) argued, the experiential significance of an event explored using IPA "often slips over into a concern with the significance for the person's identity" (p. 168). The experiential significance of challenging the physical body, in CPD and otherwise, was noteworthy for the PE practitioners because their professional identity is intricately intertwined with their body's capability. Also, it has been argued that traditionally PE teachers' professional identities center on sports knowledge and skills rather than broader educational issues (Virta, Hokka, Etelapelto, & Rasku-Puttonen, 2019). Illustratively, Eli once proclaimed, "You have to hit so many times that you could actually feel the ball staying in contact with your racket." So, Eli's professional identity appeared to align with a more traditional view on PE as he adhered great

importance to attributes such as stamina, and acquisition of technique through drills and repetition (Tinning, 2009).

Selected practitioners were hindered by physical injuries or poor health in their past learning experiences. But instead of feeling victimized as the "injured," the practitioners assumed personal agency in facing and dealing with their temporary physical set-back by admitting own inadequacy, for example, as Jo asserted "it was just due to my low ability." The ability to assume personal agency suggests that the practitioners had felt a sense of autonomy (Wood, Farmer, & Goodall, 2016). It was the practitioners' own volition to continually challenge themselves in more advanced sports skills and better sports performance. Thus, they were willing to accept risks of getting injured. Also, the way Jo attributed her failure in protecting herself from injury would not negatively affect her future engagement with competing in volleyball. It is so because her "low ability" could be rectified by training harder for example; it is something that Jo could have control over. And since Jo has a personal interest in playing ball, thus her injury would not deter her motivation in further participation in the sport (Weiner, 2005).

Meanwhile, the physical body is one of the most important teaching tools of the physical educators; the educators were motivated to explore alternative training methods, hence resulting in different CPD directions/focuses. Thus, however difficult it is to accept and deal with the injuries and aging effects, the PE practitioners learned to make peace with their changed(ing) body. For instance, Eli recollected his own disbelief but also how he moved on in looking ahead, "How come I hurt myself doing such simple stuff?! But it does not matter; I would continue to try hard to prolong my sporting life." This involves a "renegotiation of professional identity" as predicted by Virta and colleagues (2019, p. 199) since age has imposed certain restrictions on the body's ability. Eli, Addison, Jo, and Sunny in this study appeared to have assumed a "performing orientation" of physicality as part of their professional identity (Virta et al., 2019, p. 199). As contended by Virta et al. (2019), the body conceptions in the performing orientation adhere to more traditional normative body ideals in PE where teachers are expected to be fit and skilled.

In short, the changed(ing) body acted both as a challenge to and a source of motivation for ongoing and further CPD participation.

Summary

The seven PE practitioners relied both on advancement in physical skills and ongoing review of updated knowledge to seek and sustain their professional credibility. Overall, the participants were intrinsically motivated to continually explore and learn about sports and exercise due to their long-term personal devotion to sporting activities both inside and outside work context. Nonetheless, selected participants experienced somewhat of a paradox as they found themselves retrospectively trying to rationalize their CPD activity choices.

In cases where the physical educators were competitive athletes, they were strongly motivated to upkeep and upgrade their sports skills following mastery goals. Whereas for participants who pursued higher academic credentials, they were working based on performance and failure-avoidance orientations. Studies in higher academic degrees did not seem to have changed the practitioners themselves or their teaching practices. Their hard-earned paper credentials however succeeded in providing more professional credibility to the university administration, the work supervisors, as well as other HE stakeholders on the surface. Learning gained from the further studies however did not seem to have made much meaningful CPD impact.

Discussions on CPD related issues were infrequent among work colleagues. Learning in CPD was mainly individually based; collaborative learning was not referenced much in the participants' accounts of CPD experience. Nevertheless, the PE practitioners were able to learn at deeper levels by combining formal and informal CPD channels. The intricacy and interconnectedness of different pathways for learning was highlighted. Without the stimulation and exposure of face-to-face workshops, perhaps the subsequent SDL in selected cases would not have taken place.

Since each of the theories of learning tends to explore a specific aspect(s) of how individuals learn (Mugisha, 2015), different theories help to highlight and illuminate different lived moments in the practitioners' learning process. The self-directed nature of learning among the participants was prominent, and also indicative of experiential learning and adult learning principles. Cognitive and constructivist modes of learning were evident among selected practitioners as they actively assimilated and accommodated new information to their existing knowledge. Institutional treatment of CPD however implied a behaviorist undertone as job security and promotional prospects were offered as positive reinforcement for paper credentials, without attending to the actual growth and learning of the practitioners. Social learning

episodes did not feature prominently among the participants and their colleagues.

