

**TEACHER-LED PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND ITS
INFLUENCE ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS' CLASSROOM
PRACTICES IN BUNGOMA COUNTY, KENYA**

IRENE SIMIYU

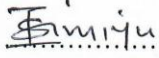
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**A RESEARCH THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE AWARD OF THE
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DECLARATION

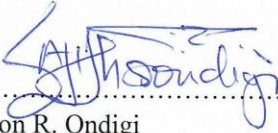
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Sign.......... Date.....5/11/2021.....
Name: Irene Simiyu
E83/27527/2013
Department: Educational Communication and Technology

Supervisors' declaration

We confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate under our supervision as University Supervisor(s)

Sign.......... Date.....5/11/2021.....
Dr. Adelheid M. Bwire.
Senior Lecturer
Department of Educational Communication and Technology
Kenyatta University.

Sign.......... Date.....5/11/2021.....
Prof. Samson R. Ondigi
Associate Professor
Department of Educational Communication and Technology
Kenyatta University.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to all my students, in the past, present and the future. You are the reason for my Title-Madam Irene!

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First, I am grateful to God whose mercies and divine enablement has brought me this far. Indeed, to Him be all the Glory, Honour and Power, now and forever more. Amen

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

AKDN:	Aga Khan Development Network
AR:	Action Research
BOM:	Board of Management
CEMASTEА:	Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa
CSO:	Curriculum Support Officer
EFL:	English as a Foreign Language
ESL:	English as a Second Language
GURT:	Government of the United Republic of Tanzania
INSET:	In-service Education and Training
JICA:	Japanese International Cooperation Agency
KESI:	Kenya Education Staff Institute
KIE:	Kenya Institute of Education
MOE:	Ministry of Education
MOES:	Ministry of Education and Science
NACOSTI:	National Council for Science, Technology and Innovation
NCLB:	No Child Left Behind
NCREL:	North Central Regional Education Laboratory
NCTE:	National Council of Teacher Education
OECD:	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
PD:	Professional Development
SbTD:	School-based Teacher Development

SMASSE:	Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education
SPREAD:	Strengthening Primary Education
SPSS:	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
TLPD:	Teacher-led Professional Development
TPAD:	Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development
TSC:	Teachers Service Commission
UNESCO:	United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization

ABSTRACT

Effective teaching at any level requires the educator to continuously increase their knowledge of how students think and learn, of the subject matter to be taught, instructional practices and assessment procedures. This can be done through teacher professional development opportunities. This study focused on teacher-led professional development which is a departure from the traditional approaches of teacher professional development. The study was guided by the following objectives: to determine the strategies that teachers of English can use to lead their own professional development; to establish the contextual factors that may influence teacher-led professional development; to investigate how teacher-led professional development can enhance the classroom practices of teachers of English; to determine the possible successes that can be achieved by teachers of English who lead their own professional development; to establish the challenges likely to face teachers of English who lead their own professional development and, to design a prototype model of teacher-led professional development for teachers of English. The study adopted a qualitative approach and specifically an action research design to allow for the practical involvement of the teachers in leading their own development. The study was informed by Mezirow's theory of Transformative Learning, Kolb's theory of Experiential Learning and the Situated Perspective on Cognition all of which focus on how adults learn. The sample for the study consisted of six public secondary schools purposively sampled from Bungoma South sub-county, while convenient sampling was used to arrive at twelve teachers of English from the study sites. Two critical friends were sampled purposively to engage in critical discussions with the researcher about the action research process, the findings and conclusions. Data was collected using questionnaires, observation, interviews, reflective journaling and a WhatsApp forum that was formed to enable informal collaboration. Quantitative data from questionnaires was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20 and results presented diagrammatically. This information together with qualitative data from transcribed interviews, observation notes, WhatsApp interactions and journal entries were read and organized under themes that were used to write a narrative of the process. The study found that if practicing teachers are equipped with strategies for collaboration, they can make efforts to learn about their practice and from one another. Additionally, that the impact of this process has great benefits for the practicing teacher and consequently their classroom practice and learner experiences. The study therefore recommends that policies for the institutionalization of professional development be put in place and practicing teachers be equipped to chart their own path of improvement in classroom practice. The study findings will be useful to school administrators as they organize and facilitate future professional development experiences for their teachers. Additionally, the conclusions drawn will help in creating theories of practice in relation to teacher-led professional development, especially in developing world contexts.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Worldwide, education systems have come under scrutiny especially in regard to the quality of graduates that leave the schools at the end of every academic year. The prominence and scope of interest in this subject are illustrated by a growing body of empirical evidence and articles that seek to explain the factors that influence students learning outcomes (Putnam & Borko, 2000; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Johnson, 2006). Consistent in the findings of these studies is the central role played by an effective teacher in determining student learning outcomes as well as impacting students' lives positively.

Scholars like Marzano (2003) have emphasized this long established fact when he posits that factors like the curriculum, length of school year, availability of learning resources and parental influence have a lesser impact on student achievement than the impact of an individual effective teacher. This could explain why in the recent past there are efforts to recognize such outstanding teachers through awards like the World's Best Teacher and African Union Continental Teacher prize that seek to celebrate teacher achievements and inspire effective practice by teachers.

Moreover, research has consistently demonstrated that effective teaching at any level is a dynamic job requiring the educator to continually increase their knowledge of how students think and learn, knowledge of the subject matter to be taught, instructional practices and assessment procedures (Hoban, 2002; Stronge, 2002; Borko, 2004). Mizell (2010) posits that, “Good teaching is not an accident...it is a result of study, reflection, practice and hard work” p.10. This view agrees with the idea that teachers ought to be learners in a continuum starting from their initial preparation and going on throughout their teaching career. This is further supported by the realization that no amount of initial teacher preparation can claim to be adequate in preparing teachers for challenges, frequent policy changes and reforms that characterize this profession.

This realization and the widespread concern about the falling standards of education has inevitably resulted in the call for more and more in-service training for practicing teachers as a way of addressing teacher quality. Literature on teacher professional development concur on the view that if the teacher’s classroom practice is to improve, then teachers regardless of their length of service must engage in professional development (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Harwel, 2003; Fullan, 2007; Mizell, 2010). This study has worked with Day’s (1999) definition of Professional Development (PD) as:

...the process by which alone or with others, teachers review, renew and extend their commitment as change agents to the moral purpose of teaching and by which they acquire and develop critically the knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence essential to good

professional thinking, planning and practice with children, young people and colleagues throughout each phase of their teaching lives. (Day, 1999: 4).

Day's definition above underscores the importance of PD, how it should be structured for effectiveness and the outcomes for both the teachers and students. This definition and others may have informed the efforts of various governments and Ministries of Education worldwide in organizing professional development for their teaching workforce.

In the United States, student underachievement has led to discussions by stakeholders about "failing schools" and the important role of teachers in changing this. The outcomes of such discussions is the introduction of high stakes accountability programs like the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 that expects States to ensure high quality professional development for all their teachers. However, as Borko (2004) points out, the program together with reports like Teaching at Risk: A Call to Action (1998) do not explain what constitutes quality professional development or how it should be made available to teachers. The United States of America also developed the National Staff Development Council (NSCD), a sophisticated and focused PD framework to ensure success for all students, staff development and school improvement (Podhorsky & Fisher, 2007). While acknowledging that staff development improves learning for all students, NSCD recommended that 25% of teachers' time be devoted to their own

learning and to collaboration with colleagues and that school districts devote 10% of their budget to professional development (US Department of Education, 2000). Yet despite these efforts, the US Department of Education has shown that most teachers in the United States are still unable to benefit from the professional development experiences at district or school level, citing time and poor scheduling of the programmes. According to Podhorsky and Fisher (2007), such programmes have also not achieved much in terms of improving student learning outcomes as they do not focus on improving the instructional practices of the teachers.

Agreeing with this view, Jaquith, Mindich, Wei and Darling-Hammond (2010), in a technical report of State Policies and Strategies in the United States of America reveal that although there are States with promising practices of PD, their quality does not meet research-based definitions of effective PD because of the inadequate policy tools that guide them. According to Jaquith et al, effective PD should lead to improvement in teacher knowledge and practice or, student learning outcomes and should be ongoing, intensive, connected to practice and school improvement while building strong collegial relationships.

In the case of Canada, education reforms have led to discussions like the Education Partnership Roundtable (2004) which focused on ongoing PD as the

central standard for practice. However, members of the Ontario Teachers College in their review of literature on content and delivery modes of professional development for experienced teachers, acknowledge the disconnect that exists between traditional modes and the everyday working lives of teachers (Broad & Evan, 2006). In view of this, Broad and Evan proposed setting aside of professional development days and establishment of programmes that are ongoing, that result in collaboration among teachers and, consider a wide range of delivery modes.

In Europe, recent studies by OECD (2005) and the European Commission (2010) have established that in countries like France, Iceland, The Netherlands and Sweden, PD is a professional duty for teachers although participation is optional. In the above studies, teachers reported that conflict with their school schedule is the main barrier to their participation in PD activities and suggest its integration in the work and function of the school (European Commission, 2010). In countries like Luxembourg, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia and Spain, the European Commission reveals that PD is connected to career advancement and salary increase, a factor that draws many teachers to seek for PD experiences. Of interest to investigate is whether the knowledge and skills learnt are used to increase learning outcomes for students, even as the teacher gains a certificate, a salary increment or a promotion in their job scale.

In the United Kingdom, PD has been linked to government policy initiatives like the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and others, but as Aiello & Watson (2007) point out, such initiatives have focused on evaluating the direct impact of PD on student achievements and paid less attention to its effect on the teachers' learning and improved classroom practice.

In Asia, Japanese education policies place a lot of emphasis on teachers working with each other to improve practice through strategies like lesson study and peer coaching. As a school-based initiative, lesson study is organized by teachers themselves to research their own practice in communities of inquiry (Arslan, 2018). According to Doig & Groves (2011), the Japanese PD through lesson study has drawn international attention especially because it is neither funded nor mandatory, yet it has achieved a lot in enabling teachers to build on their efforts and refine their understanding of their own classroom practice. Lewis et al (2009) cited in Doig & Grove (2011) posit that lesson study has potential for sustained PD because it develops communities of teachers who inquire into their practice, engenders a sense of ownership of any improvement attained, leads to the development of shared goals and, a sense of responsibility towards one's students and colleagues. Of interest to note is that teaching in Japan is viewed as a public activity with a teacher's classroom practice open to colleagues to scrutinize and

comment about, a cultural factor that could explain why Japanese teachers take to lesson study with ease (Doig & Grove, 2011).

For China, the introduction of curriculum reforms in 2002-2004 necessitated professional development for teachers driven by research that had clearly identified lack of professional development as an obstacle to integrating new teaching approaches, as well as the need to shift from one-off workshops (NCREL, 2003 cited in Taplin, Ping & Fuqian, 2007). In addition, researchers in China have established that teacher learning that leads to improved practice is facilitated by doing, exploring, trying, changing and adapting new strategies, sharing failures, successes and techniques that work (McKenzie, 2002 cited in Taplin, Ping & Fuqian, 2007). It is therefore noteworthy that the Chinese organizers of PD opportunities have made efforts to incorporate these elements of effective professional development initiatives that can be summarized as: connection to student learning, active participation of teachers and collegial learning (Taplin, Ping & Fuqian, 2007). This was demonstrated in one project that was carried out in the Guandong Province where the findings revealed that teachers can be significant contributing partners in their own learning (Taplin, Ping & Fuqian).

For India, the priority has been to improve learning for the over 280 million learners in over 1.41 million schools by improving the quality of teaching and

teaching standards (Hayes, 2014). According to Gandhe (2010), India's efforts in teacher professional development include the establishment of District Institutes of Education and Training (DIET) that are found in each of the 600 districts, with the intention of offering quality pre-service and in-service education. Additionally, Gandhe points out that all Indian universities are mandated to offer seminars, workshops, conferences, orientation and refresher courses regularly, while the Indira Gandhi National Open University (IGNOU) provides open and distance learning. Despite the above efforts, India is still home to 35% of the world's illiterates and so the need for a reorientation of the education system and an examination of the quality of the teachers (Gandhe, 2010). Tyagi & Jaiswal (2017) argue that since the professional development of teachers in India is still being provided by the authorities and not emerging from the needs of the teacher, then "...teachers are still behind the stipulated position of enlightened lamp" p 98. Tyagi and Jaiswal have proposed continuous collaborative efforts to keep teachers alive and energetic in order to realize the goals of education stipulated by the government.

In 2001, the New Zealand Ministry of Education initiated a professional development initiative the Te Kauhua Maori Mainstream Pilot project, aimed at growing teacher capabilities and cultural competencies in order to address the underachievement of Maori learners in mainstream education (Gorinski, 2007).

Gorinski reports that findings from this project suggest that the contextualization of PD within the school context is a critical success factor in determining the reception of new ideas and modification of practice. However, contextualization of PD seems to have challenges. In a study on the design and delivery of a PD programme for Physical Education primary school teachers in New Zealand, Petrie & McGee (2012) found that there was pressure for teachers to engage in consecutive and sometimes concurrent PD, a factor that did not allow the development of their own learning. Liebman & Mullen (2008) cited in Petrie & McGee (2012) further point out a paradox in the design of many of the PD experiences, in the sense that PD offered to teachers is supposed to support them to provide on-going, contextual, relevant, needs-based learning opportunities to their students, while the teachers themselves are denied these same approaches when they are learners.

The African continent has not been left behind in this concern over teacher quality, especially given the link between national development and the quality of education offered in a Nation. This concern could explain recent developments like the establishment in 2016 of the African Union Continental Teacher Prize to celebrate top teachers in Africa. The inaugural prize in 2019 was clinched by Mr. Eric Ademba, a Mathematics and Chemistry Teacher in Asumbi Girls High School in Homa Bay County, Kenya. In celebrating this teacher, the Chief Executive

Officer (CEO) of the Teachers Service Commission (Kenya), Mrs. Nancy Macharia reiterated that the commission would support Mr. Ademba and other Kenyan teachers in their Professional Development (The Standard Newspaper, 25th October, 2019).

In yet another achievement by African teachers, Bro. Peter Tabichi, a Kenyan teacher at Keriko Secondary School in Nakuru County emerged as the World's Best Teacher and was later on feted as the UN person of the Year, 2019 (Daily Nation, 25th October, 2019). A more recent achievement has been by the Principal of Othaya Girls secondary school in Kenya, Jane Waceke who was named the 2020 African Union Continental Teacher of the Year for her positive approach towards her students and exemplary performance in quality teaching using ICTs (Daily Nation, 23rd December, 2020). These three examples demonstrate the great potential in African teachers for promoting education among their learners, a factor that requires support from all education stakeholders.

In West Africa, the launch of the Universal Basic Education in 1999 in Nigeria, came with the realization that its objectives could only be achieved alongside the provision of professional development for teachers (Akpan & Ita, 2015). Indeed, the Nigerian National Policy on Education requires that teacher education shall be a continuum from initial teacher preparation and throughout ones teaching career, given changes in methodology and curriculum that have characterized the

education system (Ushie, 2009). The public outcry on the ‘falling standards’ of education in the country also resulted in the Federal government directing the National Teachers Institute (NTI) to retrain teachers through formal experiences like workshops and seminars, using the cascade model of sharing information (Ajani, 2018).

However, Ajani points out that the above modes encountered challenges. The key among them were: inability of the PD to meet the needs and expectations of the teachers; the limited numbers of teachers who would be selected to attend the trainings leading to lack of continuity and sustainability of the PD and, the inability of teachers to apply new knowledge due to lack of readiness and resistance to change. To surmount these challenges, Ushie (2009) makes a strong case for partnership learning when she posits that it allows teachers to identify their own training needs and draws on their experiences and experiments leading to active learning and collaboration.

In Ghana, similar challenges were also documented by Atta & Mensah (2015) in their study that explored the perspectives of teachers on the availability of PD programmes in Sekyere East District in Ghana. Atta and Mensah found that while teachers had access to workshops, in-service training, conferences and even distant learning facilities, they felt that these were structurally traditional, rarely organized, limited to few teachers and less effective in impacting instructional

practices and student learning. According to Asare, Mereku, Anamuah-Mensah & Oduro (2012), PD programmes in Ghana are affected by a lack of a national policy on the professional development of teachers. This has resulted in uncoordinated donor-driven programs that duplicate training content, suffer from poor utilization of time thus affecting teacher development and planning and they even caused fatigue among the teachers. Yet with all these efforts, Asare et al (2012) point out that there is little improvement recorded in the quality of basic education and so the need to re-examine the kind of professional support given to teachers.

For South Africa, the National Policy Framework for Teacher Education and Development, established and implemented Continuing Professional Development of Teachers (CPDT) to guide the support offered to teachers (Styen, 2010). According to South Africa (2007: 1) cited in Steyn (2010), the purpose of CPDT was to improve the quality of education by equipping teachers to meet the evolving challenges and needs of a democratic South Africa. This effort and others have themselves faced challenges emerging from the use of the cascade model which though useful in reaching many teachers, is costly and the information received at the lower levels is usually not clear even to the facilitators. (Ono & Ferreira, 2010). Agreeing with Ono and Ferreira, Steyn (2010) in a study that focused on the conceptual frameworks that informed initiatives like CPDT, proposed the adoption of Wenger's social learning theory in order to make PD

more collaborative, interactive, long-term, offering supportive feedback and involving school based action research. This would hopefully ensure that shortcomings in practice are identified and addressed.

Over the past two decades, the governments in the East African region have made efforts to ensure continuous professional development of teachers through workshops, seminars and refresher courses. These efforts were mainly aimed at addressing curriculum changes, challenges brought by the Education for All (EFA) initiative and the poor performance of students in national examinations (Okuni, 2007). According to Malunda (2017), the Ugandan education system was among the best in the 1960s but was affected by the wars and civil strife that lead to neglect of education institutions and decline of education at all levels. Malunda points out that this resulted in low quality teaching that was manifested by increased examination malpractices, exam-oriented teaching and part-time teaching by many teachers.

However, to address these challenges, Uganda launched several programmes like Teacher Development and Management Systems (TDMS) and Teacher Development and Management Plan (TDMP) in the 1990s, to improve teachers' performance in the classroom (Okuni, 2007). Reports like Teachers' Initiative in Sub Saharan Africa (TISSA) of 2013 revealed that the above efforts towards

ensuring PD for teachers in Uganda were uncoordinated and lacked a systematic approach (MoES, 2013). According to Orenaiya (2014) cited in Malunda (2017) lack of a policy framework on the PD of teachers and failure of the Ministry of education in Uganda to implement Secondary Teacher Development Management Systems (STDMS) greatly contributed to low quality teaching. Orenaiya argues that if PD was institutionalized, pedagogical practices would have been harmonized and the consequence would be improvement in teacher classroom practices as well as learning outcomes.

