



THE USE OF FACEBOOK GROUPS FOR CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT: EFL TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS AND EXPERIENCES

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Abstract:

The importance of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) for EFL teachers has grown significantly in recent years, particularly in technology-mediated learning where social media are used for informal and self-directed professional learning. This study was conducted to investigate EFL teachers' perceptions and experiences of using Facebook groups (FBGs) for CPD in the context of the Mekong Delta, Vietnam. A mixed-methods design was utilized, involving questionnaires for forty-two EFL teachers and semi-structured interviews with six teachers. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the quantitative data, while theme analysis was used to analyze the qualitative data. These findings reported that Facebook groups were viewed as useful, flexible and supportive spaces for professional learning. Facebook groups were utilized by teachers to look for teaching materials, new teaching methods, educational videos, and to update their professional knowledge. However, participation was reported as primarily passive, with teachers mostly reading posts and searching for materials. Some challenges were identified, such as information overload, distractions and concerns for content reliability. The findings shed light on the concept of Facebook groups as informal CPD platforms. Pedagogical implications were suggested to facilitate EFL teachers' professional development in educational settings in Vietnam.

Keywords: continuous professional development, Facebook groups, English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers, informal learning, teacher professional development

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1. Introduction

It has been agreed that CPD serves as a vital tool in improving teaching efficiency, enriching pedagogic knowledge, and developing professional identity, especially within the context of EFL learning environments (Desimone, 2009). In language education, CPD enables teachers to adapt to curriculum shifts, changing teaching requirements, and students' needs by participating in CPD activities including training, cooperative work, and reflection (Richards & Farrell, 2005). However, the traditional approach to CPD has been found to be disjointed, rigid and not immediately relevant to teachers' day-to-day classroom practice (Borg, 2015). Informal and technology-mediated professional learning are receiving more attention in recent years, as they provide opportunities for teachers to learn flexibly, independently, and continuously, which is a challenge of traditional CPD. Social media platforms like Facebook, for example, offer opportunities for teachers to join online communities, share resources, collaborate with other teachers, and help others grow professionally (Trust, 2017). Thus, Facebook groups can serve as a community of practice, allowing teachers to develop professional knowledge continually via interaction and conversation.

Recent studies have increasingly emphasized the role of Facebook groups and online communities in supporting EFL teachers' Continuous Professional Development (CPD) in both international and Vietnamese contexts. The researchers Bett & Makewa (2018), Al-Jarf (2021), Abdallah & Waer (2024) and Terry & Muralova (2025) mentioned Facebook groups as an informal community in which teachers exchanged ideas, shared teaching materials, sought solutions to problems related to the class, got support and acquired professional knowledge. Likewise, studies carried out by Bui (2018), Mai *et al.* (2020), Le (2023) and Tran & Phan (2025) show that participation in Facebook groups facilitated collaboration among EFL teachers in Vietnam with other people, helped them reflect on their work, be flexible and professionally involved. Nevertheless, previous research mainly focused on interaction patterns and general perceptions without paying much consideration to teachers' experiences with Facebook-based CPD and its effect on classroom teaching. Therefore, further research is needed to explore EFL teachers' perceptions and experiences of using Facebook groups for CPD.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the perceptions and experiences of EFL teachers with regard to the use of Facebook groups as a CPD tool. In particular, the study investigates teachers' perceptions of the advantages and difficulties of using Facebook for CPD and their experiences of engaging in CPD Facebook groups. To achieve these aims, the following research questions were addressed:

- 1) What are EFL teachers' perceptions of using Facebook groups for CPD? and
- 2) What are EFL teachers' experiences of participating in Facebook groups for CPD?

The results are expected to give insights into the role of Facebook groups as informal CPD platforms and their contribution to the professional learning of EFL teachers.

2. Literature review

2.1 Continuous Professional Development in EFL

The concept of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) has become a critical need in teaching careers (e.g., Kurteshi & Rrustemi, 2025; Le, 2020). Generally, CPD is described as a life-long and continuous learning process through which teachers engage in formal and informal learning processes to develop their professional knowledge, skills, and practice (Day & Sachs, 2004; OECD, 2009). Unlike temporary and isolated training sessions, CPD involves continuous reflection and responsiveness of the process to improve teachers' long-term professional development.