The PE practitioners had not proactively sought CPD guidance due to a general distancing relationship with work supervisors, and in some cases, work colleagues. Thus despite provisions of monetary subsidies, they perceived the level of institutional CPD support as token. Moreover, a lack of monitoring and evaluation and follow-up of CPD activities were evident among the work units and universities involved. A genuine sense of being supported by work supervisors and colleagues in CPD endeavors was lacking. The PE practitioners had not experienced motivating CPD support within their professional work environment. In sum, CPD appears to be a largely "hidden" self-motivating learning process for the seven physical educators.

Finally, coming to terms with changed(ing) bodies did not come easy for selected physical educators, but it nonetheless enabled the PE practitioners to enhance their sports expertise and prolong their sports participation.

Chapter 6: Conclusions and Recommendations

Through IPA, this study has explored the CPD experiences of seven PE practitioners working in three universities in Hong Kong. I have interpreted their experiences and drawn some tentative conclusions about the meanings of such experiences for the practitioners. My findings contribute to the limited CPD literature in Hong Kong based on an interpretative phenomenological perspective. What we customarily call "facts," or reality, "are not elements of an observer-independent world but elements of an observer's experience" (von Glasersfeld, 1995, p. 114). While the action and extent of participating in CPD activities can be observed outwardly, the intricacy of a practitioner's CPD experience has to be explored deeply to reveal the impact of experience on the practitioner and those who come into contact with the practitioner including students, colleagues, and family (O'Sullivan, 2006). My research has answered the call from scholars such as Sum et al. (2018) and Sum and Shi (2016) in exploring the professional career and lives of PE practitioners in Asia. The contribution of this study is thus in detailing the lived experiences of the PE practitioners in contemplating on, engaging in, enjoying and loathing their chosen and not chosen CPD activities.

By means of phenomenological interpretative steps, I have arrived at a number of important findings that contribute to the understanding of PE practitioners' lived experience of in CPD endeavors in Hong Kong HE. Overall, findings from this investigation supported those of prior studies, but my analysis has particularly shed light on how learning was not always identified and realized by the physical educators. Selected participants, who were more reflective in learning, were able to articulate insights that they had gained from previous learning episodes quite vividly. Whereas other participants appeared to have a fairly narrow definition of CPD. The PE practitioners' ways of learning were motivated and achieved sometimes similarly but other times in a diverse manner. While intrinsic regulation of motivation plays a significant role in many of the CPD endeavors made by the practitioners, introjected regulation and external regulation of motivation were also evident and these seem to negatively affect the physical educators' CPD experience.

The findings of this research challenge presumptions that HE educators know what best CPD activities would suit their needs, and that the HE environment is endowed with conditions conducive to collaborative professional learning

opportunities. Social learning did not appear to be at the core of the PE practitioners' CPD lived experience. But selected cases suggest that better relationships and understanding among colleagues and work supervisors may contribute to enhanced CPD experience.

Patton et al. (2015) argued that "professional development is both an obligation and an opportunity" (p. 26). Based on the research findings, participants in this study had undertaken CPD in trying to fulfil their obligation and people's expectations but they had not fully taken advantage of CPD as an opportunity. This study shares concerns of previous researchers that the learning process of practicing physical educators is poorly understood (Armour et al., 2017) and that useful facilitation of CPD is hard to come by (Hunuk, 2017). The physical educators did not experience much CPD facilitation and support from the work context. And there was little sign that the PE practitioners themselves had acted as helpful CPD facilitators to their fellow workers.

Hall (1998/2004) argued "in order to support learners to develop a sense of themselves as learners, those in higher education need to understand their own learning" (p. 14); my study has made a small step towards that goal. The PE practitioners adopted a variety of learning perspectives and strategies depending on the specific tasks at hand and their regulatory styles of motivation. The participants acknowledged that the formal types of CPD activities (e.g. coach certification programs, workshops on sports skills) accompanied by paper certificates are considered "legitimate" CPD; those activities were often delivered in a behaviorist manner with direct instruction (Palincsar, 1998). However, the majority of what the participants' revealed as meaningful and valuable learning did not come, at least not solely, from formal CPD (Hunzicker, 2010). Instead, they learned mostly in self-directed manner, sometimes alone, sometimes with fellow sports experts, and sometimes combining formal and informal learning activities. The participants' ability to build upon their existing knowledge and experience adheres to cognitive and constructivist learning theories. Furthermore, adult learning and experiential learning principles are helpful in interpreting the CPD lived experience of the PE practitioners.

Findings from this research also echo previous studies that striving for personal growth and apparent CPD relevancy can generate substantial motivation in teachers. Thus, it seems likely that physical educators who are also competitive athletes may

find themselves benefiting mainly from CPD experiences involving outside sports experts. This is so because discipline-specific CPD is typically not provided by internal staff development unit and peers' reciprocal teaching-learning endeavor is not common.