Tanzania's efforts towards improving the quality of her teachers can be traced historically to the Musoma Declaration of 1974 that resulted in high enrolments at primary school level and mass recruitment of school graduates and drop outs to teach junior classes while undergoing distant education training (Dachi, 2016). This situation inevitably resulted in teachers whose quality was poor and thus the need to support and upgrade them. Tanzania developed and implemented Primary Education Development Plan (PEPD) between 2002-2006, targeting teachers, tutors, head teachers, ward education coordinators and other education administrators (GURT, 2001).

However, assessment of these efforts and others reveal constraints since most programmes were implemented with the support of donors and collapsed once the

donors withdrew (Rarieya & Tukahirwa, 2006). In addition, Rarieya and Tukahirwa note that the culture of waiting for centralized training and lack of follow-up support for the teachers, affected the gains made by the above programmes as teachers would revert to their former practice after a while. According to Kafyulilo (2013), Tanzania has made a lot of efforts in supporting teacher professional development but less on supporting the implementation of the ideas in the teachers' classrooms. In view of the above, Kafyulilo proposes teacher collaboration that can happen in communities of practice, lesson study groups, professional learning communities and teacher design teams, as the link that would result in teachers sharing their difficulties and successes and thus improve their practice.

In Kenya, efforts have been made over time to offer professional support to teachers at all levels, through the inspectorate at the Ministry of Education. These efforts have been well documented. Emerging clearly from studies on the professional development of secondary school teachers in Kenya are a number of reasons that have necessitated this professional support, including the upsurge of student enrolment, low teacher-student ratio and high rates of teacher turn over (Wanzare & Ward, 2008; Gathara, 2011). Majority of development programmes offered to the teachers have been limited to the use of workshops, seminars, crash-programmes and short courses which have faced criticism for a number of

shortcomings (Gathumbi, Mungai & Hintze, 2013; Kiige, 2019). Indeed, according to Gathara (2011) little consideration was and has been made to develop programmes that increase teacher commitment and interest, make them feel secure and confident about their professional practices and, promote student learning through teacher performance. This has affected the realization of change and thus the quality of teachers has remained an issue of concern in Kenya.

In a study on the continuing PD for secondary school teachers in Kenya, Gathara (2011) identified the providers of PD programmes as the Ministry of Education (MOE), Kenya National Examination Council (KNEC), Kenya Education Staff Institute (KESI), Japan International Cooperation in Africa (JICA), Aga Khan Foundation (AKDN) and both public and private universities. According to Gathara, the areas of skills development offered by these providers range from administration and management, life skills, marking skills, improvement in teaching skills and improvement in academic status. Additionally, Mburungu (2010) and, Wanzare and Ward (2008), point out that a majority of In-service Education Trainings (INSETs) in Kenya are aimed at implementing innovations approved by the government like the 8-4-4 system of education, literacy and numeracy projects and more recently, the Competence Based Curriculum (CBC). Given the above areas of focus, it is inevitable that the content of the PD will be tailored to meet government needs and not those of teachers.

To address the weaknesses in the above modes and guided by research findings, Kenya has implemented a number of institutionalized INSETs in the past thirty years with the support of her development partners. Additionally, institutions like Kenya Education Management Institute (KEMI) and Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa (CEMASTEA) have been in the forefront in efforts to institutionalize INSETs. Examples of the INSETs include, Strengthening Primary Education (SPRED) a key project that was implemented from 1991-1996 to raise the quality of teaching and learning in the core subjects of English, Mathematics and science through a national textbook supply, head-teacher training and school-based in-service training (DFID Evaluation Study, EV627: 1998). Findings from this evaluation report reveal that schools exhibited resistance to changes in classroom practice unless the changes offered would improve examination results. Additionally, there was overdependence on British expertise, under-utilization of local capacity, as well as over-reliance on cascade training. All these had an effect on continuity of the programmes once the donors exited.

Another key project was the School-based Teacher Development (SbTD) programme, a self-study distance learning model which aimed at improving the quality and effectiveness of teaching and learning in primary schools (Hardman, Abdi-kadir, Agg, Migwi, Ndambuki & Smith, 2009). Despite its great success in

graduating over 47,000 teachers and developing Key Resource Teachers (KRT) in every primary school, Hardman et al (2009) found that it had weaknesses. The main one was linked to the use of the cascade model where KRTs had less impact on their colleagues and thus the recommendation that all teachers should undergo KRT training; that more official time be allocated to school-based learning; that days be set aside through-out the school year for training and, that KRTs be given official time to observe, coach and provide feedback (Hardman et al, 2009). These recommendations have not been implemented to date.

Strengthening of Mathematics and Science in Secondary Education (SMASSE) is also an institutionalized initiative that was introduced in the 80s due to poor performance in science and mathematics. The INSET is structured to involve trainer of trainers who share information with teachers. Studies on the effectiveness of SMASSE in the performance of mathematics and sciences in various counties in Kenya consistently agree that the programme should be restructured to have a bottom-up approach to enable ownership by teachers, that the cascade model resulted in dilution and distortion of content and, that the INSET training should be more regular (Waititu & Orado, 2009; Mutambuki, 2014; Kiige, 2019). Yet even with these efforts by the Kenyan government, UNESCO (2015) still isolated Kenya as one country whose teachers lack curriculum support in the classroom.

Perhaps informed by views like those of UNESCO, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in 2017 introduced the Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) tool as a way of establishing the performance of teachers through classroom lesson observation. While the effort is commendable, it is not clear how the performance gaps of individual teachers will be addressed after identification, since the commission only proposes that solutions should be sought through professional development organized by the school administration. In a very recent development though, the TSC has proposed that all practicing teachers should undergo professional training six times in their career to be facilitated by a number of identified Kenyan universities (Daily Nation, Feb, 16th 2020). Of interest to note is that the training institutions will also carry out psychometric tests to identify unique competency gaps that each teacher has as opposed to allowing the teacher to identify their challenges with practice. According to the Chief Executive Officer of TSC, Mrs. Nancy Macharia, the PD which will cost teachers a total of 30,000Ksh for the six sessions will address gaps identified during appraisal, facilitate career progression and professional compliance while deepening teacher knowledge in subject specialization (Daily Nation, Feb, 16th 2020). This move has resulted in protests by the Kenya National Union of Teachers (KNUT) whose argument is that consultation on the issue has not been done, especially given that the proposed PD will make a demand on the meagre earnings of the teachers.

In Bungoma County, there is scarce research evidence on the professional development experiences of teachers despite the fact that teachers in many subject areas are often exposed to INSET courses every academic year. To date, the focus has been the recommendation of PD in connection to student performance in national examinations, improving skills of certain cadres of teachers like administrators and when there is curriculum change affecting all the schools in the nation. Despite the above reasons for PD, the exposure of teachers to INSETs can be taken as recognition of the need for teachers to be supported to improve their practice in ways that can lead to improved learner performance and therefore good results for the county. PD opportunities for teachers in the county are characterized by teachers converging in a central secondary school in Bungoma town. Additionally, only a few teachers are selected by schools to attend the PDs with the hope that they will share the new knowledge and skills with their colleagues back in school.

In the INSETs, teachers are taught new ways of teaching which they are to implement in their schools but without any follow-up support to guide the implementation. Additionally, most facilitators of such workshops are not classroom teachers and are therefore not in touch with the realities of the classroom and school to be able to provide practical ideas that teachers can build on. Despite such efforts, studies on student performance in national examinations

in the county and Bungoma South sub-county reveal poor performance in subjects like English (Barasa, 2009; Matere, 2011; Juma, 2016). Table 1.1 clearly brings out the performance in English in the Sub-county for the past four years:

Table 1.1: Bungoma South sub-county KCSE English Mean-scores 2015-2018

S/N	Year	Mean-score	Grade
1.	2015	5.038	C-
2.	2016	3.2698	D
3.	2017	3.4062	D
4.	2018	3.9632	D+

Source: KCSE and KCPE results, Bungoma County Analysis Booklets 2016-2018

Table 1.1 shows the trend in performance by the candidates in the years captured here showing a consistent below average performance. This trend is no different from the performance at the National level as evident in the Table 1.2 below:

Table 1.2: National KCSE English Mean-scores 2015-2018

S/N	Year	Mean-score	Grade
1.	2015	40.29%	D+
2.	2016	34.03%	D-
3.	2017	36.77%	D
4.	2018	36.39%	D

Source: KCSE National results analysis.

As a consequence of such results, studies like those of Matere (2011), Barasa (2009) and others have consistently recommended more and more INSET opportunities for teachers in the form of workshops, seminars and refresher courses. While workshops, seminars and induction courses are useful in providing some solutions, the challenge is that some inadequacies may still persist since they may not be among the topics and subjects addressed by INSETs.

Most teachers therefore resort to skipping those challenging areas or seeking a colleague who is comfortable with the area to handle it every time it comes up in the schemes of work. As a result, the affected teacher never improves their skills in handling the challenge. For the teachers who get the privilege to attend an INSET, lack of follow up support could mean that the teacher may or may not put new knowledge into practice and so their practice will remain the same and most likely, the performance of learners will not improve.

The foregoing discussion illustrates the commitment that governments and education systems worldwide have in improving the quality of their teaching work force through offering them PD experiences. While this is commendable, there exists a challenge of how the PD experiences should be structured to result in teacher learning that will in turn influence the classroom practice of the teachers and consequently result in improved learning experiences for the students. This study aimed at exploring how teachers of English can play an active role in their

own professional growth and the effect of this on their classroom practices and performance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The practice of teaching is one that requires the teacher to consistently learn, especially because it is now an accepted fact that the quality of a teacher has the greatest influence on how and what learners gain in the classrooms. Teacher learning that is applied in the classroom has potential to transform the teachers' classroom practice by enabling them to teach differently and consequently enhance student learning and whole school improvement. Suffice it to say that the way professional development experiences are structured, has a great influence on teacher learning and its application in their classroom practice.

In developing contexts like Kenya and in counties like Bungoma County, PD experiences are structured from top-down, with a focus on general pedagogy, improving student performance in examinations or in relaying curriculum changes. In the process of introducing teachers to new knowledge, minimal effort is made to train them in ways that allow them to participate in identifying their instructional needs, co-construct knowledge with colleagues and experiment with new learning in their classrooms. While PD that is focused on student learning has been the practice for some time now, student learning outcomes have not improved and so the need to re-think the focus and structure of teacher professional development

that will impact the teachers' classroom practice and hopefully improve student learning outcomes.

This exploratory study investigated how teachers of English could design their own professional development plan and the effect of this on their classroom practices. The contextual factors that influence teacher-led professional development, the possible successes and challenges that the teachers may encounter in the process, were also pertinent issues in this study.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this action research study was to explore the process of teacher-led professional development and the effect of this on the classroom practice and performance of teachers of English in Bungoma County. The study was to provide an understanding of the phenomenon of teacher-led professional development especially in a developing context.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

This study set out to meet the following objectives:

- (i) To determine the strategies that teachers of English can use to lead their professional development.
- (ii) To establish the contextual factors that may influence teacher-led professional development among teachers of English.
- (iii) To investigate how teacher-led professional development can enhance the classroom practices of teachers of English.

- (iv) To determine the possible successes that can be achieved by teachers of English who lead their own professional development.
- (v) To establish the challenges likely to face teachers of English who lead their own professional development.
- (vi) To design a prototype model of Teacher-led Professional development.

1.5 Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study were:

- (i) What strategies can teachers of English use to lead their professional development?
- (ii) What contextual factors can influence teacher-led professional development among teachers of English?
- (iii) How can teacher-led professional development enhance the classroom practice of teachers of English?
- (iv) What are the possible successes that can be achieved by teachers of English who lead their own professional development?
- (v) What challenges are teachers of English who lead their own professional development likely to face?
- (vi) How can Teacher-led Professional Development be modeled?

1.6 Significance of the Study

The findings of this study will hopefully contribute to the existing body of knowledge on how practicing teachers of English can improve their instructional

practice. This knowledge will be useful to the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) as it will inform their choice of strategies that can enable teachers to handle gaps identified in their classroom practice using the TPAD tool. At the moment, TSC has proposed that all teachers must pay and engage in professional development offered by a number of universities and this has resulted in resistance from the poorly remunerated teachers and their union leaders. Teacher-led professional will hopeful enable practicing teachers to chart a professional development path in their school context and with the support of colleagues at a minimal cost.

For the researcher and fellow professional development teachers, the findings will bring meaningful insights that will expand their knowledge of what works and what does not work in teacher-led professional development ventures. Additionally, the findings will influence the skills that teacher training colleges will need to develop in the student teachers to enable them inquire about their classroom practice and learn from it. These skills include reflective practice, journaling, collaborating in lesson execution and classroom observation.

School administrators will find the outcomes of the study useful in organizing and facilitating collaborative professional development among their teaching staff. This is especially so, since the Teachers Service Commission through the TPAD tool expects them to organize PD for their teachers. Although the study was limited in scope, the conclusions drawn from it will be useful in providing an

understanding of teacher-led professional development especially in developing contexts like Kenya and Bungoma County.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The limitations of the study emanated from the action research design adopted and hence the findings generated can only be generalized to the six study sites. However, the findings can be applied in contexts with similar or almost similar characteristics like the study sites. Secondly, action research generates a lot of data requiring time to tease out meaning. To address this limitation, data analysis was an ongoing process with a view to inform the subsequent cycles in the action research processes. Thirdly, data collected for this study included self-reported information from the teachers which could lead to subjective views. However, to deal with this, the study employed triangulation of sources through multiple informants and triangulation of methods through different instruments of data collection in order to collect multiple perspectives of the issues.

1.8 Delimitations of the Study

The study delimited itself to Bungoma South sub- county which has 57 Public and 8 Private secondary schools and 188 teachers of English posted by the Teachers Service Commission, who are assisted by teachers employed by Boards of Management of various schools (source, Ministry of Education, Science and Technology, Bungoma County Education office, August, 2017). The sample size of the study was six secondary schools in Bungoma South sub-county, given the

rigor and demands of the action research design that requires prolonged engagement with the participants, a lengthy stay in the research site and iterative cycles of action. However, the researcher has provided detailed descriptions of the study sites, the teachers, the action research cycles and the data collection procedures to enable readers to relate to the characteristics and to guide those who wish to replicate the study. Lastly, this study did not examine the impact of teacher-led professional development on student learning outcomes nor did it attempt to do so. Rather, it focused on exploring the process of teacher-led professional development and its effect on the instructional practices of the teachers.

1.9 Assumptions

This study made the following assumptions: firstly, that the teachers in this study had not had an opportunity to work collaboratively in the classroom and therefore required to be trained to work collaboratively. This assumption was partially true. Although most of the teachers indicated that they collaborated, pre-intervention data and the actual classroom observation did not support their claim. For this reason, they were trained on strategies of collaborative teaching. The second assumption was that teachers in the study had not had an opportunity to lead their own professional development and always depended on traditional INSET programs.

This assumption was confirmed since most of the participants indicated in the pre-intervention questionnaire that they depended on attending workshops and seminars to acquire new information and practices in the teaching of English. The third assumption made by this study was that teachers in the study had no experience with reflection through journaling and would require to be trained in the practice. This assumption was confirmed and gradual steps were made throughout the study to guide and support them.

1.10 Theoretical Framework

This study was informed by two theories of how adults learn, that is Mezirow's theory of Transformative Learning and Kolb's theory of Experiential Learning, together with Greeno's Situated Perspective on Cognition. Below is a discussion of each of the tenets of the theories and the perspective and how they guided the structure of teacher-led professional development that was undertaken by this study.

1.10.1 Mezirow's Theory of Transformative Learning

Mezirow's (1991) theory of transformative learning focuses on the unique way in which adults learn as opposed to how children learn. Its chief propositions are captured in three themes that support adult learning. First, it emphasizes the centrality of the adult learners' experiences as the starting point of any learning and on which they can anchor new ideas. Secondly, there is the aspect of critical reflection where one engages in questioning one's assumptions and beliefs based

on prior experiences. Third is the component of rational discourse which is different from everyday discussions and involves questioning actions and statements in what is referred to as critical reflection. According to Mezirow “...the goal of transformative learning is to help the individual become a more autonomous thinker by learning to negotiate his/her own values, meanings and purpose, rather than uncritically acting on those of others” (Mezirow, 1991, p. 11)

The transformative learning theory had a bearing on this study since the teachers are adults whose new learning must take cognizance of their experiences gathered over time. During the study, the teachers were guided to question their actions, assumptions and their choices and to glean elements of new learning that may lead to practicing differently. The implication of this is that the teachers required guidance to help them move away from ordinary discussion to reflective thinking and thus embrace the reflective practice. According to Schon (1983, 1987), reflection is the hallmark of being a professional, unlike ordinary discussions which may result in complaining rather than learning. The teachers in this study were guided on how to engage in reflection through journaling, where they captured their experiences in class and with one another, while at the same time thinking of what could be done differently in the circumstance. The development of reflective teachers met the objectives of the study since it is a key characteristic of a teacher who wishes to learn and improve their practice. In this study, the reflections of the teachers were captured in journals written and kept by individual

teachers and whose contents were shared with the researcher. The researcher also kept a journal of her reflections during the interactions with the teachers and the information gathered guided the study.

1.10. 2 Kolb's Theory of Experiential Learning

The proponent of this theory, Kolb (1984) emphasizes the centrality of experience in the learning process, unlike other theories of learning that emphasize acquisition, manipulation and recall of abstract symbols. The theory's major propositions are: first, learning is a process and not outcomes, in the sense that ideas are formed and re-formed over time. The theory views all learning as re-learning and that everyone enters a learning situation with more or less articulate ideas about the topic of discussion.

Second, that learning is a continuous process where knowledge is continuously derived and tested out in the experiences of the learner. This means that the learning experience should begin by bringing out the learner's beliefs, assumptions and prejudices before integrating new ideas into the learner's belief system. Third, learning is a process of human adaptation to the situations that surround us and it takes place in all human settings and encompasses all life stages from childhood to adolescence, to middle and old age.

Kolb's theory had implications for this study which intended to introduce the teachers to life-long learning, especially learning about their classroom practice.

According to Paraskevas & Wicken (2003), adult learning is problem centered rather than content-oriented, a view that agrees with the study whose focus is on resolving the gaps identified by the teachers in their practice. However, Kolb's theory does not take into consideration the fact that practicing teachers may be limited by their experiences leading to a vicious cycle of sharing ineffective practices that may not improve learner outcomes and the practice of the teachers. Additionally, practicing teachers who are not engaged in furthering their education may not be aware of emerging ideas from research and thus the need for external assistance like that of a professional development teacher or scholars in the field of education. In this study, the researcher who is a professional development teacher and educator, guided the teachers by offering knowledge in collaborative strategies that have emerged from research on teacher professional development. This was useful in giving the teachers a head start in their efforts towards sharing their challenges with practice and developing confidence in each other leading to collaboration.