Previous studies have revealed that CPD improves teachers' performance, professional attitudes and beliefs, and learners' academic achievement (Avalos, 2011; Borg, 2015). Recent studies have provided further evidence about both advantages and difficulties of implementing CPD in EFL contexts. For example, Aamer (2024) found out that CPD increases the pedagogical knowledge and practices of EFL teachers; however, it can be limited by time and institutional support. In another study, Hossain and Boonmoh (2025) discovered that CPD helps EFL teachers cope with educational changes and requirements of the learners. Nevertheless, some issues are associated with the implementation process and teachers' professional needs. Within the present study, CPD can be viewed as a process in which teachers undertake professional development training to grow personally and professionally.

2.2 Facebook groups as informal CPD platforms

In recent years, the nature of CPD has been influenced by digital technologies, thus making the process more flexible, accessible, and learner-centered (Trust, 2017). The importance of CPD in this context is particularly noticeable in light of the COVID-19 outbreak since traditional face-to-face training had to be discontinued, and CPD switched to virtual modes. This led to the development of Facebook groups as a way of offering informal CPD, especially in EFL settings. These online communities provide opportunities for teachers to share their teaching materials, exchange their professional ideas and offer each other support, and thus provide a learning environment similar to a community of practice based on actual classroom practice (Mai *et al.*, 2020).

In these online environments, professional learning communities are largely formed through interaction and participation. Teachers are no longer just consumers of information, but active participants who share their classroom practices, materials and experiences. These exchanges of ideas foster continuous professional dialogue, and Facebook groups are referred to as "*virtual staffrooms*" (Terry & Muralová, 2025) that connect teachers from different geographies. Furthermore, Facebook groups allow for just-in-time learning because the teacher can post instant issues that are occurring in class and get immediate feedback from other teachers (Al-Jarf, 2021). Teachers are exposed to a variety of views and pedagogical styles that extends their professional knowledge and gives teachers the opportunity to reflect on their own teaching.

2.3 Teacher self-efficacy

The concept of self-efficacy refers to individuals' beliefs in their capabilities to organize and carry out actions necessary to reach desired goals (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy determines which actions a teacher would take, their level of effort exerted toward reaching specific goals and how long they persist despite failing in their attempts (Bandura, 1997). According to Bandura's theory, self-efficacy may be developed using data gathered from four different sources:

- 1) performance or mastery, depending on the success or failure experiences of the teacher;
- 2) vicarious experiences through modeling other people's success or failures;
- 3) verbal persuasion based on the negative or positive gains of feedback; and
- 4) physiological and emotional states, which depend on the understanding of one's physical and emotional reactions.

Previous research shows that greater self-efficacy among EFL teachers is related to various characteristics such as professional development, good teaching practice, instructional quality, emotional regulation, job satisfaction, commitment to teaching, and psychological well-being (e.g, Choi & Lee, 2018; Fathi & Derakhshan, 2019; Fathi *et al.*, 2021). In addition, self-efficacy has been found to reduce burnout and positively influence teachers' willingness to communicate and pedagogical success (e.g, Demir *et al.*, 2015; Fathi & Saeedian, 2020; Ghanizadeh & Moafian, 2011). Studies by Cansoy *et al.* (2020), Safari *et al.* (2020), and Zee and Koomen (2016) further indicated that teacher self-efficacy strongly predicts professional growth, psychological well-being, and students' academic development. Drawing on the conceptualizations of teacher self-efficacy, it can be inferred that teachers with a strong sense of efficacy are likely to enhance their professional growth, thereby improving their own teaching practices and student learning outcomes.

2.4 Theoretical framework underpinning the study

The framework that guided this study was the Interconnected Model of Teacher Professional Development proposed by Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002), where learning among teachers is conceptualized as a continuous process influenced by interactions in their professional settings. Rather than treating professional development as the simple transmission of knowledge through formal training, the model highlights the roles of reflection, interaction, and classroom experience in teacher growth. Such a perspective is closely related to the present study because participation in Facebook groups can be considered an informal and socially mediated form of Continuous Professional Development (CPD).

In Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2002) model, teacher professional growth is understood through the interaction of four domains: the external domain, the personal domain, the domain of practice, and the domain of consequence. In the current study, Facebook groups can be regarded as the elements of the external domain, where teachers gain access to professional sources, discuss their teaching experiences, and communicate

with each other. In the process of such communication, teachers start developing their new knowledge and professional perceptions in the personal domain. Then, when applying their knowledge in practice, they transform into the domain of practice.

Attention is given to the domain of consequence, which concerns teachers' perceptions of the outcomes resulting from changes in practice, including increased confidence, improved teaching effectiveness, or stronger student engagement. Previous studies have suggested that online professional communities can support collaboration, reflective learning, and self-directed professional growth among teachers (Marcelo-Martínez *et al.*, 2025). Thus, Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2002) model was selected as the theoretical framework for this study because it provides a useful lens for understanding EFL teachers' perceptions and experiences of using Facebook groups for ongoing professional development.

3. Research methods

3.1 Research design

A mixed-methods approach was used in this study in order to deepen understanding of EFL teachers' perceptions and experiences of CPD with regard to FBGs. Specifically, a sequential explanatory design was used, where quantitative data were gathered and analyzed in the first phase, and qualitative data were then gathered to further explain the initial findings in the second phase (Fraenkel *et al.*, 2012).

In the quantitative phase, a structured questionnaire was used to determine general patterns of teachers' perceptions and experiences of participating in FBGs. The semi-structured interviews were undertaken to gain more insight into the participants' experience. Triangulation was carried out through the use of both numerical and interview data, hence improving the reliability of the research study (Fraenkel *et al.*, 2012).

3.2 Research context and participants

The research study was carried out in Dong Thap Province, Mekong Delta region, which lacks access to educational facilities and professional development programs as compared to urban centers (World Bank, 2020). Despite the fact that the research was done using data obtained from a university in Dong Thap Province, the respondents for this study included EFL teachers who had undertaken a professional development program at this university.

A total of 42 EFL teachers participated in the questionnaire survey, while six teachers were selected for semi-structured interviews. Of this sample, the greater portion was constituted of female teachers (73.8%) compared to male teachers, who were 26.2%. Almost half of the respondents belonged to the above 35 age category (47.6%), while the other major age group was between 31–35 years (26.2%). When it comes to teaching experience, the majority (38.1%) of respondents have been teaching for 11–15 years. Concerning workplace locations, the majority of respondents belonged to urban areas (40.5%), while others were from rural areas (35.7%) and town/suburban areas (23.8%).

Lower secondary schools represented the majority (38.1%) of those who responded, followed by upper secondary schools (26.2%), primary schools (23.8%), and university/colleges (11.9%). A convenient sample method was employed to select accessible respondents, while a purposive sample technique was used for selecting interviewees in order to have a variety of professionals in terms of teaching experience, educational level, and different settings. The number of interviewees was selected through data saturation criteria (Guest *et al.*, 2006).

3.3 Data collection and analysis

The data were gathered by using a survey and semi-structured interviews. The survey, adopted from Aldossary (2022), had a combination of close-ended questions on a five-point Likert scale and two open-ended questions. The original items were reviewed and modified to match the objectives of the present study and the Vietnamese EFL context. Minor changes in wording were made to improve clarity and ensure that the items reflected teachers' experiences of using FBGs for CPD. It was developed in both English and Vietnamese and had three parts, including personal information, teachers' perceptions about FBGs for CPD, and teachers' experiences in participating in FBGs for CPD. The survey was distributed using Google Forms.

Prior to actual data gathering, the questionnaire was checked for content relevance and readability by the supervisor. After that, a pilot test was carried out among some EFL teachers who did not take part in the main research. This helped in making necessary modifications to some questions. Besides, a set of nine semi-structured questions were conducted online using Google Meet for 30-45 minutes each session. All interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed verbatim, and conducted using bilingual interview guides to support clear communication (Fraenkel *et al.*, 2012).