A desire to seek professional credibility also acted as an impetus for the PE practitioners to engage in CPD, as they strived to show students, fellow HE practitioners and themselves that they are competent in their roles. In that regard, some participants took on advanced academic pursuits. But the learning experience of further studies had not made any significant impact on the practitioners' daily work, instead it seems to have accentuated the disconnect between academic research and the teaching of skills-based courses.

Finally, this research revealed how physicality of CPD and of the PE profession tended to shape CPD decisions and experiences. Idiographically one participant experienced a health ordeal during her doctoral pursuit. Overall, the practitioners' experience in CPD focused on sports skills and techniques were infiltrated with worries and pain from injuries, and compromises and hope from recovery.

In the following sections, I will elaborate on practical implications for HE in Hong Kong, and for my own professional work in particular, and I will also make recommendations for further research.

Implications for Practice

Like previously argued, there are simply no easy ways to design effective CPD activities that could meet the diverse needs of all teachers (Makopoulou & Armour, 2011a). However, there are common core features of effective CPD such as being a social and collaborative process, ongoing and sustained in nature, and facilitated with care (Patton et al., 2015). But participants in this particular study were far from reaching those. Consequently, I am recommending a number of practical follow-up actions for enhancing HE PE practitioners' CPD experience as below.

First, dissemination of learning is recommended (Powell, Terrell, Furey, & Scott-Evans, 2003). PE practitioners may consider sharing their insights gained from a CPD experience among colleagues. Illustratively, during the process of my thesis research, I had shared my learning experience in a fitness training program and recommended it to my colleagues at work. In the end, six of them took my suggestion on board and they registered together for the training program. Even though it was only a one-day

short course, my colleagues found the contents stimulating and challenging, and they noted some useful points relevant to our teaching work. I felt strongly encouraged that my colleagues reacted positively to my recommendation and ended up benefiting from the same CPD program I had participated in. I am hoping to set an example of what fellow colleagues could do for each other in promoting meaningful CPD, and I plan to act similarly more often in the future.

Second, the potential of collaborative learning and the concept of professional learning communities need to be further explored (Makopoulou & Armour, 2007) by PE practitioners in the Hong Kong HE context. Since mutual trust and collegiality are pre-requisites to collaborative learning (Ning, Lee, & Lee, 2015), PE practitioners first need to create and seek opportunities to spend more time together as colleagues. The distancing feeling and distrust that PE practitioners felt, as revealed in the findings, would not be conducive to fostering learning communities. Joining CPD activities offered off-campus together, like what my colleagues did as described above, is one way to foster collegiality under a less formal atmosphere. By participating in and having the same CPD exposure, physical educators can have more common ground to base their discussion and explore insights from the CPD experience (Mugisha, 2015). For cases where collective action of teaching team seems too far-fetched, collaboration could begin by working with a single trusted colleague. Just like how selected participants in this study had experienced, they succeeded in finding some support from one trusted work peer. I argue that the perception of feeling supported may be more important than the actual amount of support when it comes to sustaining motivation to learn.

Third, in order to reap more benefits from CPD exposure and various teaching-learning activities, educators are advised to hone their reflection skills (Boud, Keough, & Walker, 1985). As revealed by the findings, not all PE practitioners were well equipped with reflection-in-action and/or reflection-on-action skills (Schon, 1983 & 1987) when it comes to performing daily duties and CPD. CPD workshops for skills in reflection have been shown to produce encouraging, sustained results for health practitioners (Tan, Cashell, & Bolderston, 2012), similar endeavors could be done for the benefits of PE practitioners. Such workshops can be organized within the department or work unit where the PE practitioners work to ensure situatedness of learning and application. Previously in my own work context, I had been approached

and invited by a CoP project leader in the Social Sciences Faculty to share tips on how to compile a comprehensive teaching portfolio. Such an experience could serve as a starting point for discussion and exploration among colleagues. Compiling a "reflective portfolio" (Botham, 2018, p. 167; Makhele, 2018) as a form of evidence in professional learning achieved through various channels would be a worthwhile and realistic target for enhancing reflection skills.