1.10. 3 The Situated Perspective on Cognition

The Situated perspective on cognition is drawn from the work of Greeno (1997) and is based on three conceptual themes that are central to the perspective. First, it views learning as situated in a context that plays an important role on what is learnt and how it is learnt. According to Greeno, learning experiences for teachers that are likely to transform teaching should happen in their workplace, more

specifically in their classrooms. Secondly, the perspective contends that the process of learning is social and that the role of others in this process goes beyond stimulation and encouragement for individual construction of knowledge, to determining what is learnt and how learning takes place. Thirdly, that cognition is distributed and can be 'spread out' to others, and thus is not the sole property of an individual. This is contrary to what happens in many learning environments which do not encourage sharing of learning but rather focus on individual competencies and thus competition rather than collaborative learning.

The propositions of this perspective to learning had implications for this study which encouraged teachers to learn in their schools and classrooms and, from each other. Collaboration enhances support as well as non-threatening feedback, especially after the training where teachers were taught how to collaborate on a teaching task. The knowledge arising from this study hopefully informed the teachers' classroom practice in more powerful ways than if they were passive recipients of knowledge and skills passed to them by an outside authority (Leliveld, 2006).

The two theories and the perspective on cognition agree on the view that all learning is a social activity and for adult learners, past experiences form the basis for sharing where learning and re-learning happens. These tenets guided how teacher-led professional development was structured in this study, with a focus on the individual teacher, their challenges with practice, a collaborating colleague and

the school context. This is evident in the conceptual framework that captured this study and which was derived from the review of literature, as shown in Figure 1.1 below.

1.11 The Conceptual Framework

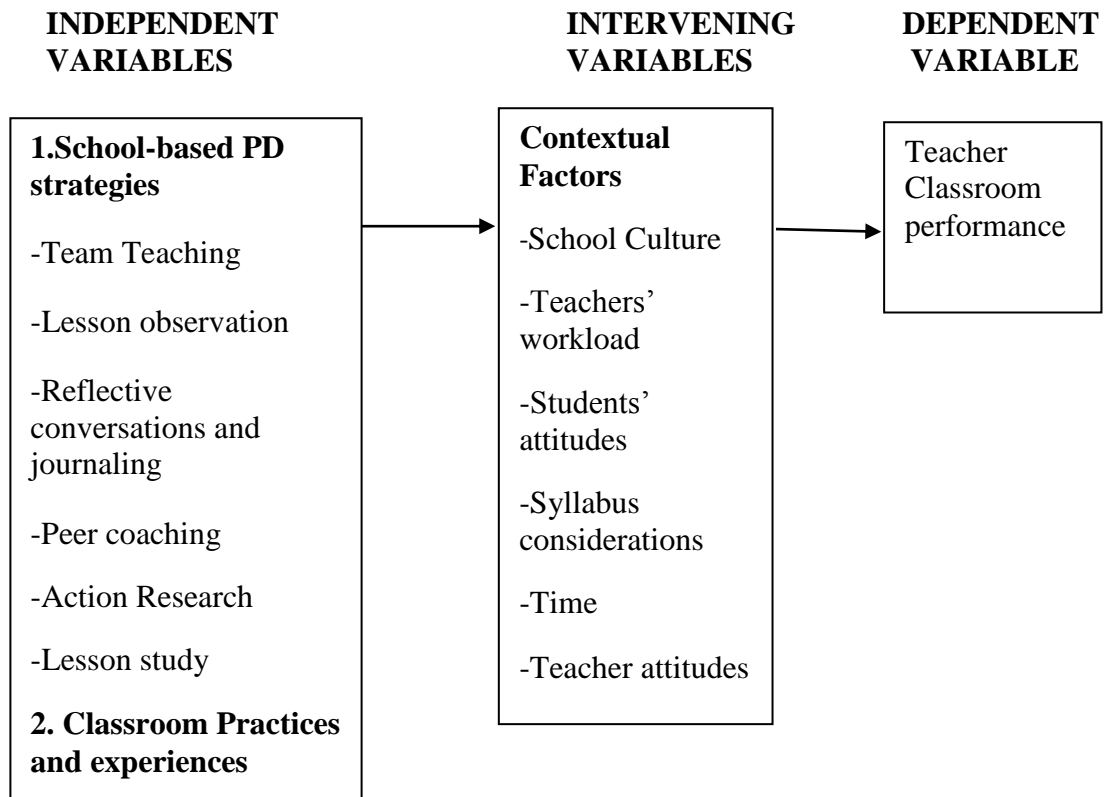


Figure 1.1: A Conceptual Framework of teacher-led professional development

The independent variables in the study consist of various strategies through which school-based professional development may happen. These are collaborative learning strategies that include: team teaching, lesson observation, conversations among colleagues, peer coaching, lesson study and action research. Additionally, the classroom practices of the teachers that form their experiences are also important contributors to school-based learning. The intervening variables that

may have an influence on the independent variables include: the school culture within the school where the teacher(s) work, time, teachers' workload, syllabus considerations, student and teacher attitudes towards collaborative teaching. The dependent variable will be the classroom performance of the teacher of English.

1.12 Operational definition of key terms

Action Research- a research type that allows one to inquire into and study classroom experiences with the intention of learning and improving.

Classroom observation – the act of watching a teacher's performance in a classroom as they teach learners.

Classroom practice – all the activities that facilitate knowledge acquisition by learners in a subject/topic, usually done by the teacher.

Coaching – a process of training or instructing a colleague in a practice where you have excelled.

Collaborative strategies- those activities where teachers work together in order to assist one another to achieve an objective linked to their classroom practice.

Collaborative teaching – the action of teachers working together to lead, instruct and mentor their students in a classroom situation.

Conferencing- a face to face meeting where the participants share their experiences and debriefing by the researcher may take place.

Contextual factors – characteristics that surround the teacher in their particular school setting.

Effective teaching – those teaching and learning activities which make observable change in students that can be described as learning.

Lesson study – a strategy in which teachers plan a lesson and one of them executes it in order to actively learn from one another, the curriculum and student learning.

Participant observation- a method in which the researcher participates in the classroom practice of teachers observing things that happen and listening to what is said, over a length of time.

Peer coaching- a strategy that allows teachers to help each other achieve their full potential through scheduled discussion and activities.

Performance- the ability to undertake a teaching task in a way to result in student learning.

Prototype model – a graphic representation of a basic working model which can be developed further until it becomes acceptable for use.

Strategy- an action plan that is intended to accomplish a specific goal.

Student Classroom Experiences- activities from which a student gathers knowledge, opinions and skills.

Teacher learning Communities- groupings of new and experienced teachers who come together to examine their practice, beliefs, knowledge and build ideas to improve practice and enhance student learning

Teacher professional development- refers to the process by which the teacher uses to acquire knowledge, skills and abilities to improve their teaching practice.

Teacher-learner- a teacher who sets out, alone or with colleagues, to examine their practice in the classroom with a view to learn from it and improve.

Teacher-learning - the result of professional development, where the teacher acquires new skills, knowledge, attitudes and predispositions to help them practice differently.

Teacher-led professional development- process by which a teacher initiates and directs their own professional learning.

Team-teaching- a strategy where two or more teachers plan together, conduct and evaluate a lesson with the intention of understanding the teaching and learning processes.

1.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a detailed background to the study by spelling out the problem being investigated from a global perspective to the local setting of the study. It has outlined the statement of the problem, rationale for the study, the objectives and questions that guided the study, the assumptions, limitations, theoretical and conceptual frameworks and operationalized the key terms used.

Chapter Two provides a review of literature on teacher professional development and teacher learning.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature on teacher professional development. The review is divided into four thematic sections namely: Teacher Professional Development for Capacity Building, The Role of Teacher Professional Development in Classroom Practice and Performance, Professional Development among Teachers of English and, Factors influencing Teacher Professional Development. These four sections are infused with the debates that exist in teacher professional development studies, ending with a summary of the existing gaps in the reviewed literature.

2.2 Teacher Professional Development for Capacity Building

A review of literature on teacher professional development studies provides a number of definitions of Professional Development (PD) which concur on the view that PD involves experiences where teachers deepen their knowledge, increase their repertoire of teaching skills and adopt new attitudes in order to improve their classroom practice (OECD, 2001; Mizell, 2010). These definitions bring to the fore the reality that a teacher, whether novice or veteran, should play the dual role of a facilitator of learning as well as that of a learner, especially if they hope to make any meaningful impact in their profession and ensure learning for all the students they encounter.

For a long time, the teacher has been conceptualized as the disseminator of knowledge, the implementer of new policies and curriculum changes, the facilitator of student learning and one whose learning will automatically be translated into learning outcomes for their learners. However, this view may not always be true. According to Trust (2012) cited in Alberth, Mursalim, Siam, Suardika & Ino (2018) teachers who stay in their isolated classrooms and do not seek out help will continue to teach in the same way regardless of new challenges or theories of learning. Such teachers may be going through the phases of their career propelled by the demands of the school leadership and education officials, rather than being moved by the desire to be better in their practice. At the same time, there exist teachers who will always be looking out to improve how they teach with a view to make an impact in the learning of their students and position themselves as effective educators.

According to Fullan (2007), every teacher at whatever phase of their teaching career should learn every day about their practice, instruction, learners and emerging education technologies that enhance learning. This view could be informed by the fact that the teaching professional is one faced with constant changes some of which emerge from research and policies. In making his argument, Fullan points out the common practice of depending on external ideas to

improve practice as “...a flawed theory of action” since external ideas can “...never be powerful enough, specific enough or sustained enough to alter the culture of the classroom and school” p.35. Fullan makes a strong case for teacher learning in his article entitled “Change the Term for Teacher Learning”, where he also presents a rather interesting argument to the extent that the use of the term PD is in itself a major obstacle to teacher learning. He argues that PD insinuates those activities that are designed for the teacher by ‘outsiders’ rather than the daily experiences of a teacher who is in pursuit for success in their practice.

Fullan’s argument above has support from other scholars and has resulted in efforts to shift the design of teacher professional experiences to ensure that they are driven by the learning needs of the teachers, focus on specific areas of practice and allow the teacher to learn when they want to learn and with whom they want to learn with (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Villegas-Reimer, 2003; Borko, 2004). The current study while acknowledging that teachers need to develop professionally, also sought to ensure that the teacher participants initiated the need to learn and engaged in it through self-driven learning activities with the support of a colleague.

The definitions of PD that abound in literature agree that its main aim is to enhance the expertise of a practicing teacher, a process that will require extended

time to ensure learning for the teacher and increased chances of the learning being applied. Literature show that the time spent by a teacher in a professional development experience is determined by whether the activities are held in a formal setting or an informal setting. PD held in formal settings like workshops and seminars are usually externally organized for a short period ranging from one day up to two weeks, while school experiences do not have a limited time and may extend to the duration that is acceptable to the teachers involved. School experiences which literature point out as having potential for improving teaching include: conversations among colleagues about their practice, the opportunity to observe a colleague in the classroom or even daily classroom experiences that lead to reflections on one's practice (Paraskevas & Wickens, 2003). Literature suggests that in schools there are teachers who have found ways to help their students learn and these strategies and practices can be shared with colleagues in an environment that allows them to get support in the implementation process (Harwel, 2003; Mizell, 2010; Westbrook et al, 2013).

However, it is also a truism that school experiences can have the characteristic of being random, unpredictable and unplanned despite the fact that they provide spaces for teachers to interact and discuss issues concerning their practice (Wilson & Berne, 1999). According to the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) (2010), such interaction is responsible for the establishment of teacher

learning communities which are groups of teachers who continually inquire into their practice with a view to improve it. Indeed, studies point to the fact that teachers working collaboratively is important since their greatest challenge with professional development is not the acquisition of knowledge, but the implementation of newly acquired methods (Jang, 2006; Gulamhussein, 2013; Coenders & Verhoef, 2018).

Research and literature consistently show that effective PD that results in teacher learning is likely to transform teaching and increase student learning if it is applied in the teacher's classroom (Hattie, 2003; Borko, 2004; Wong, Britton & Ganser, 2005). Consensus is also emerging among researchers and practitioners about the characteristics of what is termed as effective PD. A review of literature reveals that effective PD should exhibit a number of characteristics like: allows for active learning of new teaching strategies; provides opportunities for collaboration among teachers; includes follow-up support and continuous feedback; involves teachers in planning the PD experience; takes place over an extended period of time; is site-based and, allows the teacher to try out new behavior in a non-threatening environment (Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon & Birman, 2002; Darling-Hammond, 2006). Harwel (2003) in her paper entitled "Teacher Professional Development: it is not an event but a process" summarizes these characteristics under three elements: a context that supports high quality PD,

strong content to deepen and sharpen skills and, a PD process organized around research documented practices. This current study concurs with the above characteristics which also find support in studies on PD. The duration of the current study was especially informed by the finding from earlier studies that teacher learning is a process that could involve iterative actions that require extended time, unlike one-off PD experiences.

While the above lists and others provide a road-map of what makes effective PD, contentions have arisen regarding the way the characteristics were arrived at (Garet et al, 2001; Guskey, 2003). For example, after analyzing 13 different lists of characteristics of effective PD, Guskey discovered that the lists were inconsistent and sometimes contradictory. He contends that the researchers used self-report data from teachers to arrive at the lists and did not have verifying empirical evidence. Further, he points out that nearly all the lists related the characteristics to improvements in student learning in Mathematics and Science, while ignoring the effect created by these characteristics on the teacher's classroom practice. However, a review of literature shows that there are some studies that have sought to demonstrate empirically the effect of PD on either the classroom practices of teachers or the learning experiences of the students.

Jang (2006) in a quasi-experimental study on the effects of team teaching upon two 8th grade teachers established empirically that the average final scores of students receiving team teaching was higher than those of learners receiving

traditional teaching. Additionally, Jang established that half of the experimental students preferred team teaching to traditional teaching as it made learning more enjoyable and they were able to benefit from the teaching styles of the two teachers.

In another study, Gore, Llyod, Smith, Bowe, Ellis & Lubans (2017) tested the pedagogy-based collaborative PD of 8 teachers in each of the 24 schools in their study and found a significant positive effect on teacher quality ($d=0.4$) that was independent of the school type, years of teaching experience and school location. Gore et al were able to establish that these effects of collaboration were sustained even six months after the study and greatly illustrated how to support teacher learning for quality teaching and teacher morale. Additionally, they were able to establish that PD that involves teachers as learners is able to promote transformative practice rather than accountability.

The current study was planned to take into consideration the characteristics of effective PD in order to ensure teacher learning. The study focused on creating opportunities for the teacher participants to deepen their content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge in the context of their schools and classrooms, with the support of a colleague. This collaboration will hopefully lead to the establishment of teacher learners who can form communities of learners to support each other even after the end of this current study. Also, the study focused on the teachers of English, while applying a variety of strategies like lesson observation, peer

coaching, team teaching and lesson study that were carried out within an action research model, with teachers engaging in reflection. The data collected was triangulated to provide verifiable empirical data that was used to make claims about knowledge emerging from the study.

2.2.1 Traditional Approaches of Teacher Professional Development

A review of literature on teacher learning reveals two distinct routes through which teacher professional development can happen: formal and informal processes. Formal/traditional processes are situated away from the teacher's workplace and include workshops, seminars, college courses and conferences, while the informal/alternative PD which are on-site include discussions among colleagues, independent reading and research, observation of a colleague or learning from a peer (Mizell, 2010). As Villegas-Reimer (2003) notes, the only forms of PD that have been available to teachers for a long time are the formal ones which were meant to offer new information to teachers on a particular aspect of their work, as identified by school district or education officials. These approaches have received a number of criticisms from literature (Putnam & Borko, 2000; Gathumbi, Mungai & Hintze, 2013; Bett, 2016). For example, Putnam & Borko (2000) describe traditional PD as "woefully inadequate..." p. 3. This conclusion is based on the findings that traditional PD is fragmented, does not take into account how teachers learn and its organization lacks the input of the teacher who is the target of the learning experience.

Among the key drawbacks of traditional PD is the fact that knowledge is usually offered to passive teachers without considering that teachers like their students require to engage with new knowledge and make meaning out of it. Indeed, literature on teacher learning reveal that effective PD is that which allows for active learning that is done with and from others, for a period of time. French (1997) cited in Gulamhussein (2013) reports that some studies have suggested up to 50 hours of instruction, observation, coaching, discussion and practice before a new strategy is mastered and implemented in class. This is to help teachers to be active agents of their own change and who are able also to deal with unexpected responses during the implementation stage.

Gulamhussein (2013) brings out another shortcoming of traditional PD when she argues that while questions are asked about how students learn with a focus on their needs, no questions are asked about the needs of the teachers nor about their learning. This assumption by organizers of formal PD presupposes that every effort towards improvement is about the learner and that the teachers will automatically implement any suggested changes. Studies exist that point to the presence of many professional needs faced by teachers that need to be taken into consideration if they are to be trusted as change agents. In a study that sought involving 36 teachers of English, Widodo (2003) even established that teachers needed certain PD programs to enhance their classroom practice including: training, teacher association, continuing education and inter-school visits. In

another study on the teaching of writing to form 2 classes, Eyinda (2010) established that teachers of English felt that their initial teacher preparation was inadequate to equip them with appropriate pedagogical content knowledge to teach writing competently and therefore they needed to be trained in this direction. Yet even with such needs expressed by teachers, traditional PD is still organized using a top-down approach to meet the needs which education officials think the teachers have.

Another grey area in the structure and implementation of traditional PD is the fact that they are organized as an event rather than a process that should be pursued for some time. Most PD experiences fail to make an impact because they are held as one-shot workshops where teachers are exposed to concepts that they hardly have time to engage with (Borko, 2004). According to Gulahusseini (2013), it is ironical that teachers are required to make learning for their students social through collaboration and discussion, yet for them knowledge is hurriedly shared with them. Studies exist that have sought to extend the time used in the training by organizing a number of workshops over a duration of time. In a 2-year study that set out to design teacher professional support for 51 teachers of reading at the Kenyan coast, Dubeck et al (2017) documented positive remarks about the 3 workshops spread across the two years, although the participants still felt they needed more and longer workshops to enable them practice with others in the program.

Despite such documented shortcomings, literature suggests that traditional PD “...is not useless, but it can never be powerful enough, specific enough or sustained enough to alter the culture of the classroom and school” (Fullan, 2007; 1). This view suggests that the duration of a PD experience, its focus and rigor have an impact on the resulting effects on teacher learning and student outcomes. According to Broad & Evans (2006), traditional approaches are beneficial for direct teaching of new ideas, help to develop awareness of policy changes and curriculum reforms while providing a different environment where learning can take place. However, Broad and Evans contend that although the setting of the PD experiences away from the classroom can provide opportunities for teachers to think in new ways, the process of integrating the new ideas and practices in one’s classroom practice may not be simple or straight forward.

Indeed, scholars have for some time now established that the challenge for teachers is not the uptake of new knowledge, but the implementation of the new skills and application of new knowledge in their classroom with their learners (Gulamhussein, 2013). The shortcomings of traditional PD call for alternative professional development modes that take into consideration the fact that learning about teaching and for teaching, should not be an ‘additive process’ involving the accumulation of knowledge and skills from one-off workshops (Hoban, 2002), but one that leads to development of skills, knowledge and predispositions as informed by constructivist rather than transmission orientations.