Quantitative data were analyzed by utilizing the SPSS software version 20.0. Cronbach's alpha was employed to test the reliability of the questionnaire, whereas descriptive statistics such as frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation were used to explore teachers' perceptions and experiences. Qualitative data were thematically analyzed following Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase approach. Initially, all audio files from the interviews were transcribed word for word and read several times in order to get familiarized with the data. Then, initial codes were developed through identification of meaningful data segments in relation to research questions. Codes similar to each other were placed in one category and later developed into larger themes. These themes were checked multiple times in order to accurately represent the answers provided by the participants.

3.4 Ethical considerations

The ethical issues were taken into consideration during the study to ensure the rights and welfare of the participants (Fraenkel *et al.*, 2012). Participants were provided with information sheets and consent forms before the data collection process and were informed about the purposes of the research and procedures. They were also provided

with the information that they could withdraw from the study at any time without facing any consequences of withdrawal (Fraenkel *et al.*, 2012). Pseudonyms were used to protect the participants' identities. The responses to the questionnaires and the recordings of the interviews were securely kept and only accessed by the researcher and supervisor (Cohen *et al.*, 2018).

4. Findings and discussion

4.1. Findings

4.1.1. Quantitative findings

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' perceptions of benefits of FBGs for CPD

Items	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
I think I can manage students' behaviours (e.g. providing verbal feedback) through Facebook group.	42	1.00	5.00	3.21	.97
I think professional development programs and training opportunities through Facebook group are useful to my teaching.	42	2.00	5.00	3.83	.79
I think using a Facebook group helps me improve my English proficiency in teaching practices.	42	2.00	5.00	3.73	.76
I think I have not applied cultural aspects of English (e.g., idioms, expressions,...) through discussions in the Facebook group.	42	1.00	5.00	2.54	.86
I think using Facebook group is a way to interact with other teachers of English from different countries.	42	2.00	5.00	4.33	.75
I think Facebook group does not divert teachers' attention from the main topics or academic-related content.	42	2.00	5.00	3.45	.86

Table 1 shows that teachers' perception of the benefits of FBGs for CPD is generally positive, with mean scores from 2.55 to 4.33. The highest mean score was obtained for interacting with teachers from other countries ($M=4.33$, $SD=.75$), indicating that teachers reported a high level of interest in professional networking and communication through the Facebook groups. Next, professional development opportunities ($M=3.83$, $SD=.79$) and improving English skills as a language of instruction ($M=3.74$, $SD=.77$) were found to be of great benefit to teachers. Similarly, Facebook groups were considered by the teachers as facilitating professional development but not distracting them greatly ($M=3.45$, $SD=0.86$), whereas their perception about the management of their students' behavior was relatively lower ($M=3.21$, $SD=0.98$). Finally, the lowest mean scores were related to applying cultural aspects of English through Facebook group discussions ($M=2.55$, $SD=.86$), indicating a lower level of confidence in this aspect. In short, teachers

reported that Facebook groups were primarily useful tools for professional learning, communication, and teaching support.

Table 2: Descriptive statistics of EFL teachers' perceived challenges of FBGs for CPD

Items	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
I think teaching content shared in Facebook group may be inaccurate.	42	1.00	5.00	2.64	.95
I think teachers find it hard to navigate Facebook group functions (e.g., searching posts, filtering content,...).	42	1.00	5.00	2.64	.87
I think ideas or information obtained from Facebook groups are not always practical to implement.	42	1.00	4.00	2.02	.84
I think Facebook group contents may not be relevant to Vietnamese cultural contexts or curricular features.	42	1.00	5.00	2.76	1.10
I think the Facebook group may yield/ generate excessive resources, making it hard for teachers to decide what is useful in instruction.	42	1.00	5.00	2.92	1.02
I think teachers do not have enough time to engage in the Facebook group due to their workload.	42	1.00	4.00	2.57	.99

Table 2 presents that teachers faced some challenges in using the FBGs for Continuous Professional Development (CPD); however, these challenges were not very severe. The greatest difficulty was information overload ($M=2.93$, $SD=1.02$), as teachers sometimes found it hard to identify useful materials among the large amount of shared content. Likewise, teachers had concerns regarding the appropriateness of the shared content for Vietnamese contexts of teaching ($M=2.76$, $SD=1.10$). In addition, some stated concerns about the accuracy of information shared ($M=2.64$, $SD=.96$), problems with accessing the group functions (searching posts, $M=2.64$, $SD=.88$), and lack of time to participate due to work ($M=2.57$, $SD=.99$). The score with the lowest mean was the practicality of information from Facebook groups ($M=2.02$, $SD=.84$). The results reported that teachers have a positive attitude towards the Facebook group but they still had some problems with content quality, information flow and time management.