Recommendations for Further Research

The first step in seeking or designing appropriate CPD activities is to identify teacher's professional development needs (Moeini, 2008). In order to enable PE practitioners to see their strengths and weaknesses as teachers, I recommend exploring the possibility of teacher self-assessment as a way of enhancing teaching quality. Having teachers act as observers in their own lesson would enable them to realize their real practices (Derri, Vasiliadou, & Kioumourtzoglou, 2015). Such self-evaluation can cater for teachers who are not yet comfortable with peer observation and it can fill the void of constructive feedback that is currently lacking in the participants' CPD lived experience. The PE practitioners could set the investigation agenda themselves (e.g. which particular aspects of teaching practice to focus on) to ensure high relevancy (Graves & Moore, 2018) and a sense of ownership (Ince & Kitto, 2020). Such action research of one's own teaching practice is a scholarship of teaching and learning activity (Shulman, 2000); it can enhance the individual's sense of competency as a scholarly PE practitioner and possibly fuel further interest in trying new teaching strategies (Graves & Moore, 2018). As a constructive strategy for improving effectiveness of in-service CPD, a group of staff can build a self-assessment tool collectively as a team, thus further enhancing relatedness and collegiality (Ross & Bruce, 2007).

The physical demand of the PE profession in HE and its implications on CPD engagement is worthy of further examination. Despite a lesser focus on motor skill development in PE at the HE level, the physicality of PE teaching emerged as a significant theme in this study. Since all participants in this research were not beginning educators, it would be interesting to examine whether less experienced HE PE practitioners are similarly influenced by the physical conditions of the body in their CPD experience. This is of significance because a better understanding can guide the planning and design of more relevant CPD activities for the PE practitioners in

HE.

Personal Reflection on the Research Journey

The research journey has prompted me to re-examine my own teaching career and what and how I have chosen to engage in for my professional development. I came to realize that I could do more in my capacity of a teacher-leader in promoting CPD among colleagues. It is true that within the Hong Kong's HE system, there are various constraints and barriers to promoting CPD; and departmental supervisors often are not in position to provide the ongoing type of professional support that frontline educators seek. But university PE practitioners in Hong Kong enjoy a much higher degree of autonomy as compared to PE teachers at primary or secondary school levels. As HE educators, we have more say in the curricular contents as well as the mode of instruction. That, in effect, presents many opportunities for trying out different pedagogical concepts and strategies. I think physical educators in university are not necessarily cognizant of such opportunities, or they may not be taking advantage of such opportunities. Either way, university physical educators are selling themselves short in realizing the significance they could make in students' learning experience. Thus, during the course of my thesis research journey, I had purposely worked as a "lead learner of capacity building" (Day & Hadfield, 2004, p. 579) by writing a number of new course proposals which focus on interdisciplinary topics. Moreover, I concurrently acted as a critical friend to my colleagues and explored with them how they could follow suit, and how they could expand their professional realms. Such actions hopefully would enhance the sense of collegiality and professionalism in our work context.

In terms of development as a researcher, one of the most important points I learned is the need to focus succinctly on the arguments that I want my audience to remember (Williams, 2003). This is especially so for insider research like the current study where many findings may appear to be highly relevant and personal. It is critical to be selective and concentrate on findings that have the greatest potential to benefit the target audience, including PE practitioners, their work supervisors, and CPD providers in HE.

According to the Careers Research and Advisory Centre (CRAC, 2011), there are four domains in the researcher development framework (RDF): 1) knowledge and intellectual abilities, 2) personal effectiveness, 3) research governance and

organization, and 4) engagement, influence, and impact. The learning I noted above together with the practice implications and research ideas I suggested reflect my development in all domains of the RDF. Specifically, I enhanced my cognitive abilities in synthesizing data and constructively defended the research outcomes; I engaged in self-reflection on CPD practice and experience; I adhered to relevant codes of conduct and ethics for undertaking research; and I endeavored to support the learning of others when involved in teaching and mentoring activities (CRAC, 2011). With these valuable gains from the doctoral journey, I look forward to contributing as a budding researcher in the area of teaching and learning in PE.

Final Remarks

In completing the current study, I have become vicariously more experienced in the phenomenon of CPD by examining other PE practitioners' experiences (van Manen, 1990). Based on the findings, it is affirmed that CPD is not a straight-forward process compelled by one single factor (Hoban & Erickson, 2004). Various personal, social, and professional concerns and issues framed the lived experience of the seven practitioners. I strived to make sense of the physical educators' experiences and recognize potential impact on practice (Hopkins et al., 2017) in a double interpretive, phenomenological manner (Smith, 2004). To a certain degree, the practitioners had struggled in realizing learning and taking care of their bodies in their CPD journeys. Faced with minimal guidance and support, and the presence of barriers such as heavy workload and doubts in CPD choices, the PE practitioners nonetheless safeguarded their professional credibility by integrating their personal and professional interests, and learning in various self-directed pathways.

Undeniably, there is still a lot to be done in the area of CPD for PE practitioners in Hong Kong. The physical educators are selling themselves short as practitioner-scholars in HE – they have not reflected thoroughly on, and more importantly acted upon their CPD experience to maximize probable benefits (Clegg, Tan & Saeidi, 2002). The professional potential of these HE physical educators has yet to be fully explored.