2.2.2 The School-based Approach for Teacher Professional Development

In the past decade, a considerable body of knowledge has emerged on alternative professional development approaches, although most of this is from the West with very little from developing world contexts. The school-based approach is premised on the view that teachers benefit most by learning in a context where new knowledge and behavior can be applied (Broad and Evans, 2006). Agreeing with this view, Mizell (2010) contends that schools are places where teachers like their students can learn from each other and from the context. The increasing interest in school-based PD is informed by a number of reasons. Key among them is the view that teachers need to learn continually and the best way to do this is with a colleague(s) in a school setting. This means, the assumption that a one-off workshop will meet the needs of a teacher is mistaken. Secondly, school-based PD has shown the capacity to address the shortcomings of traditional PD, especially the de-contextualization of knowledge (Cochran-Sith & Lytle, 2002; Gathumbi, Mungai & Hintze, 2013). Thirdly, school-based PD have demonstrated greater chances of new learning being applied in the practice of teachers, especially given the fact that teachers have support in the implementation process and they hold each other accountable in terms of what they learn (Garber, 2014; Degan, 2018). It was the concern of the current study to explore what school-based strategies can be exploited by the teachers as they chart their professional growth.

A review of literature reveals a number of school-based strategies that can be used by a teacher seeking their professional development, especially in collaboration with a colleague/colleagues. One of the ways in which teachers can learn about their practice and collect outcome oriented data that can inform future actions, is action research. Definitions of action research abound in literature and one of them is by Carr & Kemmis (1986) who define action research as:

...a form of self-reflective enquiry undertaken by participants in social situations in order to improve the rationality and justice of their own practices, their understanding of these practices, and the situation in which the practices are carried out. (p.162)

This definition and others concur on the view that action research is an important kind of teacher professional development as it involves the practitioners in changing their practice in line with their social and educational values. Indeed, scholars have consensus that action research provides an opportunity for self-inquiry, experimentation and reflection that is likely to lead to increased understanding of practice and student learning (McNiff, Lomax & Whitehead, 2003; Hendrick, 2006; Wilson, 2009).

Action research has gained a lot of popularity, especially in the West where it has enabled teachers to be conceptualized as ‘knowers’ and ‘thinkers’ rather than ‘doers’ of actions generated by ‘outsiders’ to the practice (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 2012). Indeed, in their seminal work, Carr & Kemmis (1986) cited in Koshy (2005) contend that action research is an integral part of the professional

development of teachers as it allows generation of knowledge to produce change in practice. According to Kemmis, McTaggart & Retallick (2004), action research has a number of benefits for the teacher that include: allowing teachers to engage in evidence-based inquiry; enhances collaboration among teachers; increases teacher understanding of their practice and, leads to a school climate where teachers are learners, knowledge creators and have opportunities to apply new learning in their practice. The current study also employed action research to enable the active participation of teachers in questioning their practice with the support of a colleague, trying out researched strategies and learning from their practice and in the classroom context.

Research studies consistently demonstrate that action research fits in the collaborative model of teacher learning that can lead to the emancipation of the individual teacher first, then colleagues (Segal, 2009; Okoth, 2009; Simiyu, 2010). The methods of action research that have been documented either involve an individual teacher investigating an issue in their classroom or a group of teachers working collaboratively on a common problem in what is termed practical action research or with the support of a researcher in what is termed technical action research. Oja and Smulyan (1989) cited in Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) argue that teachers are more likely to change their behavior and attitudes if they have been involved in an activity that demonstrates not only the need for such change, but that it can be done with positive consequences.

According to Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000), action research is one such space which is open-minded about what counts as evidence and thus the teacher researcher can collect and analyze their own actions, judgements, reactions and impressions about what is going on. This view suggests that any practicing teacher can engage in the process of examining their practice, documenting the outcomes and gleaning new ideas and strategies in what is termed teacher research, or they can work in action research teams with the support of a university researcher.

Alongside action research, reflection has also gained importance as a tool for enabling transformative thinking and learning that is linked to good practice (Ashraf & Rarieya, 2008). While action research provides the opportunity to examine an issue in one's practice and introduce an intervention, reflection provides a means to question and analyze actions and outcomes, which is key to establishing new directions and actions. According to Mathew, Mathew & Peechattu (2017), reflection is important because experience alone does not necessarily lead to learning and so the teacher must be deliberate about learning by mulling over their actions. Mathew, Mathew and Peechattu state a not so obvious truth when they posit that the complexity of teaching requires teachers to question their own classroom practice if they have to improve and increase the performance of their learners.

This process of continually reflecting is termed the reflective practice, where a teacher thinks over their practice, analyzes how the teaching was done and how this can be improved or changed for better learning outcomes (Ashraf & Rarieya, 2008; Otieno, 2009; Mathew, Mathew & Peechattu, 2017). Yet even with this truth, most teachers do not include in their daily schedule time to think and analyze their choices in regard to lesson planning, the learning patterns of their learners or even what they can reinforce or do better in their next lesson. Arguably, this lack of reflective practice could explain the assertions by some teachers that teaching is a boring job since it requires one to repeat what they did last year with the current students and again next year with a different set of students.

Ashraf & Rarieya (2008) posit that the reflective practice has the ability to improve teaching and learning through strategies like reflective conversations and journaling. Reflective conversations involve verbal sharing, discussing, questioning and reasoning about practice either with a colleague or a reflective coach. According to Ashraf & Rarieya, reflective conversations help in identifying gaps in knowledge, skills and attitudes that may hinder improvement of practice and thereby providing opportunities for collaborative inquiry. Undoubtedly, reflective conversations contribute significantly in building a shared repertoire of skills and techniques amongst the teachers, a factor that improves their professional practices. On the other hand, journal writing provides an avenue of

capturing thoughts in writing to enable one to think about an experience, mull over it and evaluate it at a later time (Otieno, 2009).

Both approaches to the reflective practice are opportunities for teachers to be more aware of their practice and its effect on learner achievement and thus enhancing the professional development of the teacher. Although there is a lot of empirical research work done on the reflective practice in the West, there is hardly any mention of it in the developing world contexts like Kenya. This study made attempts to introduce the participants to journaling, where they were to capture their thoughts in reflective journals. Additionally, the participants were encouraged to explain their choices and actions to each other and the researcher, as a way of engaging in reflective conversations.

A third strategy is lesson observation, which is a systematic inquiry into the classroom practice of a teacher with the goal of informing both the observer and the teacher (Shing, n.d). Studies suggest that classroom lesson observation is useful in a number of ways: to develop basic knowledge of teaching procedures, critical thinking and reflection, to develop keen observation of actions and gathering evidence for planning and, improvement of teaching quality and effectiveness (Zaare, 2012; Shing, n.d; Noguera, 2018). In a study that set out to investigate the effect of classroom observation on teaching methodology, Zaare (2012) found that the teachers learned a lot about how to teach by observing their

qualified peers. This finding agrees with that of Noguera (2018) who studied the role of classroom observation in pre-service English teachers' understanding of the teaching profession. Noguera found that the pre-service teachers were able to evolve in their beliefs about teaching and even their identities as teachers developed. Shing (n.d) also established that teachers preferred action research lesson observation to the appraisal lesson observation for improving the quality and effectiveness of their teaching. According to the teachers in Shing's study, the traditional evaluative lesson observation minimizes openness and willingness of the teacher to accept suggestions and comments as they felt the need to defend their choices and actions, rather than learning from their choices and actions.

Lesson study is another school-based strategy whose origin literature documents as being in Japan, where it is believed that teachers learn best in communities with the intention of generating practical ways to implement curriculum content (Arslan, 2018). The lesson study process happens when a small group of teachers work together to plan, teach, observe and analyze a jointly designed lesson. The strengths of lesson study include the fact that it is on-site, does not require funding as compared to other PDs, helps the teachers to rise above self when making inquiries and hearing what others suggest (Kamina, 2011). In a study whose purpose was to observe the influence of lesson study on student-teachers, Arslan (2018) established that it increased their confidence and contributed to their professional growth through observing and teaching experiment lessons.

In a qualitative multiple case study that consisted of two lesson study teams each with an experienced and a beginning teacher, Coenders & Verhoef (2018) found that lesson study supported the development of the pedagogical content knowledge of both levels of teachers. According to the findings of Coenders and Verhoef, teachers took to lesson study with ease because it is non-threatening to them as it focuses on observing the students, their learning and specific content and not the teacher. According to Podhorsky & Fisher (2007), lesson study is one way of systematically improving instruction while at the same time reducing teacher isolation.

The fifth strategy is peer coaching, a strategy that allows teachers to become a resource to one another in order to achieve their full potential through scheduled discussions and activities. According to Garber (2014), peer coaching is key to changing instruction as it allows for companionship, enables teachers to get technical feedback, analyze application of new practices, develop professional capital and facilitates professional development. In their paper entitled “Teacher Mentoring: A Synonym for Teacher Professional Instruction and Guidance”, Simiyu, Mwanzi & Wanambisi (2020) confirm the emerging fact that teachers are also learners at whatever stage of their teaching career and therefore peer coaching allows teachers to work in a mentor-mentee relationship that is of mutual benefit. To emphasize this further Garber (2014) posits that for peer coaching to succeed,

teachers must build relationships of trust that will allow them to take risks and expose their mistakes and challenges to one another.

Joyce & Showers (1982) cited in Gulamhussein (2013) give the structure of peer coaching as: teacher meets with a colleague who acts as the coach before the actual lesson where they discuss the strategy to implement in the lesson. The teacher with the issue plans and implements the lesson which the coach observes, then the teacher and coach meet to debrief about the lesson and how it should be improved. The two may agree to have the coach teach while the teacher observes and later on there is a debriefing session to discuss the lesson. This cycle is repeated until a skill is mastered or new knowledge is applied successfully, before another area is identified and the same process is repeated.

The sixth strategy is team teaching which involves two or more teachers, whose aim is to share teaching experiences and generate a discussion with a view to enhance learning for their students (Jang, 2006). Team teaching is a departure from traditional teaching where one teacher handles a lesson resulting in students who experience a singular perspective of issues and knowledge. In a quasi-experimental study on the effect of team teaching upon two 8th grade teachers and their student population of 124, Jang (2006) established that more than half of the students preferred team teaching to traditional teaching. Findings from this study also showed that the average scores of students receiving team teaching was higher than those receiving traditional teaching.

Team teaching is also key to the development of a collaborative culture in a school that has immense benefits for the school, teachers and even learners. In a study that aimed to determine the impact of team teaching on teacher efficacy, burnout and student engagement in an elementary school, Degan (2018) found that the teachers built and maintained relationships of trust, learnt together, felt more effective and energized and exciting to their students, thus curbing burn out among the teachers and increasing student engagement. The collaboration by teachers in workload and delivery of the curriculum soon became an attribute that the learners borrowed, making the teachers models of collaboration. The current study also employed team teaching to enable the teachers to learn together and to enhance support during the implementation of new strategies and new knowledge.

In a multi-site study conducted in three large urban school districts from three States using randomized controlled field trials, Gersten et al (2010) found that the classroom practice and student outcomes of the experimental groups indicated improvement as opposed to those of teachers and pupils in the control groups. By engaging in the study groups, teachers were able to implement new instructional types and engage in discussions more frequently, a factor that altered their practice significantly. In another study that involved collecting and examining teachers' experiences as they participated in study groups, Torres-Guzman & Hunt (2006) found that teachers expressed freedom, confidence and excitement during collaborative inquiry. Additionally, through the teacher voices, Torres-Guzman

and Hunt learnt that study groups facilitated collaboration that pushed the teachers to learn and to own their learning, as well as to support their students to engage in collaboration in class and around tasks.

The above strategies have a strong connection to the theories of how adults learn, especially the aspect of bringing personal and professional experiences to a learning situation leading to construction of knowledge rather than passively receiving it (Hayes, 2014). Research has established for some time now that adults learn differently from children and any learning that takes into consideration their experiences enhances learning for them and the new learning is likely to be used in the classroom practice of the teacher. Additionally, the above strategies can be categorized as sustainable and generative modes of PD since their key requirement is the presence of willing teachers who find time to collaborate with each other and a school culture and environment that supports them (Simiyu, 2011). The above views informed by literature on teacher professional development guided the design and implementation of the current study.

2.2.3 Emerging Tools and Spaces for Teacher Professional Development

Literature on teacher professional development documents a number of tools and spaces that have been associated with the idea of lifelong learning for teachers. For example, on-line spaces are rapidly expanding as tools of informal PD for teachers based on the framework of constructivism, distributed cognition and communities of practice (Van Bommel & Liljekvist, n.d; Charalambos & Zembylas, 2004;

Pereira & Santana, 2013). These three aspects are key to how adults learn and should guide the design of any professional development programme for teachers. Additionally, social media are emerging as a platform for harnessing social capital which is important in teacher professional development that relies greatly on collaboration and sharing as a way to professionally support a colleague (Alberth, Mursalim, Siam, Suardika & Ino, 2018).

According to Alberth et al, social media is a solution to the issue of lack of discussion and exchange of ideas between the facilitator and the teachers and among the teachers themselves, a factor that is a drawback of traditional professional development. In a three-year study on mathematics teachers' informal professional development on Facebook, Van Bommel & Liljekvist (n.d) found that teachers used this site to initiate and lead their own professional development through communication, interaction and collaborative knowledge construction.

However, in a literature review of on-line communities of practice Saifuddin (2016) found the following barriers that challenge the effectiveness of on-line PD: teachers' lack of technological skills, limited access to computer and internet resources and services, ethical issues regarding the content shared, facilitators who control rather than lead dialogue and lack of a personal touch to the communication process. Yet even with these barriers, on-line PD has found support in literature especially for enabling the teacher to engage in

communication and interaction with colleagues outside working hours, to watch model lessons and to find critical support in communities of learners.

Another emerging space for teacher professional development is the concept of teacher study groups where collaborative groups of teachers meet to reflect and dialogue about their concerns with practice (Torres-Guzman & Hunt, 2006; Ospina & Sanchez, 2010; Gersten, Dimino, Jayanthi, Kim & Santoro, 2010). Study groups are hinged on the assumption that knowledge is constructed in communities of practice through social interaction and that learning is mediated by the difference in perspectives among participants and thus participation is the best way of learning (Torres-Guzman & Hunt, 2006). The key advantage of study groups is the fact that it is a space for bottom-up professional development that is driven by teacher professional needs (Ospina & Sanchez, 2010).

Studies on teacher learning have consensus that collaboration among teachers has a number of benefits that include: eliminating teacher isolation which has negative implications on teacher professional growth; provides teachers with an opportunity to understand their practice and student learning; works to develop skills, confidence and self-esteem among teachers; allows teachers to support each other to solve instructional dilemmas and, develops collegiality, mutual respect and supportive professional relationships (Podhorsky & Fisher, 2007; Mizell, 2010; Garber, 2014; Degan, 2018). These views should therefore guide the design of

professional development experiences for teachers that is likely to result in teacher learning that can influence the way they practice in the classroom.

However, Jang (2006) points out that collaboration is not a common feature among teachers and has even been ignored in schools although there is documented evidence of its positive effect on the learning of teachers. According to Jang, collaboration has not found enough support because of a number of reasons that include the fact that schools still emphasize teacher autonomy rather than collaboration; schools have limited opportunities for collaboration among teachers and, collaboration demands a lot of time and energy from the teacher who has to plan with a colleague, teach and evaluate the teaching in order to learn. Additionally, during collaboration teachers also fear that their differences in teaching may result in students comparing them with each other, a factor which may not go well for their self-esteem.

With an understanding of the above arguments for PD that is on-site, on-going, driven by the needs of the teachers and involves collaboration, this current study was designed to offer an alternative PD to the teachers and examine how this would work towards improving their classroom practice.

2.3 The Role of Teacher Professional Development in Classroom Practice and Performance

Research based evidence from the few available evaluation studies available reveals that effective professional development experiences have an effect on the

teacher's classroom practice and student learning outcomes (Guskey, 2002; Desimone et al, 2002; Taplin, Ping & Fuqian, 2007). In a study into the efficacy of in-service PD on the classroom instruction of 71 Mathematics teachers in Sri Lanka, Johnson (2006) established that most teachers used new strategies consistently and regularly in the classrooms thereby improving their pedagogical practices. Also Desimone et al (2002) in a longitudinal study established that PD which focused on specific Mathematics and Science content increased teacher use of these specific practices in the classroom.

The above researchers propose that districts and schools might have to focus PD on fewer teachers and specific content in order to have an impact on teaching practice and provide the important support for implementation. In a review of 9 studies addressing the effect of PD on student achievement, Yoon, et al (2007) established that teachers who receive PD for an average of 49 hours were able to boost their students' achievement by 21 percentile points. In this current study that covered a whole school term, the focus was on improving the pedagogical content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge of the 12 teachers of English, sampled for the study. This is in line with the contentions of Desimone et al (2002) that specific focus is useful in ensuring consistent application of new skills and knowledge in the classroom situation.

The above contentions notwithstanding, studies exist that have documented the impact of professional development on the classroom practices of teachers of

English. In a study on the impact of teacher study groups as a PD model, Gersten et al (2010) found that this model significantly improved the vocabulary instruction of the first grade teachers who were in the experimental group as compared to those in the control group. In another study in Kathmandu District Higher Secondary schools that explored the power of reflection on the teaching and learning process, Pandey (2012) found that PD enhanced teaching skills, activated and improved the instructional process of the teachers of English. The findings in Noguera's (2018) study that examined the role of classroom observation of 171 pre-service teachers show that they were able to develop critical thinking, new teaching methodologies and their beliefs and identities as teachers of English developed.

Yet despite statistics like those of Yoon et al (2007) and others, Meiers (2007), argues that there has been little systematic research showing the link between PD and improved classroom practice, for a number of reasons. First, change in teaching practice takes place over time and is often connected to other factors that may influence the improvement in classroom practice. Secondly, most evaluations of the impact of PD rely on ratings given by participants at the end of the PD session, yet change takes some time to show and may not be evident immediately. Thirdly, the questionnaires used to collect data on the change in classroom practice lack the ability to elicit this information. To mitigate the above challenges, Meiers (2007) proposes that the timing of the evaluation should allow for change to show

and should isolate improvements that may be attributed to the PD. She also encourages teachers to document their practice, observations and judgments over time. In making a case for evaluation, Guskey (2003) suggests that evaluating PD processes is important in decision making that will enhance the success of PD efforts anywhere.