Table 3: EFL teachers' experiences of using FBGs for CPD

Items	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
I use Facebook group to stay updated with new trends in classroom instructions (e.g. digitally-assisted learning) through Facebook group.	42	2.00	5.00	3.88	.88
I use the Facebook group to search for EFL-related resources (e.g. academic articles, teaching ideas,...).	42	2.00	5.00	3.95	.76

I use Facebook groups to seek advice on answering students' questions and give them feedback.	42	1.00	5.00	3.26	1.01
I use the Facebook group because it is useful for accessing educational videos and tutorials.	42	1.00	5.00	3.90	.91
I use Facebook group to exchange ideas and collect feedback from colleagues.	42	2.00	5.00	3.57	1.03
I use Facebook groups to explore new ideas about teaching methods and practices.	42	2.00	5.00	4.00	.96
I use Facebook groups to keep up with the latest news about EFL teaching.	42	2.00	5.00	3.97	.92

As can be seen in Table 3, teachers utilized the Facebook Groups (FBGs) for different purposes concerning their CPD, with the highest scores varying from 3.26 to 4.00. The most common activities included investigating new ways of teaching and practices ($M=4.00$, $SD=.96$), staying updated about new developments in the area of EFL teaching ($M=3.98$, $SD=.92$), and searching for EFL related sources (ideas for lessons and other academic sources) ($M=3.95$, $SD=.76$). It is also worth mentioning that educational videos and tutorials are the main means of searching for the required resources through Facebook Groups ($M=3.90$, $SD=.91$). The lowest use ($M=3.26$, $SD=1.01$) of the groups on Facebook was found regarding seeking assistance in responding to the students' inquiries and feedback. Generally, it can be said that based on the results, the Facebook groups were mainly employed for practical purposes of accessing teaching materials and information on new learning techniques.

4.1.2 Qualitative findings

While teachers perceived Facebook groups (FBGs) as practical, flexible, and supportive informal learning environments, their actual experiences are characterized by a pattern of passive engagement, the adaptation of resources to the local context, and a complex emotional dichotomy between professional motivation and feelings of inadequacy. The following section presents their perceptions and experiences of FBGs for continuous professional development.

Theme 1: EFL teachers' perceptions of using FBGs for CPD

This theme explores the attitudes and beliefs teachers held regarding the utility of FBGs.

When asked about their perceptions of Facebook groups as tools for professional development, Teacher 3, 5,6 regarded Facebook groups as online social networks which enabled teachers to share their experiences, teaching material, and professional knowledge. The following extracts illustrate their perceptions.

"...an online space where teachers... can connect, share materials, experiences, and ideas."
(Teacher 3, interview extract)

"...it became like a community where everyone could share experiences, tips, and lesson plans." (Teacher 5, interview extract)

"...teachers can share materials, share experiences, learn from each other and support each other." (Teacher 6, interview extract)

Moreover, teachers highly valued the practical benefits of Facebook groups. Three out of six participants reported that using Facebook groups to search for games, lesson ideas, and classroom activities that could be directly adapted to suit their classroom contexts and students' needs. The following extracts present their perceptions.

"...I usually see posts sharing methods or new games, like some posts that people share games or activities they do in class. I find those the most useful and I can apply." (Teacher 2, interview extract)

"...I redesigned the reading lessons into a game format..." (Teacher 4, interview extract)

"...I used those games to apply in class." (Teacher 6, interview extract)

In addition, Teacher 2,3,6 perceived Facebook groups as flexible and accessible forms of CPD because professional learning could take place anytime and anywhere. The following extracts illustrate these views.

