

## ABSTRACT

### Continuing Professional Development of Teachers in Secondary Schools in Jamaica: Implications for Practice & Policy

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This thesis examined the types of professional development activities that secondary school teachers in Jamaica engaged in most often and perceived most beneficial to their growth and development, teaching practice, success in teaching and other educational outcomes. The study also determined if significant differences existed in the amount of time spent on and teachers' perception of professional development activities according to school classification, gender and number of years in teaching. Using a mixed research methodology, the sample consisted of 755 secondary school teachers who were randomly selected from different school classifications to participate in a survey and six traditional secondary teachers who were identified through purposeful sampling to participate in in-depth interviews. The findings showed that there were several professional development activities, such as experimenting with new ideas and methodologies, reading educational books and sharing with colleagues that teachers engaged in most often and perceived most beneficial to their development and success in teaching. In addition, the results indicated that there were differences in time spent on, and perceptions of professional development for teachers according to school classification, gender and years in teaching. These findings will assist a) school leaders in planning ongoing developmental interventions for teachers in secondary schools in order to improve educational outcomes and b) Ministry of Education policy makers in developing professional development policies and opportunities for teachers in order to improve teacher quality and the education system in Jamaica.

**Key Words:** professional development, professional development activities, teachers' perception, teaching practice, educational outcomes, teacher quality