The current study attempted an evaluation of the effects of teacher-led professional development on the classroom practice of teachers of English in secondary schools in Bungoma South sub-county, Kenya. This was done after engaging the teachers in the action research cycles for one school term and documenting their views about the process, especially in regard to their classroom practice. The evaluation of the effects of the intervention on classroom practice was undertaken at the end of the term and involved classroom observation by the participants and the researcher, self-reported data captured using interviews and, journal entries in teacher journals. This is in line with the views of Meiers (2007) and Guskey (2003) who support evaluation that can be used in decision making that will inform PD efforts elsewhere. Also, in consideration of the above information the current study utilized six school based strategies that are situated in the collaborative model of PD to explore how teachers of English in the study sites can learn and improve their practice and hopefully, increase the learning outcomes for their learners. These were: classroom lesson observation, peer coaching, team teaching, lesson study, action research and reflective practice. Alongside these

strategies, the study introduced the teachers to a WhatsApp forum where they shared their challenges with practice, sought explanations and shared information.

2.4 Professional Development among Teachers of English

Literature concurs on the view that having an operational command of English in this century is advantageous for education, employability in the global workplace and social mobility (Nyarigoti, 2013; Cirocki, Tennekoon & Calvo, 2014; Galaczi et al 2018). This fact could explain the need for governments to prioritize improving outcomes in English language learning as well as the quality of English language teaching. The teaching of English especially in contexts where it is a second language or a foreign language presents a number of challenges, some of which are context specific and have to be navigated if learners have to be supported to develop proficiency. However, according to Galaczi et al (2018) there are a number of key realities that undermine English Language teaching including: limited subject-specific training; teachers' low level of English; time pressure; challenging classroom and pedagogical environments; ineffective learning environments and limited digital competencies to use technology. Arguably, it is only by addressing these realities that teachers of English the world over, will be on a path to support their learners, most of whom have only their teacher of English as a role model and representative of this target language.

The above realities could explain efforts like those of the British Council which has pioneered in providing fora for discussions and sharing on continuing PD for

teachers of English in Kenya and globally. The Council has collaborated with many governments worldwide to design and implement INSETs specifically for teachers of English, although this has been in the form of workshops and seminars (Hayes, 2014). In Britain, the Cambridge Assessment English is one of the frameworks that uses digital learning to increase teacher professional development (Galaczi et al, 2018). According to Galaczi, the framework has considered among other factors that the PD should be localized and content specific; done with a growth mind-set; with bottom-up/top-down synergy; involving reflection and critical engagement, collaboration and mentoring; with observable, realistic and efficient outcomes. While this is commendable, it is important to note that because the framework is on-line, it suffers the challenge of lack of physical interaction which is an important factor in teacher learning.

Literature shows that there exist many efforts and strategies to ensure PD for teachers of English especially in relation to their diverse needs as educators, phase of their teaching career and in line with patterns of adult learning (Diaz-Maggioli, 2003; Hismanoglu, 2010). In a study of 50 language teachers that aimed to explain what PD strategies they preferred, Hismanoglu (2010) established that teachers preferred the use of teacher portfolios (22.7%), in-service training (28%) and mentoring (14%) as opposed to collaborative activities like peer coaching (4%), action research (12.7%), study groups (9.3%) and team teaching (9.3%). The teachers pointed out that collaborative PD exposed their weaknesses and affected

their confidence and thus their preference of activities where they received new ideas without many demands on their time and thinking.

Additionally, they pointed out other impediments to their PD as lack of time, heavy work schedule, strict working hours, lack of motivation, lack of communication among staff and lack of support from the school leadership. In a study of 45 Sri Lankan ESL teachers, Cirocki, Tennekoon & Calvo (2014), established that teachers acknowledged classroom research and reflective practice as useful elements of a teacher's career, but insubstantial training is the reason why a small number of teachers are involved. For the few who engaged in classroom research, some found difficulty in collecting data in their classrooms and even sharing results, with 60% keeping results to themselves, 44% shared results with parents and students, while 24% informed colleagues to improve their practice. These findings present the realities among teachers of English and present the challenge of structuring their PD in ways that will meet their preferences and contexts as well as researched evidence of effective PD.

In the Kenyan context, many studies have been carried out to understand the challenges of English language learning and teaching, especially given the persistent poor performance of learners in national examinations and literacy tests at both the primary and secondary school levels. The teaching of English at these two levels and the performance of learners at the two levels have presented unique challenges, demanding unique solutions. At the primary school level, literacy has

been a key issue and this has resulted in many programmes being developed to improve the literacy levels especially of pupils in lower primary.

One of the recent programmes is TUSOME, a national literacy programme that began in January 2015 targeting 60,000 teachers in 22,600 primary schools in Kenya, with the intention of helping 5.4 million class one and two pupils to meet the MOEST benchmarks of literacy. According to Piper, Destenao, Kinyanjui & Ong'ele (2018), the objectives of TUSOME were to improve teacher capacity by providing support through the use of teacher guides that would enable them deliver high quality lessons. This was done under the supervision of a Curriculum Support Officer (CSO) who visited the schools regularly to observe teaching and provided constructive feedback to the teachers. Although the above quoted research examined improvement of teacher capacity, it did not focus on how teachers could peer support each other to improve their classroom practice and performance. The current study went further and examined how teachers can work collaboratively in their context to overcome their unique challenges with practice. The study has also suggested ways in which teacher learning can be configured so that it is on-going.

The teaching of English at secondary school in Kenya has also faced a number of challenges that require teacher professional development to address them. The key challenges emanate from the multi-lingual state of the country resulting in issues like code switching, code mixing and borrowing from other languages. Secondly, is the issue of the selection and use of instructional resources to enhance learning

and performance of learners, especially in an era of educational technologies (Adhiambo, 2011; Juma, 2016). In a study that investigated and documented factors that affect the selection and utilization of instructional resources in selected public secondary schools in Nairobi province, Adhiambo (2011) recommended more language workshops to improve teacher knowledge and skills.

In third place is the issue of teacher attitudes. In a study that investigated factors that contributed to students' poor achievements in English in public mixed day secondary schools in Kirinyaga district, Kariuki (2007) established that 33% of the teachers of English reported that given a chance, they would prefer to teach other subjects. The teachers argued that English as a subject is taxing and tedious as they have to do a lot more work than their colleagues in other subjects.

The fourth challenge is linked to the use of the Integrated English Curriculum Approach to language instruction, where the teaching of English language is integrated with literature, language skills and emerging issues in society. Studies on the integrated approach to teaching English in Kenya reveal that teachers of English feel inadequately prepared to teach integrated English in secondary school, since these were handled as two subjects during their training (Barasa, 2009; Matere, 2012; Nyarigoti, 2013; Matara, 2014). In a study on teaching techniques that enhance integration in the development of English language skills in secondary schools in Gatundu district, Ogalo (2011) found that teachers do not integrate the four language skills when teaching due to various reasons that

include: large classes, teachers' concentration on writing and reading skills while ignoring listening and speaking skills, teachers dominating the class using the lecture methods and, lack of knowledge on how to teach an integrated lesson. These challenges can dominate the practice of a teacher to levels where the teacher settles and does nothing to bring meaningful change. The current study aimed at establishing ways in which the under explored area of teacher-led professional could be used to enable teachers overcome their challenges with applying this teaching approach by observing and working with a colleague.

In the Kenyan context literature reveals the following in regard to the provision of professional development for English language teachers, first that PD which is usually held in one day is inadequate for skills development. In a study to evaluate the effectiveness of PD on English and Literature teachers in selected schools in Tharak-Nithi and Meru County, Njagi, Muriungi & Peter (2014) noted that all 30 sampled teachers expressed the need for the PDs to take longer and follow-up support be offered for implementation. Secondly, that PD facilitated by external speakers makes little contribution to change in teachers' practices. In a study of two City schools, Nyarigoti (2013) established that while teachers were expected to hold at least two departmental meetings per term where external speakers would speak to teachers, observations showed that this made little contribution to change in classroom approaches or subject matter knowledge. Thirdly, that most language teachers do not get a chance to attend PD opportunities. Kariuki (2007) found that

50% of teachers in a study that investigated factors that contributed to students' poor achievements in English, reported that they had not attended any in-service training to improve their practice and they thus felt inadequate.

With these challenges in mind, education officials and school administrators have from time to time organized INSETs to support teachers to surmount these challenges and hopefully teach better and ensure increased learning for their students. Of interest to note is that the PD offered to teachers of English is in a one-size-fits-all manner, designed to offer them 'new' knowledge which they are expected to use in their classrooms. This model of PD has been shown to have weaknesses, as earlier discussed and so Kenyan teachers have continued to grapple with the challenges of teaching English as a second language. Currently, the Teachers Service Commission in their TPAD tools expects teachers to engage in school-based PD experiences despite the fact that no clear guideline is available on how this is to be done. The current study was designed to explore the process of teacher-led PD among teachers of English in Bungoma South sub-county, in order to fill this gap.

2.5 Factors Influencing Teacher Professional Development

Despite the documented benefits of PD, there are factors in the teacher's milieu that can challenge the full realization of the effects of PD on the classroom practice of teachers and the improvement of learning outcomes. First is the issue of time, which Gulamhussein (2013) postulates is one of the largest costs in PD. Her

argument is based on the fact that the learning curve for teachers is greatest at the implementation stage, where teachers need a lot of time for planning, experimentation and support, over an extended period of time. Yet school time is occupied with a lot of activities that are time consuming and energy usurping. In the USA, the department for Education (2000) reported that despite efforts to incorporate PD into the school schedule, a number of teachers were unable to benefit from it citing time and poor scheduling. The time referred to here includes time for planning, coaching, practice and follow-up which many institutions do not have in their daily schedule of events, resulting in PD conflicting with school schedules (European Commission, 2010). Research findings suggest that effective PD will require some good time, planning and availability on the part of the teachers.

The second factor that may influence the realization of teacher learning has to do with teacher attitudes towards PD. A number of studies reveal that most teachers will attend PD as a means to attain job mobility, career advancement and salary increase and not necessarily to improve their practice (Berne & Wilson, 1999; GURT, 2001; OECD, 2005). Teachers even have preferences of the venue of the PD. Nyarigoti (2013) in a recent study on PD needs of teachers of English established that teachers preferred those PD experiences held away from school where they can interact with others, as opposed to school based PD. Some of the teacher attitudes towards leading their own development can arguably be linked to

their pre-service training which does not develop in them the ability to think and discuss about their practice, instead they are socialized to complain about challenges and to wait for solutions from elsewhere. This could mean that teachers may be hesitant to plan and direct their own improvement, preferring instead to wait for ready-made solutions. Such perceptions and attitudes are likely to have an effect on the participation of teachers in PD sessions and even the uptake of knowledge and skills. The current study was planned with this information in mind and included a training on collaboration and reflection through journaling and conversations which have been established to enable teachers to think about their practice and to seek to improve it.

The third factor is the school environment and the school culture that thrives in it. In the past decade, issues of school culture have come to be connected to the adoption or otherwise of any change introduced in a school. Stoll & Fink (1989) define organizational culture as “observed behavioral regularities that include language and rituals, norms that evolve in working groups, dominant values of an organization, rules of getting along and the feeling or climate conveyed in an organization” p 81. Stoll and Fink posit that in schools, cultural rules and rituals abound which are shaped by history, context and the people within the school and because they are implicit, their effect is evident in the way the school responds to change. Of importance to note is that all schools are unique in the way they deal with and respond to issues, including those of educational change. This view

suggests that any attempts to introduce new ideas in a school should be cognizant of the effect of the school culture. While the current study did not set out to examine the school cultures in the different research sites used in the study, it is without a shade of doubt that the different school cultures played a role in the way teacher-led professional development was received, implemented and supported.

The fourth factor is connected to school leadership that is located in the Principal. The principal's supervisory role in enhancing teacher professional development and indeed the learning for all adults in the school as well as the learners, is one that cannot be ignored. According to Bredeson (2000), principals can influence teacher professional development to a large extent if they take the roles of stewards, models, experts and instructional leaders. However, principals do not always feel comfortable and confident in undertaking these roles, as evident in the findings of studies like that of Nyarigoti (2013), who established that principals felt inadequately prepared to oversee PD while they too had their own challenges.

Studies investigating the supervisory role of principals in enhancing teacher professional development have established that while principals performed diligently, they lacked adequate knowledge and skills to undertake instructional supervision; were operating in tight school schedules that occupied most of their time; lacked funds to support teacher professional development; had limited opportunities to attend PD to enhance their leadership skills and had to contend with negative attitudes from teachers who viewed supervision and the supervisor

as a tool of control and intimidation (Mburungu, 2010; Umoh, 2013; Atieno, 2019). Despite these challenges, studies on school leadership and teacher professional development have established that the role of the head teacher is crucial in PD, since they are key in creating a positive and enabling environment that supports learning for the staff and learners (Bredeson, 2000; Mburungu, 2010; Wanyonyi & Simiyu, 2017).

In a statement that seems to absolve principals of any blame for teachers lack of PD, Bredeson (2000) argues that while principals have the role of encouraging, nurturing and supporting teacher learning, they are not governors or gatekeepers of learning, since teachers are professionals who can take charge for and in their own learning. According to Bredeson, "...a major role of school principals in the area of teacher professional development is to build leadership capacity among staff in their schools to create, nurture and maintain over time a vital, self-renewing and authentic learning community" (p. 399). This view suggests that teachers have a key role to desire and seek to improve their practice, alone or in collaboration with others. While the current study did not set out to examine the principals' role in the PD of their teachers of English, the researcher was able to arrive at a conclusion that the principals in this study were keen to support their teachers. This was evident from their suggestions of which members of the English department were to participate in the study, the support they provided to the study participants and especially permission to use institutional facilities to prepare collaborative lessons.

The last factor is connected to the issue of teacher workloads. Worldwide, school enrollments have gone up resulting in the phenomenon of large classes. This has not been matched with more teachers in the classrooms, resulting in teachers who have heavy workloads and consequently no time for other activities that are demanding, like PD. Teachers in Kenya are expected to teach a load of 28 lessons per week, alongside other duties and responsibilities as allocated to them by the head teacher or other senior teachers. This lessens the time and energy they can devote to activities like PD. The current study was cognizant of these factors and was keen to observe and document the effects this had on the teachers in their effort to lead their own professional improvement.

2.6 Summary of Existing Gaps in the Literature Reviewed

This review of literature on teacher professional development has provided insights about the place of PD in the growth and effectiveness of a practicing teacher. The review has also revealed that there exist gaps that need to be closed in order to provide a clearer understanding of teacher professional development.

First, that while school-based PD appears to be a new phenomenon in developing nations, it has been applied successfully elsewhere like in Japan, China and the USA. This points to the need to try out this kind of PD in developing contexts and document the processes, successes and challenges. Secondly, even in developed contexts, most instances that have been studied and documented were among

teachers of mathematics and sciences. This points to the need to examine how the phenomenon works among teachers of English and even social sciences.

Thirdly, the reviewed literature revealed research-based characteristics of effective PD which are likely to have a positive impact on the classroom practice of a teacher. These characteristics have emerged from studies in the West and Europe and thus the need to try out these aspects in PD held in a developing world context in order to establish their efficacy.

Lastly, a great majority of reviewed studies on teacher professional development have employed research designs like surveys that do not give a clear picture of how teacher professional development happens and the part of the teacher in the process. Although the approaches yielded important information, they also exhibited weaknesses especially in relying on self-report data, use of single instruments of data collection and the use of experimental designs with the inevitable denial of benefits of interventions for the control groups.

The current study filled these gaps by using the action research design to introduce the practical involvement of the teachers of English in Bungoma South sub-county in leading their improvement using strategies that are informed by research. Additionally, the study engaged a small sample of teachers over the period of one school term, while providing opportunities for them to interact with each other and the researcher. Data for the study was collected using several methods that

included questionnaires, interviews, classroom observation, journaling and a WhatsApp platform therefore avoiding reliance on self-reported information, while at the same time generating information that was triangulated for convergence of ideas.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter has presented a detailed review of relevant literature that touched on different aspects of the study objectives as captured in the four thematic areas discussed. The review also exposed gaps in previous studies which the current study has exploited to provide an understanding of teacher professional development in a developing world context; among teachers of English; while allowing the active involvement of the teachers and by use of multiple methods of data collection.

The next chapter will provide details of the methodology that was used to generate data for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter outlines the methodology of the study by giving the rationale for the research approach and research design used in the study. It also provides information on the location of the study, the target population, sampling procedures and the sample size used in the study. Additionally, it describes the instruments of data collection, explains piloting of the instruments, the procedures of data collection, how validity, reliability and trustworthiness was ensured and the ethical issues that were considered in guaranteeing the requirements of research.

3.2 The Research Approach

This study adopted a qualitative research approach in the collection and analysis of data. The qualitative research approach was used predominantly because first, its explorative nature allowed an on-site examination of teacher-led professional development from individual school sites and teachers of English. Marshall and Rossman (1989) cited in Creswell & Creswell (2018), suggest that qualitative research involves “immersion in the everyday life of the setting chosen for the study, the researcher enters the world of the informants through ongoing interaction and seeks the informants’ perspectives and meaning” p 320.

Secondly, the qualitative approach is flexible and allowed changes in the initial research plan so as to accommodate emerging issues in the field of study. One

such change was in regard to the duration of the study which had to be extended because the teachers were caught up in the school activities of term one and had to negotiate through the busy schedules to meet and plan for collaborative teaching. By extending the study over a longer period adequate data was gathered to answer the research questions.

Thirdly, the qualitative approach enabled the study to develop a holistic account of teacher-led professional development by reporting multiple perspectives using a range of data collection methods that included questionnaires, interviews, observation, journaling and interactions on a WhatsApp platform. The data that was collected informed the claims made in this report about teacher-led professional development among teachers of English in Bungoma south sub-county, Kenya.

Fourthly, the qualitative approach was useful in allowing the researcher to be reflexive by thinking about their role in the study, their personal background and experiences that would shape their interpretation of teacher-led professional development (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This was especially useful because the researcher is a former secondary school English teacher, and being reflexive enabled her to grapple with her biases and address the findings as they emerged. Lastly, the qualitative research paradigm enabled the gathering of data that brought out participants' meanings that are captured and framed in their own unique words.

This allowed the study to present the findings in a narrative and descriptive manner, infused with quotes from the exact words of the participants.

3.3 The Research Design

The study engaged twelve teachers of English from six public secondary schools in Bungoma South sub-county in the process of leading their own professional development in collaboration with one another and the researcher. To do this, the study adopted the action research design to enable the active participation of teachers in leading their own professional development. The study happened in two levels of action research: the main action research by the researcher that involved the entire sample of participants and the smaller action researches by the pairs of teachers at the individual school sites, where they tried out the different strategies of collaborative teaching.

The study used an action research design because of its commitment to effecting education change that arises from a systematic examination of issues in a context, in what is called 'insider research' (Carr & Kemmis, 1986; Mills, 2007; Wilson, 2009). Literature provides a number of definitions of action research that concur on the view that it is an inquiry into practice usually undertaken by the practitioner, sometimes alone or in collaboration with others. According to McNiff, Lomax & Whitehead (2003) action research is "...an intervention in personal practice to encourage improvement for oneself and others...driven by educational values that need to be explored and defended" (p.19).