"...I can learn anytime, anywhere." (Teacher 3, interview extract)

"...Compared to a workshop or a course, I find joining a Facebook group more flexible in terms of time. It's like there's a continuous flow of discussions and topics that people send up for us to exchange and share, depending on our pace and frequency of participation. So it's very flexible." (Teacher 2, interview extract)

"... I'm not limited to time." (Teacher 6, interview extract)

However, there are some difficulties such as information overload, distractions, and worry about the validity of the information. The following extracts illustrate these views.

"... you cannot know whether that particular technique is already verified..." (Teacher 2, interview extract)

"... it is very easy to be distracted while using phones." (Teacher 5, interview extract)

"... there is an abundance of information..." (Teacher 6, interview extract)

Although the Facebook groups were perceived to be practical and flexible places for learning, there are various barriers associated with information and distraction problems.

Theme 2: EFL teachers' experiences of participating in FBGs for CPD

When asked about their participation in Facebook groups in terms of professional development, three out of six teachers indicated passive participation by simply reading posts, looking for ideas on how to teach, and downloading information but not actually posting any information. The following extracts illustrate their experiences.

"...I have never." (Teacher 2, interview extract)

"...I don't share materials; I only find them." (Teacher 6, interview extract)

"...I participate as a group member to learn." (Teacher 1, interview extract)

However, Teacher 3 and Teacher 4 described more active and selective participation for lesson preparation and material searching.

"...I usually spend about 15-30 minutes at a time reading, noting down ideas, or downloading materials. Sometimes I just browse for fun, but other times I find an article so good that I read it carefully and take notes to apply to the next lesson." (Teacher 3, interview extract)

"...To spend more time in the groups, it's usually on weekends (like Sunday today). When I have to prepare lesson for the whole next week, I go into the Facebook groups and browse through them to see if there's anything new that I can apply to my lesson plans." (Teacher 4, interview extract)

In addition, Facebook groups were perceived as motivating and supportive professional spaces. Three out of six teachers described feeling more connected and inspired after interacting with other educators online.

"...I was also a lifelong student." (Teacher 1, interview extract)

"...Many teachers are willing to help, send materials, or simply leave words of encouragement. These small things make me feel like I'm not alone in my profession, but part of a community that progresses together." (Teacher 3, interview extract)

"...I think Facebook group is like a place where I can share ideas or find more motivation to innovate my teaching methods. From that, I feel more confident now in my role as a primary school English teacher." (Teacher 6, interview extract)

However, one teacher mentioned feelings of self-comparison.

"...I feel a bit inadequate." (Teacher 5, interview extract)

Teachers suggested improving Facebook groups through better organization, clearer classification systems, and stronger moderation. The following extracts present their recommendations.

"...In my opinion, Facebook should further improve its tools for categorizing specialized content more clearly, for example, by separating the categories "Teaching Materials," "Teaching Methods," and "Classroom Activities" to make it easier for teachers to find what they're looking for." (Teacher 3, interview extract)

"...We need to classify it by grade level, student ability, subject group, and by specific area, for example, extracurricular activities, textbooks, or tests. Each area needs to be divided so that teachers can find the information quickly." (Teacher 4, interview extract)

"...I think it's better to categorize things, like if someone wants to search for a keyword but doesn't want to see images, read, or just watch videos, there should be a separate section for videos and keywords. Additionally, administrators should carefully check each link to ensure the safety of all participants." (Teacher 5, interview extract)

To conclude, the findings point out that Facebook groups were experienced as practical and flexible environments for professional learning, although challenges related to participation, information quality, and content organization were also recognized.

4.2 Discussion

Research Question 1: What are EFL teachers' perceptions of using Facebook groups for Continuous Professional Development (CPD)?

From the findings, it was observed that EFL teachers had positive perceptions regarding the use of Facebook groups as instruments of CPD. The teachers regarded the Facebook groups as professional networks that could allow them to communicate with their peers, exchange experience, and have access to resources on teaching. The positive perceptions imply that social networks can be an effective tool for professional development. This result is in line with past research emphasizing the significance of Facebook groups as professional learning communities (e.g., Mai *et al.*, 2020; Terry & Muralová, 2025).

The practical use of Facebook groups was highly appreciated by teachers. It was found out that the activities and games provided by other teachers on Facebook groups could be applied in their own classrooms. The opportunity to learn at any time was also considered to be valuable as a part of their continuous professional development. The same results were obtained in the research conducted by Trust (2017) and Al-Jarf (2021).