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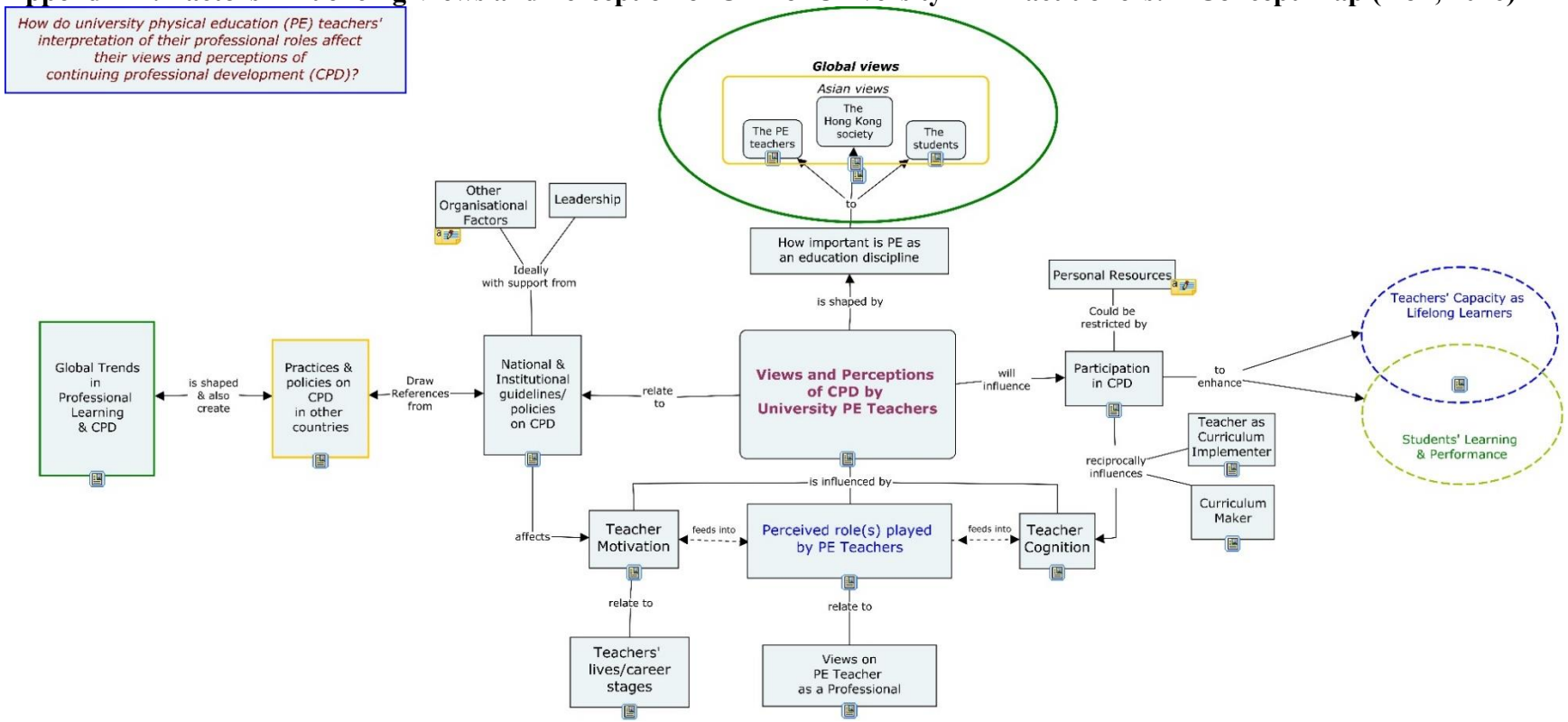
Appendix A: Factors influencing Views and Perception of CPD of University PE Practitioners: A Concept Map (Hon, 2016)



Appendix B: Interview Guide

Interview Guide

How do PE practitioners experience continuing professional development (CPD) in Hong Kong's higher education?