Action research was an appropriate design for this study because, first, it allowed for a systematic inquiry into the learning and collaboration of the teachers through gathering data, engaging in analysis and making recommendations for future practice. Secondly, action research allowed the researcher to collaborate with the research participants in knowledge creation that improved their practice and hopefully enhanced student learning (McNiff, Lomax & Whitehead, 2006). Thirdly, action research provided an opportunity for theoretical and researched information on teacher-led professional development to be tried out in the real practices of the teachers in a developing context like Bungoma South sub-county. Fourthly, by engaging in action research, the researcher and the participants were able to critically examine their beliefs about practice and reconsider new strategies of teaching that resulted in teacher learning.

Lastly, action research encouraged the presence of critical friends who are scholars selected by the researcher purposively to engage in critical discussions about the action research process, findings and conclusions drawn by the researcher. McNiff, Lomax & Whitehead (2003) propose that a critical friend should offer validation especially of findings so as to lead to objective discussions and conclusions.

3.4 Research Locale

The research study was carried out in Bungoma County, one of the forty-seven counties created under the new constitution of Kenya 2010 (see appendix IV). The county was selected because of the following reasons: first, the teachers of English

in the county majorly experience traditional teacher professional development in the form of occasional workshops and seminars held in a central secondary school in Bungoma town. This is likely to mean that not all teachers of English access and benefit from the workshops and thus their classroom practices are lacking. Secondly, the rigor and demands of action research require prolonged engagement with participants, iterative cycles of action and lengthy stay in the field and therefore the need to find an accessible location that will make it possible for the study to be conducted with ease.

Bungoma County is located in the Western part of the Republic of Kenya, in what used to be Western Province (see Appendix III). It lies between latitude 00 28' and latitude 10 30' North of the Equator and longitude 340 20' East and 350 15' East of the Greenwich Meridian. The county covers an area of 3032.4 square kilometers. It borders the Republic of Uganda to the North West, Busia to the South West, Kakamega to the East and Trans Nzoia to the North. It is divided into nine sub-counties, that is: Bungoma North, Bungoma East, Bungoma South, Bungoma West, Webuye East, Webuye West, Bumula, Kimilili and Mt. Elgon (See Appendix V).

3.5 The Target Population

The target population for the study consisted of secondary schools in Bungoma County and the teachers of English in those schools. The county has 275 Public and 12 Private secondary schools with an eligible population of 150, 738 students,

against a total of 3,238 teachers (County Integrated Development Plan 2013-2017). Of the 275 schools, two are National schools, 17 extra county schools, 63 County schools and 193 Sub-county schools. However, because of the expansive nature of the county, the study was delimited to Bungoma South sub-county.

Bungoma South sub-county, one of the nine sub-counties in Bungoma County has three Extra County secondary schools, four County schools and fifty Sub-County secondary schools, with a total of 188 teachers employed by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC). Bungoma south sub-county was selected for a number of reasons. First, the performance of candidates in English has been poor over the years (see Table 1.1) resulting in concern by all stakeholders. Secondly, the sub-county is peri-urban meaning that workshops and seminars are hosted here and thus all teachers are expected to converge in a central place. The sub-county hosts secondary schools in the categories of Extra County, county and sub-county. The schools in the sub-county are divided into 3 zones: Municipality zone (19 secondary schools), Sangalo zone (20 secondary schools) and Mwibale zone (18 secondary schools).

Initially two schools were to represent each of the three categories of secondary schools found in the sub-county that include extra county, county and sub-county schools. However, this was not realized and one school represented the extra county schools, no representation was found of county schools and five schools represented sub-county schools. This was due to reluctance by the Principals to

involve their teachers of English in an extra task because they claimed these teachers were already over-burdened. The study was able to get consent from twelve teachers in the six schools who were identified by the Principals from the total number of teachers of English in a particular site. The researcher also identified and worked with two critical friends.

3.6 Sampling Techniques and Sample size determination

This study engaged teachers of English in Bungoma south sub-county in leading their own professional development. To do this, the study sought samples of schools and teachers of English who according to Wiersma and Jurs (2005) are information rich cases. The sample units, sampling techniques and the sample size are discussed below.

3.6.1 Sampling Units

Data for this study was collected from 6 secondary schools in Bungoma South sub-county. The demographic details of the schools are given below. All the names used for the schools, the teachers and the critical friends are fictitious and thus Pseudonyms.

Uwezo Boys High school is an extra County Boys boarding school with a student population of 1538 students. The teachers of English employed by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) in the school are 10 and one teacher is employed on Board of Management (BOM) terms. The ratio of teacher to students is 1:139. Mr. Richie who is between 40-45 years has been teaching English and literature here

for between 10-15 years and he holds a Bachelors degree. He is the head of Department English and has a teaching load of 23 lessons per week. His colleague Ms. Raquel is above 45 years and has taught English and French for between 10-14 years in Uwezo High school. She holds a Masters degree and her current workload is 22 lessons. She is also in-charge of the school library.

Tumaini Girls secondary school is a sub-county day secondary school with a population of 520 girls. The teachers of English employed by TSC are 2 and one teacher on BOM terms. The ratio of teacher to students is 1:173. The research participants in Tumaini girls' secondary school are Mr. Prolific who is above 45 years old and has taught English and Literature for more than 19 years with 15 of these years in Tumaini girls. He is the Head of Languages department and holds a Masters degree. His weekly workload is 24 lessons. The second teacher is Ms. Belinda who is aged between 20-24 years and has a teaching experience of less than one year, all in Tumaini secondary school. She holds a diploma in Education and is a class teacher and in-charge of Music training. She has a workload of 18 lessons in English and teaches another subject apart from English.

Fanaka secondary school is a sub-county co-educational boarding secondary school with a student population of 637. TSC has employed one teacher of English, while the BOM has employed 2 teachers. The teacher to student ratio is 1:159. Mr. Ariel is aged between 25-29 years and has taught English and literature for between 1-4 years in Fanaka. He holds a Bachelors degree, is the Head of

Subject English and is the games master in the school. He teaches 20 lessons per week. His colleague Mr. Adrian is also aged between 25-29 years old and has taught English and literature for between 5-9 years in Fanaka. He holds a Bachelors degree and is the Boarding master. He has a weekly workload of 20 lessons.

Mshindi secondary school is a sub-county co-educational day secondary school with a student population of 1000. It has 2 teachers of English on TSC terms and 2 teachers on BOM, together with 1 teacher on teaching practice. The ratio of teacher to students is 1:200. Ms. Sophie is aged between 35-39 years and a holder of a Bachelors degree. She has been teaching English and literature for between 10-14 years, 5-9 of these have been in Mshindi secondary school. She is the head of Subject English, the Music trainer and member of the disciplinary committee of the school. Her workload is 28 lessons. Her colleague Mr. Enzo holds a Bachelors degree and is aged between 25-29 years old. He has taught English and literature for between 1-4 years in Mshindi secondary school where he is a class teacher and assists Ms. Sophie with music training. His workload per week is 20 lessons.

Wema secondary school is a sub-county co-educational day secondary school with 3 TSC employed teachers of English and one teacher on BOM terms. The student population is 500 students. The ratio of teacher to students is 1:125. Ms. Celestine is above 45 years of age and has taught English and literature for above 19 years, with between 1-4 of these years being in Wema secondary school. She

holds a Bachelors degree, is a class teacher and in charge of Guidance and Counselling. Her workload is 15 lessons. Her colleague Ms. Celine is aged between 20-24 years and holds a Bachelors degree. She has taught English and literature for between 1-4 years in Wema secondary school and is a class teacher and volleyball coach. Her workload is 20 lessons.

Pendo secondary school is a sub-county co-educational day school with one TSC employed teacher of English and 2 teachers on BOM terms. The student population is 420, giving a teacher-student ratio of 1:140. Mr. Akes is aged between 25-29 years and holds a Bachelors degree. He has a teaching experience of between 5-9 years of which 1-4 years have been in Pendo secondary school. He is the Head of Department, the Drama and Music trainer and a class teacher. His weekly teaching load is 14 lessons. His colleague Mr. Antonne is aged between 20-24 years old and has taught English and literature for between 1-4 years. He holds a Bachelors degree and is the assistant patron Drama club and a class teacher. His workload is 22 lessons per week.

The Critical friends

Dr. Neema is a university lecturer and a specialist in Linguistics. Her interests are in English language teaching and literacy development, Teacher education and teacher preparation where she has researched and published extensively. She has been engaged in educational research and supervision of post graduate students for some time now.

Dr. Zuri is a university lecturer and a specialist in education curriculum where she also has research interests. She has been involved in guiding and supporting post graduate students at her university and abroad. She has been engaged in research in the areas of education, psychology and immigrant issues where she has also published extensively.

3.6.2 Sampling Techniques

a) Bungoma South Sub-County

The Sub-county was purposively selected from the 9 sub-counties because teachers of English in this sub-county, like in all other parts of the county, mainly experience traditional PD through workshops and seminars, thus the site is representative of other sub-counties in Bungoma County. The sub county was also sampled in consideration of time available for data collection, fieldwork costs and accessibility of the research sites, given that Bungoma county is expansive. Bungoma South Sub County was thus found to be logistically convenient for the study. It was also hoped that the sub county would provide information that is relevant to the study through its information rich participants (Wiersma and Jurs, 2005).

b) Secondary Schools in Bungoma South sub-county

The secondary schools used in the study were selected through stratified random sampling to represent Extra-county, County and Sub-county schools that are present in the sub-county. It was hoped that this technique would enable the study

to arrive at conclusions regarding the phenomenon in the various school categories. However, due to denial by Principals of certain schools, access was gained in one extra county school and five sub-county schools bringing the total to six secondary schools.

c) Teachers of English

The teachers of English were conveniently selected from the total population of teachers of English in the study sites. This was done with the help of the Principals in the various study sites who proposed which teachers of English to participate in the study. This is because all the sites did not have sufficient teachers in this subject and thus the few that were available were also tasked with other school responsibilities, apart from their teaching loads. Despite this selection, veteran and novice teachers of English were captured in the samples, a factor that was useful in examining how these various groups of teachers experienced teacher-led professional development. Two teachers of English from each of the six study sites participated in the study to act as a representative sample.

(d) Critical friends

The critical friends were selected by the researcher purposively because of their ability to engage in critical discussions about the action research process, findings and conclusions drawn by the researcher (McNiff, Lomax & Whitehead, 2003). The critical friends are scholars who are not collaborators in the study as this could raise conflict of interests.

The sample size for the study is captured in the grid in Table 3.1 below.

Table 3.1: Sampling Grid

School category	Number of schools	Sample schools	%	Number of Teachers	Sample Teachers	%
Extra County	3	1	33.3%	23	2	8.7%
Sub-county	50	5	10%	145	10	6.9%
Total	53	6	11.1%	168	12	7.1%

3.7 Research Instruments

This study made use of five research instruments during data collection to ensure that as much information about the phenomenon was collected, which would increase the accuracy of the study (Hendricks, 2006). The research instruments used were questionnaires, interview schedules, observation guides, reflective journals and a WhatsApp platform, all of which ensured that relevant data could be gathered in a systematic manner so as to answer the research questions. By using the five instruments, the study acknowledged that the use of a single instrument would provide a limited understanding of the phenomenon of teacher-led professional development (Kumar, 2018). Below is a description of each instrument and its function in the data collection process.

The questionnaires-The study had two self-administered questionnaires, that is the pre-intervention questionnaire and the post-intervention questionnaire. The pre-intervention questionnaire (see Appendix Ia) was used during the pre-

intervention phase of the action research study in order to collect initial information regarding the professional development experiences of the teachers. The questionnaire items were intended to allow teachers to reflect on their experiences and observations of their practice. Each teacher was allowed some time to complete the questionnaire and return it.

In section A of the questionnaire, there were five items that sought to collect personal details of the teachers that included their gender, age, years of teaching experience, number of years they have taught in the current school and the level of their professional training. Section B of the questionnaire enumerated eight areas in the secondary English syllabus where the teachers were to tick the level that best described the frequency of their challenge in teaching those areas. This was on a four point Likert scale listing the levels as never, occasionally, regularly and always. The level of occasionally meant now and then while that of regularly meant the issue happened in a more or less predictable frequency. In section C, five close-ended questions were given to establish the classroom practices of the teachers who were expected to tick appropriately. Section D had both close-ended questions and blank spaces for the teachers to provide further explanation of their answers in regard to their attendance of workshops/seminars.

The second questionnaire (see Appendix Ig) was also self-administered to allow teachers to reflect on the effects of PD on their subject matter knowledge, classroom practices and student experiences. Section A of the questionnaire had

eight aspects of English language content where teachers were to indicate their levels of improvement on a four point Likert scale with choices like: highly improved, improved, unsure and not improved. Section B was to find out information on the extent to which professional development that is teacher-led had impacted the classroom practices of the teachers. This was to be done for seven items captured on a Likert scale that had choices like: strongly agreed, agree, disagree and strongly disagree. Section C was intended to find out information on the impact of teaching differently on students. Teachers were to tick one among the four choices on the Likert scale for each of the eight statements.

Interview schedules – The study had two face-to-face interviews that sought to gather self-reported data. The pre-intervention interview schedule (see Appendix Ib) was used in a face to face interview between the researcher and each of the twelve teachers. Each interview lasted between 10-15 minutes and set out to gather more information about the teachers’ experiences of professional development. The schedule had 4 open ended questions that were expanded further to allow probing and clarification of some of the information that the teachers provided. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2002), semi-structured interviews can enable one to verify or refute impressions gained through other methods of data collection like the questionnaire and observation. In this current study, the pre-intervention interview was a follow-up to the pre-intervention questionnaire.

The post-intervention interview schedule (see Appendix Ic) was used to guide the interviews that sought to establish the experiences of teachers with teacher-led PD. This interview was carried out at each research site for between 10-20 minutes. The schedule had 5 open-ended items that allowed for probing in order to gather more information and clarify explanations. With consent from the teachers, both the pre-intervention and post-intervention interviews were audio-recorded to enable the researcher to listen to the proceedings away from the site and also to revisit the information for analysis. Audio-recorded information was transcribed and kept as evidence of the study.

Observation guides- the study made use of 2 observation guides to enable both the researcher and the teacher observers to document information regarding the teachers' classroom practice. The first observation guide was a classroom observation form that was used by the teachers (see Appendix Ie), and was adopted from the Teachers Service Commission TPAD classroom observation form, but without the assessment part. The first part of the form was intended to capture the gap or challenge in classroom practice as identified by the teacher. This part would be filled in advance by the teacher after careful consideration and proper description of the gap or challenge. The teacher would then hand over the form to the observing teacher whose task was to sit behind the class and strive to observe the classroom practice of the colleague, how the gap or challenge manifests and record down this together with any emerging issues. The observer

recorded what they saw in a descriptive way for later discussion with the teacher during the feedback session and development of a plan to address the gap. It is important to note that no marks or evaluation was made about the teacher's performance in class, instead the observer captured information that could guide a discussion and a plan to assist the teacher overcome their challenge and seal the gap.

The second observation guide (see Appendix Id) was used by the researcher to observe the teachers' classroom practice and their interactions during the intervention phase of the study. The observation was used to rate 5 aspects of classroom practice that were expected to emerge from new skills and knowledge gained through collaboration among the teachers. The behavior aspects which formed the main focus were: interaction of the teachers in the classroom, collaboration of the teachers during lesson delivery, evidence of new practice, ability of the teachers to use new practices in the lesson and students' reactions during the lesson. This data was used to establish how the implementation process was going for the teacher and the levels of success achieved. Here again, no marks or evaluation was given for the teachers' implementation of new learning, instead information captured was used to guide a discussion between the researcher and the participants with the hope to address any challenges with implementation. From the information gathered using this observation checklist, it was possible to

gauge the level of collaboration and the effect of this on the teachers' practice and students' learning experiences.

Reflective Journals - The study made use of reflective journals that were kept by each of the participants and the researcher. For the participants, the journals sought to gather self-reported data in the form of reflections about their experiences while collaborating and implementing new classroom practices (see sample Journal entry - Appendix Ii). Through reflective journaling, it was hoped that the participants' feelings would be brought out as they became more aware of their thoughts regarding the process of leading their own professional growth (Bashan & Holsblat, 2017). The participants were introduced to journaling in a training on collaborative strategies (see Appendix If) as a way of revisiting their experiences in what Mathew, Mathew & Peechattu (2017) argue is a way to mull over their actions in a deliberate effort to learn. Each participant was provided with a journal where they were expected to write down their experiences at the end of the day especially when they tried out new strategies, guided by the format: what happened, what went well, what did not go well and what needs to be improved.

The researcher maintained frequent contact with the participants' journals by reading and giving short comments like: was this all that happened? Provide more details of your thoughts; this sounds like something new learnt today, keep looking out for more! Through the reflections, the participant's voices were captured thus providing evidence of their engagement with the whole process of leading their

own professional development. According to Lutz & Poretti (2019), reflective journaling helps to consolidate the trustworthiness of a study by providing an audit trail, capturing what happened as planned or what did not happen as planned or thought. For the researcher, the journal provided an opportunity to capture her reflection on the study process and even her interactions with the participants. These reflections helped to guide the stages of the study as the researcher questioned and analyzed actions and outcomes with a view to establish new directions and actions (Ashraf & Rarieya, 2008). Reflection was important for the researcher given that this study had a main action research cycle, within which were embedded the action research cycles by the teachers.

WhatsApp Platform - The study used a WhatsApp platform that sought to gather information from the informal interactions of the research participants as they shared challenges and ideas, and received support from the researcher (see Snapshots of Teacher Collaboration WhatsApp platform Appendix 1j). WhatsApp was used because it is a free platform that teachers already engage with in their daily lives when sharing texts, photographs, links, files and even video recordings. Additionally, its affordances allow for instant sharing of ideas (Colom, 2021) which was useful for the study given that the participants had busy schedules and heavy workloads, yet they required to share experiences and challenges.

The researcher formed the group and gave it the name Teacher Collaboration, with a group symbol of a Mug with the inscriptions “We are not ‘just’ Teachers, we are

the managers of the world's greatest resource: CHILDREN” This message was intended to further enhance the self-worth of the teachers as they sought to learn from each other and improve the learning of their students. The participants were then enrolled on the platform and encouraged to engage on it as often as they found time by posting challenges, solutions, dilemmas with practice or even their discoveries in the process of implementing collaborative teaching. The researcher being the administrator ensured that only information related to the study was posted by gently guiding those who posted unrelated information. The drawback of the platform as a data collection tool is that the identity of the participants could not be hidden. While this can be viewed as compromise on anonymity, for this study it provided some security for some participants who posted their views because they knew the members of the group were fellow teachers of English in the County.