Despite the positive perceptions, the sources identify significant barriers. The most prominent difficulty reported was information overload, where the content made it difficult for teachers to filter useful materials. Teachers also expressed concerns regarding distraction, content reliability, and suitability of shared materials to fit the specific Vietnamese teaching context, reported in a study by Hossain and Boonmoh (2025).

From the perspective of self-efficacy, these positive perceptions enhanced teachers' confidence in their professional abilities. Support from colleagues and opportunities to apply ideas in classrooms further reinforced their teaching abilities (Bandura, 1997). The findings are consistent with the Interconnected Model of Teacher Professional Development by Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002), which indicates that professional learning takes place due to the interconnection between new experiences, reflection, and classroom practice.

Research Question 2: What are EFL teachers' experiences of participating in Facebook groups for Continuous Professional Development (CPD)?

The findings indicate that EFL teachers primarily used Facebook groups to support daily classroom activities rather than engage in professional discussions. Teachers commonly searched for teaching ideas, classroom games, instructional resources, and updated teaching information. Interview data show that their participation mainly involved reading posts, browsing content, saving useful materials, and applying activities in their classrooms. These findings are consistent with Mai *et al.* (2020) and Al-Jarf (2021).

Another significant finding was that teachers mainly participated in Facebook groups as observers rather than active contributors, as most rarely posted, shared content, or engaged in discussions. Similar patterns were also identified by Bui (2018) and Lê (2023).

The findings further show that teachers experienced both professional and emotional impacts while participating in Facebook groups. For some teachers, involvement in Facebook groups made them feel motivated and connected through the ideas and experiences shared by other teachers, whereas others felt distracted, overloaded with information, and inadequate due to comparisons with more experienced teachers online. These findings indicate that participation in Facebook groups influenced teachers' classroom practices but also their professional emotions.

According to self-efficacy theory, the above experiences can be explained through Bandura's (1997) sources of efficacy beliefs. Teachers developed vicarious experiences by observing other teachers' practices, while communication and positive feedback in Facebook groups functioned as verbal persuasion. Successful implementation of teaching ideas in classrooms also contributed to mastery experiences. However, experiences in self-comparison and information overload negatively influenced some teachers' emotional states, which Bandura identified as another important factor shaping self-efficacy.

The study synthesizes these findings using Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2002) Interconnected Model of Teacher Professional Growth, which views learning as a dynamic process across four domains. Facebook groups functioned as the source of external information, resources, and collegial interaction. In personal domain, teachers translated these external stimuli into new pedagogical insights and increased professional confidence. With regard to practice, this occurs when teachers adapted and applied the strategies, such as new games or lesson formats in their own classrooms. Evidence of change was reflected in consequence domain, where improved student engagement and enhanced teacher motivation and professional growth indicated meaningful learning.

5. Conclusion and Implications

The findings indicate that teachers perceived FBGs as effective platforms for continuous professional development and primarily used them to access teaching resources, exchange instructional strategies, and adapt classroom practices.

These findings support Bandura's (1997) concept of teacher self-efficacy and Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2002) Interconnected Model of Teacher Professional Growth, highlighting that professional growth can develop through observation, interaction, reflection, and classroom application within online professional communities.

There are some implications that can be drawn from the study findings. The findings have several implications. First, EFL teachers should actively participated in Facebook groups by sharing ideas, discussing pedagogical practices, and collaborating with colleagues in order to enhance their professional learning. Second, teachers should critically evaluate the quality and relevance of online resources before applying them in the classroom. Third, educational institutions should view Facebook groups as a complementary form of informal professional development and promote teachers' engagement in online professional communities. Finally, group moderators should manage content to reduce information overload and improve access to relevant and reliable resources.

This study has limitations. First, the sampling strategy involved a relatively small number of participants, which may limit the generalizability of the findings. Second, the study focused exclusively on Facebook-based learning communities, restricting the applicability of the findings to other media platforms and educational contexts. Future research should therefore involve larger and more diverse samples, examine different educational settings, and explore additional networking platforms to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the role of social media in teachers' continuous professional development (CPD).

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Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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