	Interview Questions
First Interview	- Please tell me how you come to become a physical educator. - Please tell me about the nature of your job. What roles do you think you play in your university? And in serving the students? - How have your roles change in your career history as a physical educator? - What thoughts come to you when you think about "CPD" i.e. "continuing professional development" for PE practitioners? - Why is CPD important to you? - Can you give me some examples of PE-CPD you have participated in? What were the main reason(s) for choosing the PE-CPD you had taken before? - From where do you get financial resources to support your CPD endeavours? - What would be the most difficult barrier for you to overcome in deciding to engage in CPD?
Second Interview	- What are some of the types of materials that you have received from a CPD program? Which is the best type(s)? - Are you aware of the types of PE-CPD that your colleagues have taken part in? Please give me some examples that you know of. - If you were asked to plan a PE-CPD program/activity for you and your colleagues, how would you design it? - Please share with me some joy and struggles in striving to fulfil your duties and roles throughout your career? - How would you describe the extent to which your past CPD experience has helped you in fulfilling the job duties/roles you mentioned earlier? - Please give me an example(s) of things you have changed as a result of participating in a CPD activity. - How do you think educators/academics from other disciplines view physical educators? - How would you define/describe what a "professional" is? - Have you ever thought of discontinuing a CPD activity/program that you had embarked on? What happened that time/in those cases? - Have you ever discussed or been consulted by colleagues on issues related to CPD?

Appendix C: Main Categories of CPD Related Documents by Channel of Access

Access Type	**Nature of Documentary (no. of documents)**	**No. of Individual Documents**
Open access (i.e. websites)	· Webpages related to functional units providing services related to staff training and development (3) · Webpages related to different grants supporting staff's conference participation and teaching enhancement (4) · Webpages related to new staff orientation and induction (4) · Information paper on professional development of teachers at a university (1)	12
Restricted access (i.e. accessed and provided by research participants)	· Documents related to policies and procedures of obtaining financial support for staff training and development	6
Personal Collections (i.e. provided by research participants)	· Report for Staff Development Grants (3) · Program admission letter (1) · Document related to studentship (1) · Program progress report (1) · Document related to conference grant (1) · Document related to conference leave (1) · Document related to reflection on teaching (1)	9
	Total no. of individual documents:	27

Appendix D: Personal Narrative of One Participant

Addison's Narrative

Addison deems that for many university students, compulsory PE classes are just like something that they have to fulfil. Only a minority of students would develop interest in learning more about physical activities and knowledge related to sports.

Addison is an avid high-jumper who is competing regularly to strive in reaching new personal best. Since his sporting endeavors in high-jumping involves physical risks, Addison works hard in doing physical conditioning so that he could continue his pursuit in high-jumping without jeopardizing his full-time work. Addison thinks that it is important to act as good role model for students that continual participation in sports and physical activities is desirable.

Due to the closer contact with students in the athletics team, Addison finds more job satisfaction in coaching than in teaching. Nevertheless, he is somewhat frustrated that university team members tend not to devote much time training with the university team because they all train with outside coaches. Addison however continues to upgrade himself in knowledge and training methods for high-jumping, hoping that one day he would meet the right students to pass on his passion and insights for the sport.

Addison sees CPD as something important which should be done in a continual fashion. When he comes across CPD programs that really interest him, he would immediately enroll provided that he could make time. But he would prefer participating in CPD programs along with some company if the program is not that attractive. Addison always follows up CPD participation with further exploration on topics or issues brought up in the CPD exposure; it is often through these follow-ups that he finds valuable insights.

Addison considers himself one of the least experienced staff among his work colleagues. Although he has some vague thoughts on doing further studies, he feels no urgency and no pressure in doing so at the moment.

Appendix E: University of Liverpool Ethical Approval

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL | ONLINE PROGRAMMES

Dear SzeSze Hon			
I am pleased to inform you that the EdD. Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC) has approved your application for ethical approval for your study. Details and conditions of the approval can be found below.			
Sub-Committee:		EdD. Virtual Programme Research Ethics Committee (VPREC)	
Review type:		Expedited	
PI:			
School:		Lifelong Learning	
Title:			
First Reviewer:		Dr. Rita Kop	
Second Reviewer:		Dr. Mary Johnson	
Other members of the Committee		Dr. Morag Gray, Dr. Kalman Winston, Dr. Lucilla Costa, Dr. Janet Strivens, Dr. Peter Kahn, Dr. Ian Willis, Dr. Ann Qualter	
Date of Approval:		10th October 2017	
The application was APPROVED subject to the following conditions:			
Conditions			
1	Mandatory	M: All serious adverse events must be reported to the VPREC within 24 hours of their occurrence, via the EdD Thesis Primary Supervisor.	

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL | ONLINE PROGRAMMES

This approval applies for the duration of the research. If it is proposed to extend the duration of the study as specified in the application form, the Sub-Committee should be notified. If it is proposed to make an amendment to the research, you should notify the Sub-Committee by following the Notice of Amendment procedure outlined at http://www.liv.ac.uk/media/livacuk/researchethics/notice%20of%20amendment.doc.
Where your research includes elements that are not conducted in the UK, approval to proceed is further conditional upon a thorough risk assessment of the site and local permission to carry out the research, including, where such a body exists, local research ethics committee approval. No documentation of local permission is required (a) if the researcher will simply be asking organizations to distribute research invitations on the researcher's behalf, or (b) if the researcher is using only public means to identify/contact participants. When medical, educational, or business records are analysed or used to identify potential research participants, the site needs to explicitly approve access to data for research purposes (even if the researcher normally has access to that data to perform his or her job).
Please note that the approval to proceed depends also on research proposal approval.