3.7.1 Piloting the Instruments

The piloting of instruments was carried out before actual data collection. This was done to determine the effectiveness of the instruments and thus ascertain whether they are logical and clear. The pre-intervention questionnaire for teachers was administered to 3 teachers of English in 3 typical secondary schools in Bungoma South sub-county to ensure that the teachers would be able to understand and respond to them. The respondents were encouraged to make comments to enable the rephrasing and restructuring of the instruments (Silverman, 2013). The items in

the instruments that were found to be unclear or with ambiguous meanings were rectified. The interview schedules and the post-intervention questionnaire were discussed with the supervisors to determine their validity and appropriate adjustments made to them. The adjustments included rewording of questions and removing those which were ambiguous to ensure that the instruments would gather information to answer the research questions.

3.7.2 Validity and Reliability of the Instruments

Validity is the extent to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure (Kumar, 2019). For the instrument to be valid, the content included in the instruments must be relevant to the issue under investigation. To ensure the validity of the above instruments, the study focused on construct, content and criterion-related validity. Construct validity was ensured by using triangulation of data collection procedures to arrive at a convergence of multiple measures of the phenomenon of teacher-led professional development (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Content validity in the questionnaires was ensured by identifying the aspects that describe improved classroom practice and measuring these during data collection. To ensure content validity, the teachers who participated in the pilot study were requested to respond to the questionnaire items and give their comments. Comments on language, clarity, format, structure and content lead to rewording of questions, adding questions and in other instances, removing irrelevant questions. Criterion related validity was achieved by ensuring the

behavior of the teachers in the classroom is identified and captured using appropriate instruments, like the observation schedule, lesson observation form and field notes. To validate the items of the questionnaires and interviews, these were submitted to the two supervisors for verification. A pilot test was conducted in three secondary schools, with three teachers of English to eliminate or adjust items to enhance their ability to elicit relevant responses. After piloting, the instruments were amended accordingly.

3.7.3 Trustworthiness of the study

To ensure that this study was done in a truthful, careful and rigorous way to qualify the claims that it makes, credibility, reliability and confirmability were ensured as discussed below.

The trustworthiness of this study, which is the extent to which the results are consistent and, credibility which is the extent to which the study actually investigates what it investigates and reports what occurred (Creswell & Miller, 2000) were ensured in various ways. First, the researcher engaged in triangulation of sources and data collection methods to ensure that findings from one source or method are supported by those of another source or method. The questionnaires were followed by face-to-face interviews to corroborate information, probe, confirm and sometimes disconfirm earlier data, in what Jwan & Ongondo (2011) refer to as a chain of evidence that builds a strong case. In addition, the operationalization of key terms in the study was done with the guidance of

supervisors and critical friends to ensure they are clear and are used consistently in the study.

Secondly, sections of the draft report were shared with the teachers and discussion about the representation of their views and actions were allowed to reduce bias and ensure data was recorded as accurately as possible (Hendrick, 2006). This enabled the teachers to clarify what they thought and did during actual teaching in class and in their reflections. The researcher also engaged in peer debriefing with two critical friends to ensure objective discussion and analysis of findings, thus significantly reducing researcher bias. The action research design allowed for persistent and prolonged observation of the intervention in order to gather data that answered the research questions and improved the credibility of the study (see Figure 3.1-The Research Itinerary). To further ensure dependability, a description of how the study was carried out has been provided in this report to inform any reader who wishes to replicate the study, policy makers and practitioners.

Confirmability, which Jwan and Ongondo (2011) refer to as the extent to which the findings are free of both internal and external influences of the researcher, was an issue that was considered throughout the study. The researcher's influence was evident in the main action research process, from selecting the issue of study, the interview and questionnaire items and even the strategies to try out to ensure teacher collaboration. However, this influence was driven by the desire to generate what Jwan and Ongondo (2011) refer to as "...the most confirmable data in the

circumstances... not to pre-determine results or desired outcomes” (pg 144). The researcher also acknowledges that her background as a teacher of English at the secondary school level could have had a bearing on her perception of the issue of professional development as well as the meanings she brought to the data generated by the study. To reduce this researcher bias and ‘baggage’ the researcher relied on discussions with her critical friends and made adjustments. Nevertheless, the study agrees with Hammersley & Atkinson (2007) cited in Jwan & Ongondo (2011) in their assertion that instead of making futile efforts in eliminating the effects of the researcher, we should strive to understand them since a researcher inevitably has some influence on one or more aspects of the study.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The process of data collection was guided by a research itinerary discussed below.

3.8.1 Research Protocol and Itinerary

The research study was conducted as planned although the timelines were not strictly followed as the teachers were also occupied with tight school programs and teaching loads. However, the itinerary in Figure 3.1 captures how the work was carried out.

PHASE	ACTIVITY	PERSON INVOLVED	DOCUMENT/TOOLS USED	DURATION AT EACH SITE
Pre-intervention	1. Establishing PD experiences of teachers using questionnaire and face-to-face interviews.	-Researcher -Teachers	-Pre-intervention questionnaire -interview schedule and audio recorder	-3 days (22-30 th January, 2019) -(30 th Jan-8 th Feb, 2019)
Intervention	1. Training teachers in collaboration 2. Teachers planning, acting and reflecting to implement learning (at least 5 cycles)	-Researcher -Teachers -Researcher	Training Manual -Lesson observation form -Reflective journal -Lesson observation guide -WhatsApp platform	-1 day at each site (11 th Feb-1 st March, 2019) -4 months (1 st March-30 th June, 2019)
Post-intervention	Establishing experiences of teachers with teacher-led PD	-Researcher -Teachers	-Post-intervention questionnaire -interview schedule -Lesson observation guide -Reflective journals -WhatsApp platform	-3 days (July, 2019)

Figure 3.1: The Research Itinerary

3.8.2 Actual Data collection

The study used an action research process underpinned by Practice-Research Engagement (PRE) as proposed by Brown (2001) where he postulates that action research that aims at bringing change cannot generate knowledge and improvement without the involvement of the practitioner. This view was important

for the study since the researcher is no longer involved in teaching English at the secondary school level but would collaborate with practicing teachers of English to examine the phenomenon and learn from it. The PRE encourages the use of resources found in both the practitioners and the researcher (Brown, 2001). The researcher planned, implemented, observed and reflected on the main action research cycle, within which were embedded the action research cycles by the teachers.

The study provided the teachers with an opportunity to engage in a technical emancipatory action research, which Carr & Kemmis (1986) describe as practitioners taking joint responsibility for developing their practice with the support of a university researcher. While doing this, the teachers were able to collect data about their experiences, successes and challenges that can be used to guide their future efforts in collaboration and learning. The teachers also worked with the support and guidance of the researcher who is a professional development teacher and a university researcher.

This study adopted Kemmis, McTaggart & Rettalick's (2004) model of the Action Research spiral presented below in Figure 3.2.

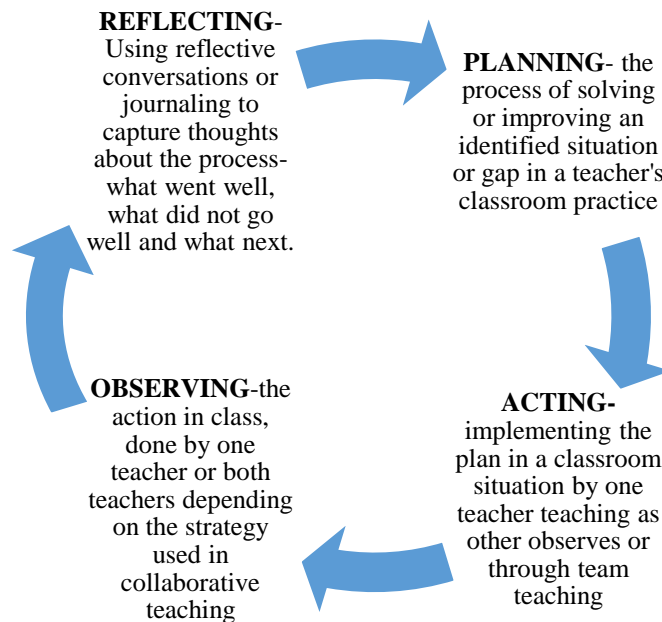


Figure 3.2: An Action Research Cycle in this Study

In this cyclic model of an action research cycle, a problem or issue in the classroom is identified for improvement or to be solved. The collaborating teachers draw up a plan on the process of solving or improving the situation.

The plan is implemented in an action undertaken in class with observation to gather information on what is being undertaken by one of the collaborating teachers. The collaborating teachers then engage in reflective conversations or journaling to capture their thoughts about the whole process. If they are not satisfied, they repeat the process beginning at the planning stage.

The cyclic form of action research ensured rigor in checking, rechecking and refining the data and interpretations done at each cycle leading to reliability of the

findings (Hendrick, 2006). Action research also allowed for theory to meet with practice as the interventions introduced to the teachers have emerged from research and this was an opportunity to try them out in classroom situations in a developing world context.

To collect data for this study, a range of methods (interviews, questionnaires, classroom observation, reflective journaling and a WhatsApp platform) were used to provide corroboration and triangulation of data with a view to increase the accuracy of the study. By triangulating, it was presupposed that the results of one source of data would be supported by results from another source (Hendricks, 2006). This study set out to gather information that would describe how teachers of English can lead their own professional development and therefore the appropriate methods used were: Questionnaires, Interviews and Classroom observation. Additionally, the reflections made by the researcher and the teachers in the reflective journals and interactions on the WhatsApp platform were also used as sources of data.

Data collection for the study was done in the three phases of the action research by both the teachers and the researcher, yielding both quantitative and qualitative data.

PRE-INTERVENTION PHASE

The study began with a situational analysis to establish the experiences of the teachers with professional development opportunities available to them. In

addition, this phase was also to enable teachers to identify and write down their challenges with classroom practice. To get access into the teachers' experiences, a self-administered questionnaire (See Appendix 1a) was given to each of the participants, who were 5 females and 7 males, with varying ages, levels of professional training and years of teaching experiences as captured in Table 4.1. After a week of analysis of the questionnaires, face to face interviews were conducted with each of the teachers (See Appendix 1b-Interview schedule) and the data gathered was transcribed and read alongside the questionnaires to get an understanding of the experiences and challenges of the teachers.

INTERVENTION PHASE

The first action in the intervention phase was to introduce teachers to strategies of collaboration and this was done in a training facilitated by the researcher, based on research supported strategies (See Appendix 1f-Training Manual). The intervention followed the finding that although all participants cited occasional challenges, they did not have proper channels of mitigating them. It was also evident that when they talked of working with a colleague to meet these gaps, they meant asking the colleague to teach for them, while they stayed away from class. It was therefore important that the teachers receive some training on how to collaborate with each other in the process of supporting a colleague. It was also going to be important to create interaction spaces for the teachers as they navigated through teacher collaboration and thus a WhatsApp platform titled Teacher

Collaboration (See Screen shots of the platform in Appendix 1j) was set up, where the teachers and the researcher could interact and provide support to each other.

The training was scheduled to take place in a central place but due to tight school programs and teacher workloads, the training happened in each school for the pairs of teachers. Certain aspects of the training had to be omitted, including the demonstration of the strategies in ‘mock’ lessons, group discussions and presentations and written evaluation of the training session. However, to mitigate this challenge, the researcher visited the schools often to further explain and support the teachers’ understanding. Further support was offered in the form of information posted on the Teacher Collaboration WhatsApp platform for the teachers to access (See Appendix 1j- Screenshots of the Teacher Collaboration WhatsApp platform).

The training introduced the teachers to four strategies that can be used during collaboration in improving their classroom practice. These are: classroom/lesson observation, peer coaching, lesson study and team teaching. Additionally, teachers were informed about the importance of collaboration as a way of helping them to deal with gaps which are personal and sometimes contextual.

After the training, the teachers worked in pairs to assist each other in the areas of instruction and content where they had identified challenges. This phase focused on providing answers to the first three research questions – *What strategies can*

teachers of English use to develop their own professional development? What contextual factors can influence teacher-led professional development among teachers of English? and How can teacher-led professional development enhance the classroom practice of teachers of English? This phase happened in 5 cycles of planning, acting, observation, reflection and re-planning that were mainly done by the teachers with the support of the researcher. Each cycle consisted of the implementation of a single collaborative strategy.

CYCLE ONE

Cycle one consisted of a lesson in the classroom of each of the teachers that aimed to involve them in lesson observation without assigning a grade to their performance. The current study used the action research classroom observation. The process involved three stages: First was the pre-observation stage where the two teachers had a discussion and description of what they each considered as areas of challenge in their teaching of English language content. This stage also involved agreeing on who would be first to observe the other in class, planning when this would happen and what aspect of practice to focus on.

According to Zaare (2012), this stage is useful for alleviating anxiety and providing the observer with areas which the teacher would like feedback on. The second stage was the classroom observation where one teacher taught while the other observed the colleague's practice with a focus on the agreed aspects. Observation also involved making notes on a schedule developed for this purpose.

The third stage happened after the lesson where the two would be involved in a professional dialogue on what was observed, what went well and what needs improvement and how the improvement is to be done. It is at this point that the participants would decide on whether to engage in peer coaching, team teaching or lesson study. Observing and being observed is beneficial to both teachers as it enhances one's ability to describe instructional processes and appreciate the practice of a colleague who is a familiar 'model' (Shing, n.d).

The success markers for this cycle included: the identification of 2-3 gaps in the classroom practice, the ability of one teacher to teach while the colleague observes them, filling in the lesson observation forms with teacher observations and comments, the after-lesson discussion to provide feedback and planning the next strategy and, writing reflections in the journals.

CYCLE TWO

Cycle two was a lesson planned as a way of addressing the challenges identified in the lesson observation undertaken in cycle one. The participants agreed on what strategy to use to mitigate the challenges. The most preferred strategy was peer coaching, where the observing teacher would demonstrate ways of overcoming the challenge exhibited by the colleague. The process began with a planning session to establish convenient time and identifying the content to be taught. The coach was mandated to develop a lesson plan and teach the lesson while the teacher with the challenge observes and makes notes. The teachers then had a discussion after the

lesson to establish what was observed. Each teacher then captured the process of the peer coaching; what went well, what did not go well and the learning they achieved. This process was then repeated in the class of the other teacher (who was the coach) where the teacher who was the observer, planned and taught a lesson to demonstrate ways of solving the earlier identified challenges in the practice of the colleague.

The success markers for this cycle were: The participants planning for a lesson where one teaches to demonstrate a strategy while the other observes, the journal entries showing their observations and views about peer coaching, the lesson plans, discussions with the researcher about the process of peer coaching and the discussions on the WhatsApp Teacher Collaboration platform.

CYCLE THREE

Cycle Three was a lesson that was planned to enable the teachers to team teach as a way of combining their expertise in lesson delivery. This process involved planning for a lesson, identifying convenient time and implementing it. Due to the technicalities of having two teachers in a classroom and executing a single lesson, most participants allocated more time to this strategy by using 80 minutes or double lessons. The teachers then discussed their observations of the process; what went well, what did not go well and what can be done better next time. They also wrote their observations in their journals, as part of their reflections. A lesson

taught using the team teaching strategy was undertaken in each teachers' classroom.

Success markers for this cycle included: Successful planning for the lessons, a lesson taught by the two teachers successfully, the journal entries describing their experiences and thoughts and, their discussions on the WhatsApp platform.

CYCLE FOUR

Cycle four was a lesson that was planned to enable the teachers to engage in lesson study. This current study adopted the lesson study model captured in Figure 3.3:

A Lesson Study Cycle used in this Study

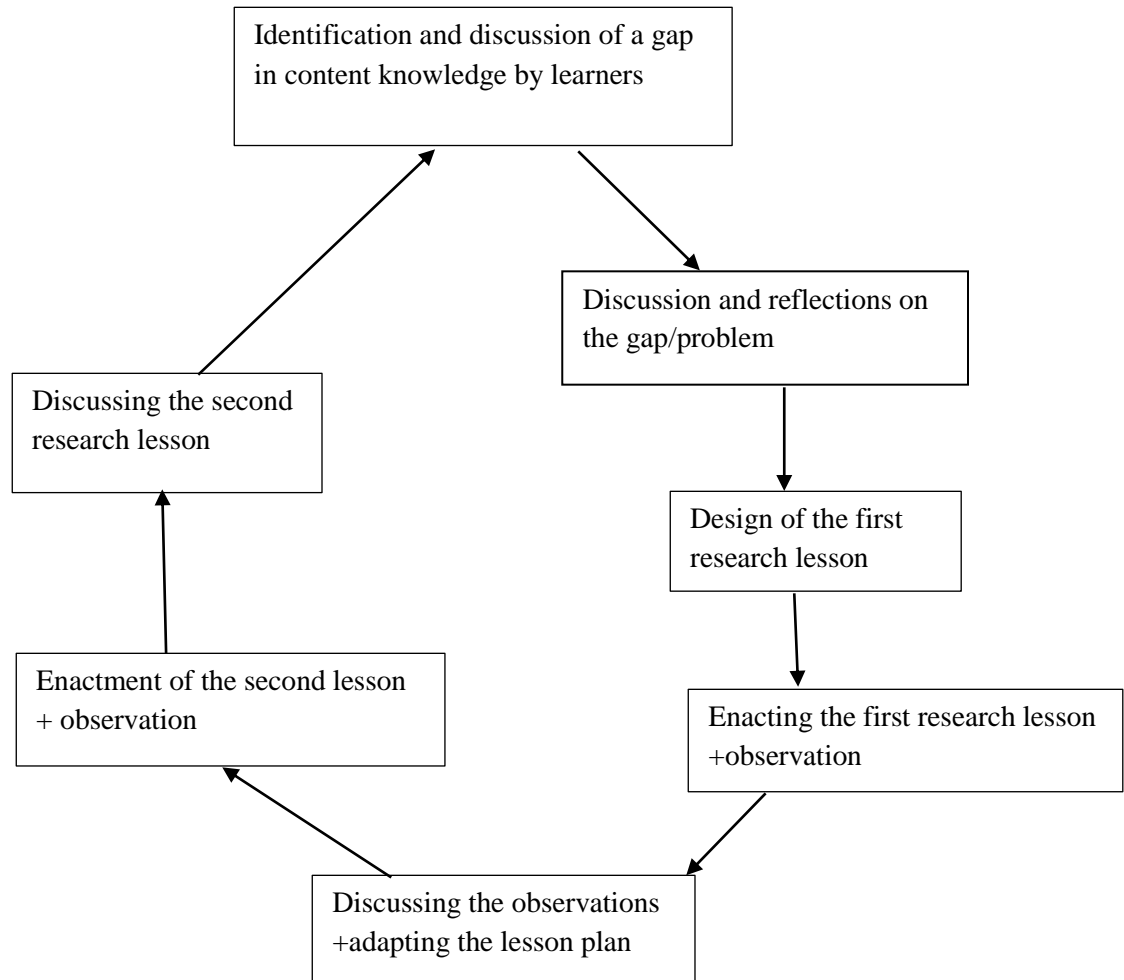


Figure 3.3: A Lesson study cycle used in this study. (Adopted from Stepanek et al, 2007 cited in Coenders & Verhoef, 2018, p 220)

The lesson study process involved planning for the lesson, identifying aspects of the lesson to observe, agreeing on the convenient time for the lesson and who was to implement it with the other teacher observing. The teachers then discussed their observations of the process: what went well, what did not go well and what can be done better next time to enhance learning and understanding for the students. The

teachers also wrote their observations in their journals as part of their reflections. Lesson study was undertaken in each teacher's classroom.