Kind regards,

Lucilla Crosta

Chair, EdD. VPREC

Appendix F: Ethical Approval of the Researcher's University

2019/8/3 [redacted] [PE] Result for HASC Application -- HASC/17-18/0383

[redacted]

Sze Sze HON [redacted]

[PE] Result for HASC Application -- HASC/17-18/0383

1 message

hasc@[redacted]edu.hk> Thu, Aug 17, 2017 at 12:20 PM
To: trekker[redacted]
Cc: hasc@[redacted]

Dear Miss Hon, Sze Sze (PE),

This is to inform you that 'approval' has been granted to your research project HASC/17-18/0383 by HASC. Below is/are the comment(s):

Please be reminded that under normal circumstances, the research data should be kept for 7 years.

For enquiries, please contact Ms. Kit Ng at extn. 7940. Thank you.

Regards,

Committee on the Use of Human and Animal Subjects in Teaching and Research

--- Disclaimer ---

This email is intended only for the person or entity to which it is addressed and may contain confidential and/or privileged materials for specific purposes. If you are not the addressee you may not copy, forward, disclose or use any part of it. If you have received this email in error, please notify us by replying to this email and delete it from your system immediately. Internet communications cannot be guaranteed to be timely, secure, error- or virus-free. Neither the University nor the sender accepts liability for any errors or omissions caused during the transmission process.

SAVE PAPER - THINK BEFORE YOU PRINT!.

Appendix G: Sample of Authorization Letter

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

Authorisation Letter

I, Sze Sze Hon , am enrolled in the Doctor of Education (EdD) Programme at the University of Liverpool in partnership with Laureate Education.

I entered the programme in order to develop doctoral-level depth of knowledge and research skills across areas in higher education such as higher education management, innovative approaches to educational leadership, decision making, as well as ethics, social responsibility, and social change. As an EdD student I am required to undertake a thesis research project as a graduate requirement. This project provides an opportunity for me to explore the continuing professional development (CPD) experiences of fellow physical education (PE) practitioners working in local higher education institutions. I will take this opportunity to apply my scholarly learning to issues related to CPD specific to PE. It is anticipated that insights from this project may help to inform future policies and practices in CPD in universities in Hong Kong.

In the context of my research in the EdD programme, I hereby request authorisation to access organisational data, facility use, and use of personnel time for research purposes relevant to my required assignment. This includes permission to access documents from the archives of the organisation which are not necessarily in the public domain and which the research participants may normally have access to when performing the responsibilities of their job. This also includes authorisation to conduct interviews with selected employees of the organisation about the organisation's policies, programmes, and practices. I also request permission to provide my personal reflections on the collected data. I have included with this letter a Study Information Sheet which outlines in greater details the nature of the research project.

I appreciate the opportunity to engage in research involving your organisation. Please contact me and/or the Research Participant Advocate at the University of Liverpool with any question or concerns you may have.

My contact details are:

Sze Sze Hon [redacted] email: szesze.hon@online.liverpool.ac.uk or [redacted]

Mail Address: S.S. Hon, [redacted] Hong Kong.

The contact details of the Research Participant Advocate at the University of Liverpool are:

001-612-312-1210 (USA number)

Email address liverpoolethics@ohecampus.com

Sincerely,

.....

S.S. Hon, EdD student

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

Title of Research Project: A Qualitative Phenomenological Research: How do Physical Education practitioners experience Continuing Professional Development in the context of higher education in Hong Kong?

Researcher: Sze Sze Hon

Please initial box

1. I confirm that I have read and have understood the Study Information Sheet dated Sep. 4, 2017 for the above study. I have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these answered satisfactorily. ☐

2. I hereby grant permission to the researcher for all relevant data access, facility use, and use of personnel time for research purposes. ☐

3. I understand that, under the Data Privacy Ordinance (Hong Kong), I can at any time ask for access to the information provided and I can also request the destruction of that information if I wish. ☐

4. I understand that information on the organisation will be anonymised, will be maintained as proprietary information, and will be kept in confidentiality. Additionally, I understand that no results of the research will be made publically available without my specific approval. ☐

Name of Person giving consent	Date	Signature

Job Title of Person giving consent

Sze Sze Hon	4/9/2017	
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix H: Informed Consent Statement

UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL

Informed Consent Statement

A Qualitative Phenomenological Research:
How do PE practitioners experience continuing professional development (CPD) in the context of higher education in Hong Kong?

You are cordially invited to take part in a research study. Please read through the information provided below before you decide whether to participate. If there is any information you do not understand, you could ask the researcher in person or otherwise. Thank you for taking the time to consider.

RESEARCH PURPOSE AND PROCEDURES

- The purpose of this project is to design and implement a research project that explores how physical education (PE) practitioners experience continuing professional development (CPD) in higher education in Hong Kong. The researcher is conducting this project to fulfil requirements in a doctoral programme module (Doctor of Education, University of Liverpool).
- The researcher will engage in various data collection methods to gather qualitative/quantitative primary and secondary data. The main sources of primary data will include personal interviews and CPD related documents.
- The researcher will collect and analyse documents of organisational policies, practices, and programmes (such as program/course documents, course syllabi, and meeting minutes) within the organisations to determine how information revealed within these artefacts can support the analysis and arguments as related to CPD.
- Each participant will be asked to take part in at least two semi-structured individual interviews; each lasting approximately 60 - 75 minutes in duration. The interviews will be audio-recorded and conducted at time slots and venues agreed upon by both the participant and the researcher in advance so as to minimize any disturbances to normal work/other personal obligations.
- No deception will be used in the research project. You are entitled to ask questions related to your participation anytime as you deem appropriate.
- Each participant will also be asked to gather and share text/hand-written documents and other artefacts related to her/his previous CPD experiences. These items will only be photographed or collected as data by the researcher upon participants' verbal consent.
- If you choose to take part, some of the data you generate through the interview process or otherwise will be used to compile an anonymous report and shared with faculty and students at the University of Liverpool.
- This study is small in scale and the total number of participants is from six to nine. Pseudonyms will be used in analyses and the final report. In all cases, the researcher will not disclose to any third party that you participated in this project, and your privacy will be safeguarded in the study process and in the final report. Additionally, no results of the research will be made publically available without specific approval from the project participants concerned.
- The personal interviews will be audio-recorded using digital devices. Only the researcher will have access to the audio data and the data will be kept securely using double passwords for up to seven years upon completion of the project. You have the right to request that all records of your recorded interview(s) be returned to you or destroyed anytime. The audio data gathered from the interviews will not be used for additional purposes without your additional permission.

RISKS

- It is not anticipated that you will experience any physical harm from participation in this project. However, you may experience discomfort when faced with certain interview questions. In such cases, you have the right to refrain from replying the question(s). Should you have any concerns in regard to participating, please inform the researcher immediately (see contact information below).

_____
Participant's initials

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BENEFITS

- The research activities are intended to help the researcher learn to apply phenomenological research approaches in examining the lived experiences of fellow PE educators. Phenomenology is based on the theory of achieving understanding through interpretation. Potentially, research insights can be valuable in informing future policies and/practices in CPD in the local PE field of Hong Kong.
- The main benefits of participation in this project will be an opportunity for reflection and sharing on current and past personal views, feelings, and practices in relation to CPD and an enhanced level of collegiality and professional efficacy. All research participants will be contributing to a project filling the gap of qualitative studies and experiential knowledge in the local PE field at the university level.

CONFIDENTIALITY

- Pseudonyms will be used to enhance anonymity for research participants starting from the stage of data analysis. Descriptive data on participants' personal particulars will be handled with care. Age ranges instead of specific age will be used in report. Gender neutral pseudonyms will be adopted; and additional consent will be sought from participants should significant insights surface from analysis that call for gender specific references.
- Secondary data such as organisational documents and personal artefacts will also be anonymized when collected. Data will be stored for seven years with adequate provisions to maintain confidentiality (i.e. double password protection for digital data and securely locked file cabinet for hard copies).

CONTACT

If you have questions at any time about the research or the procedures, you may contact the researcher as listed below:

Sze Sze Hon [redacted], email: szesze.hon@online.liverpool.ac.uk or [redacted]
Mail Address: S.S. Hon, [redacted] Hong Kong.

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this research project, you may contact the Research Participant Advocate at the University of Liverpool are: 001-612-312-1210 (USA number). Email address: liverpoolethics@ohecampus.com

PARTICIPATION

Your participation is entirely voluntary and you should only participate if you want to. You have the right to withdraw from the project anytime without explanation or repercussion. Data generated by your participation up to the period of withdrawal may be used with your consent. Otherwise you may request that those data be destroyed and not used for the purpose of analysis or report.

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All essential information about the stated research project is presented here in written form for your consideration. You are cordially invited to give written consent to voluntarily participate in the project by signing below.

CONSENT

I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Signature of the Subject _____ Date _____

Signature of the Investigator _____ Date _____

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