The success markers for this cycle were: successful planning and identification of learner weaknesses to be addressed after lesson study, collaboration of teachers in teaching and studying the lesson, reports of the lesson study, journal entries capturing observations and learning and discussions on the WhatsApp platform.

CYCLE FIVE

Cycle Five was one lesson that was planned in each of the research sites to enable the researcher observe the teachers using any of the collaborative strategies in their classroom. This process involved the participants planning for the lesson, selecting a strategy to use, identifying convenient time and implementing it in the presence of the researcher who was to observe the collaboration by the teachers. The researcher captured the observations by use of an observation schedule (See Appendix 1d) and wrote details as field notes. After the lesson, the participants and the researcher held a discussion session about the process: what went well, what did not go well and what can be done better next time. The participants and the researcher also wrote their observations and learning in their journals, as part of their reflections.

The success markers for this cycle were: successful planning and teaching using a strategy of choice by the teachers, journal entries by the teachers capturing

observations and their learning, discussions with the researcher after lesson, discussions on WhatsApp platform.

POST-INTERVENTION PHASE

This phase sought to establish the experiences of the teachers as they endeavored to improve their classroom practice with the assistance of colleagues. This was to provide answers for the following research questions –*What contextual factors can support teacher-led professional development among teachers of English? What are the possible successes that can be achieved by teachers of English who lead their own professional development? What challenges are teachers who lead their own professional development likely to face?* Data was collected through a self-administered questionnaire, audio-recorded face-to-face interviews for the pair of teachers which lasted for 15-20 minutes and, recorded reflections by teachers as captured in their reflective journals.

The success markers for this phase were: teacher participants were available and responded to interview questions about their experiences. The teachers also responded to the questionnaire items and returned them to the researcher while the journal entries by the teachers captured their experiences.

3.8.3 Challenges during data collection

The study proceeded well except for a number of challenges that are connected to the research design. First was the issue of prolonged stay in the field against a busy

term full of activities that included preparation for the drama festivals and termly games competitions, where a number of the research participants were involved. This necessitated constant encouragement and follow-up by the researcher to get teachers to attempt the collaborative strategies and find time to engage in journaling.

Secondly, while the data collection was initially planned to last for Term One 2019, it was not possible for this to happen and it continued into second term, 2019 to allow teachers time to implement the cycles and record their learning. This was as a result of the demands placed on the teachers to engage in planning, implementation, observation and reflection, against their teaching loads and other school responsibilities.

Thirdly, the prolonged stay in the field also resulted in the researcher appearing like a quality assurance officer often visiting the sites and sometimes finding that Principals expect the collection of data to be long over. However, this prolonged stay may have resulted in the development of trust between the participants and the researcher that may have influenced their confidence in trying out the strategies. Despite the above challenges, data collection was undertaken successfully.

3.9 Data Analysis Procedure

The study yielded both qualitative and quantitative data. Data analysis was an ongoing process done during each phase, so that information gathered was used to inform the next phase of the study (Hendrick, 2006). At the pre-intervention phase,

quantitative data from the questionnaires was analyzed after manual coding and the findings presented in the form of tables. The teachers were coded as KIB1 to refer to the first teacher who was interviewed in the first school and KIB2 for the second teacher interviewed in the same school. All the 6 schools had two codes for each of the two teachers, making a total of 12 codes. Pre-intervention interviews were coded using the same codes used in the questionnaires and then transcribed. Qualitative data from the pre-intervention questionnaires was read together with transcribed pre-intervention interviews to glean emerging threads of information. This preliminary analysis provided information that was used to inform the intervention phase of the study.

During the intervention phase, qualitative data was collected from journal entries of both the researcher and the teachers, lesson observation forms used by the teachers, lesson study forms and discussions on the WhatsApp platform. Quantitative data was gathered from the post-intervention questionnaire and qualitative data from the post-intervention interviews. The initial codes used for the pre-intervention data were applied here. All the data was read through in order to obtain a general sense of the information and to reflect on its overall meaning. This information revealed the general ideas of the participants in relation to their experiences, attitudes and observations. This step was followed by organizing the data into categories before trying to make meaning out of it. This involved putting text messages into categories and labelling them using a term picked from the

actual words of the participants describing their reflections, experiences and observations.

Codes were then generated and later combined according to similarity of ideas to form themes that appeared as major findings. To convey the findings, narration was used to make detailed discussions of the themes using specific illustrations, multiple perspectives from individuals and quotations using the participants own words. Lastly an interpretation of the data followed that helped to confirm past information or to diverge from it in a way to make claims of new knowledge. All the quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Statistics 20 in order to establish any significant relationship between teacher-led PD and the classroom practices of teachers of English. SPSS was important in coding quantitative data in order to develop tables, pie charts, and bar graphs. The package enhanced the analysis of data in line with the current trends in the world where computer assisted data analysis is possible. Figure 3.2 below is a diagrammatic representation of the methodology of this study.

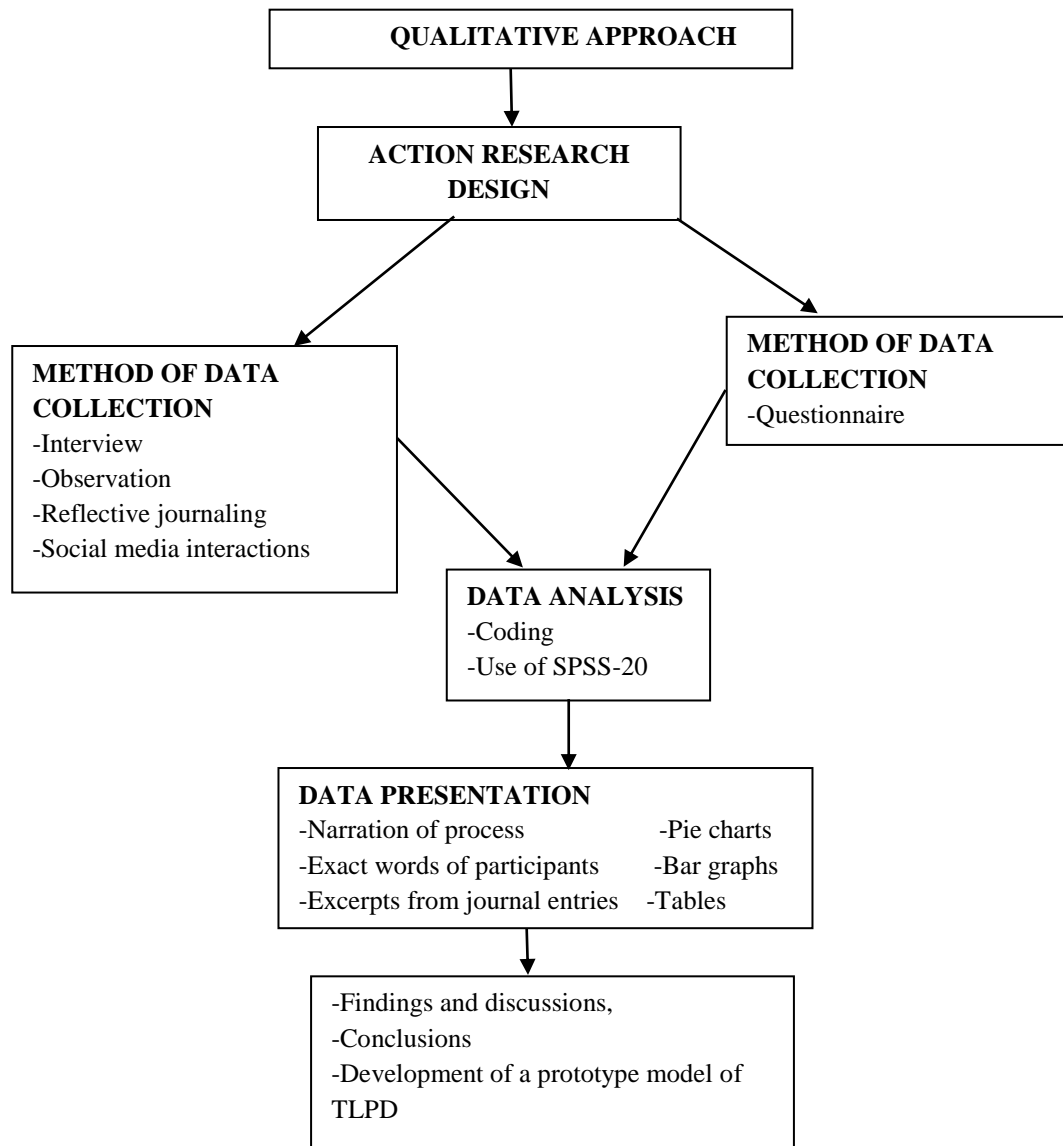


Figure 3.4: A Diagrammatic representation of the Methodology of the study

3.10 Logistical and Ethical Considerations

The logistical issues related to this study were in three areas: Pre-field work logistics, fieldwork and post-fieldwork logistics. In pre-field work, clearance from the Ethical Review Board of Kenyatta University was sought and authority to

collect data was given by the Dean graduate school (See Appendix IV), which lead to application and obtaining a research permit from NACOSTI (See Appendix VI). The researcher then notified the County Education Office in Bungoma of the intention to carry out research, visited the six secondary schools in Bungoma South sub-county and briefed the Principals about the nature and purpose of the study. Then the principals were requested to read the Information Sheet (See Appendix IIa) and also sign the Principal's Consent Form (See Appendix IIb) as a way of agreeing to their schools being research sites. The researcher proceeded to meet the teachers of English proposed by the principals and explained the study and their role and requested them to read and sign the Teachers' Consent Form (See Appendix IIc) to show their voluntary acceptance to participate in the study. The consent forms assured the teachers of privacy and confidentiality.

The fieldwork began with the process of gathering pre-intervention information that led to the intervention and later the post-intervention phases. The researcher guided the planning and execution of the action research cycles undertaken by the teachers and gathered data that was later analyzed. For post-fieldwork, data was stored safely and the process of report writing was undertaken.

In planning and conducting this study, four ethical principles were considered that is: informed and voluntary consent, confidentiality of shared information, anonymity of research participants and no harm to participants (Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2011). Informed consent was obtained through written forms that

were filled by the principals and the teachers. The forms contained information on the study such as the purpose, procedures, time, benefits, risks and a clause showing that teachers can participate voluntarily and have a right to withdraw from the study. In the form was an assurance of confidentiality of shared information and that teachers would not have their identities nor their institutions revealed and that pseudonyms would be used instead. Additionally, the form had a declaration of how the participants and their institutions would be reciprocated for time and effort.

However, due to the nature of action research, there emerged challenges with ethical issues. Firstly, the evolutionary nature of the study meant that the researcher could not conclusively point out the direction of the study before conducting it. The inability to point out the direction of the study beforehand meant that limited information could be provided concerning the whole process of the study and thus participants were informed of emerging issues as they arose. Secondly, the principle of consent seeking was not a one-off event due to the length of the study and the likelihood of emerging cycles. The study was thus guided by Halai's (2006) proposition that the researcher needs to negotiate consent throughout the study, both in written form or informally during conversations with the teachers.

Lastly, this study aimed to establish a community of teacher-learners and so teachers worked in close collaboration through-out the study. This meant that anonymity and confidentiality were not achieved among teachers in a research site as information was shared openly in discussion sessions and during planning. However, during report writing, anonymity and confidentiality have been ensured using pseudonyms for the schools, teachers and the critical friends.

3.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter has outlined the methodology of the study and provided the rationale for the approach, design, locale, sampled units and data collection methods. In addition, the data analysis procedure has been discussed together with the logistical and ethical considerations that have ensured the study meets research requirements.

The next chapter presents the findings of the action research processes undertaken in the study by both the teachers and the researcher.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings and interpretation of the data gathered in this study, according to themes generated from the research questions. Since the study was an action research, the pre-intervention phase also yielded data that is presented here as preliminary findings and which informed the intervention phase where the study had its main focus.

4.2 Research Questions

The study set out to answer the following research questions:

- (i) What strategies can teachers of English use to develop their own professional development?
- (ii) What contextual factors can influence teacher-led professional development among teachers of English?
- (iii) How can teacher-led professional development enhance the classroom practice of teachers of English?
- (iv) What are the possible successes that can be achieved by teachers of English who lead their own professional development?
- (v) What challenges are teachers of English who lead their own professional development likely to face?
- (vi) How can Teacher-led Professional Development be modeled?

4.3 Preliminary Findings from the Pre-Intervention Phase

This section presents data from the pre-intervention phase that sought to understand the professional experiences of the teachers, especially the professional development programmes available to them. The data was collected through a pre-intervention questionnaire, face-to-face interviews with individual teachers and journal notes by the researcher. The pre-intervention phase revealed the following information:

4.3.1 Teacher Characteristics

In section A of the questionnaire (see Appendix 1a for sample questionnaire), the researcher sought to establish the characteristics of the teachers that were important factors as the teachers engaged in improving their instructional practices. Table 4.1 below summarizes the findings.

Table 4.1: Characteristics of Teachers

PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS		
CHARACTER ASPECT	n	%
Gender of Participants		
male	7	58.3
female	5	41.7
Age of Participants		
25-29	7	58.3
30-34	1	8.3
40-44	2	16.7
45 and above	2	16.7
Teaching experience of Participants		
1-4	5	41.7
5-9	3	25.0
10-14	1	8.3
20 and above	3	25.0
Level of professional training		
Diploma	1	8.3
Bachelor's degree	9	75.0
Master's degree	2	16.7
Number of years in current school		
1-4	7	58.3
5-9	2	16.7
10-14	2	16.7
15 and above	1	8.3

Table 4.1 shows that more male teachers (58.3%) participated in the study as compared to their female counterparts at 41.7%, indicating a gender disparity, although this was not a factor of consideration for the study. The majority of the participants were aged between 25-29 years (58.3%), while the least represented age was 30-34 years which had 8.3%. In regard to the teaching experience of the

teachers, it was evident that the highest number were those with between 1-4 years (41.7%) while the veteran teachers with 20 years and above teaching experience were 3(25.0%). These results show that the study captured both novice teachers and veteran teachers whose experiences with teaching are likely to be varied and different but important in collaborative teaching. The results also depict the characteristics of a real school situation where novice and veteran teachers co-exist.

The results also revealed the participants' level of training as follows: Diploma, one teacher (8.3%), Bachelors, nine teachers (75%) teachers and Masters holders were two (16.7%). This finding indicates that the participants were suitably trained to teach at the secondary school level. In regard to the number of years they have taught in their current schools, majority had taught for 1-4 years (58.3%) while there was only one teacher with 15 years and above (8.3%). These results suggest that a majority of the teachers were relatively new to their school contexts and therefore had the potential to try out new ways of doing things, especially practicing differently. A number of studies have established that when teachers are still new in a site, they do not have burnout which is a factor responsible for teachers rejecting change or not supporting it (Rock & Wilson, 2005).

4.3.2 Challenging areas in Teaching English Language Content

Section B of the questionnaire (see Appendix 1a) sought to understand the challenging areas in the teaching of English content, according to the teachers. The

questionnaire outlined 8 possible areas that can present challenges in the teaching of English content. The teachers were to indicate the frequency of their challenge using a Likert scale of Never - Always. Table 4.2 presents a summary of the challenging areas and indicates the frequency at which they occurred for the teachers.

Table 4.2: Challenging Areas in the Teaching of English Content

Challenging areas of teaching of English	Never	Occasionally	Regularly	Always
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Poetry content	3 (25.0)	7 (58.3)	2 (16.7)	0 (0.0)
Grammar content	0 (0.0)	11 (91.7)	1 (8.3)	0 (0.0)
Oral literature content	7 (58.3)	5 (41.7)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Oral skills content	5 (41.7)	7 (58.3)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
Literature set book content	4 (33.3)	6 (50.0)	1 (8.3)	1 (8.3)
Imaginative compositions	4 (33.3)	7 (58.3)	1 (8.3)	0 (0.0)
Functional writing	5 (41.7)	6 (50.0)	1 (8.3)	0 (0.0)
Comprehension content	6 (50.0)	6 (50.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)

Table 4.2 reveals that the teachers experienced challenges in the teaching of English content to their learners. It is clear that the teachers did not feel they always had challenges, except for one teacher who indicated that they always had challenges in the teaching of literature set books. However, the teachers majorly had occasional challenges in the teaching of all the areas of English language content, with grammar which has the rules of the English language being indicated as the one with the highest percentage (91.7%).

In the pre-intervention interviews, the teachers explained that the teaching of grammar presented challenges because the syllabus is wide, necessitating a rush to cover the content; grammar content is complex especially at the form three and form four levels; grammar content is dynamic and keeps on changing and so they found difficulty in content delivery, especially explaining to the learners what they themselves had not understood well. In the teaching of poetry, (58.3%) indicated having occasional challenges while 16.7% indicated they regularly faced challenges when teaching poetry. In the pre-intervention interviews, the teachers gave the following as reasons for the challenges: learners have a negative attitude towards poetry and working on attitude change takes time; poems prescribed in texts are usually 'hard' to analyze; requiring a lot of explanations yet the learners sometimes ended up not understanding; singular interpretation of a poem can be confusing for a learner who sees multiple meanings and, the prescribed poems are sometimes difficult for the teacher to make meaning from them, yet they have to help their students.

For oral skills, 58.3% cited occasional challenges while 41.7% said they have never experienced challenges when teaching oral skills. The interview responses revealed that delivery of oral skills content was a challenge to the teachers who could also have personal challenges with speech work, thus making students to understand what their teachers have challenges in a difficult undertaking. The teaching of literature set books had a surprising six (50%) of the teachers

indicating occasional challenges and 33.3% indicating never being challenged. This means that the teachers were comfortable teaching the set books, although in the interviews some seemed to suggest that the regular changing of set books, the need to have uniform analysis of the books and the need to train students to answer examination questions made the teaching of the set books a great challenge.

Teachers indicated occasional challenges for the imaginative compositions as 58.3% and functional compositions 50%, while the teaching of comprehension was cited as occasionally challenging at 50.0%, with an equal percentage never experiencing any challenge in this area. The teaching of oral literature posed the least challenge, with 7 (58.3%) of the participants having never experienced any challenges in this area, while 5 (41.7%) cited occasional challenges. Mr Prolific (not his real name) confirmed the presence of challenges by saying:

...the length of time I have taught does not mean I don't have any challenges. Challenges come with new experiences of teaching...let me even say the evolution of language can result in challenges (Pre-intervention Interview 6th, Feb, 2019)

According to Mr. Prolific, even his vast teaching experience of 20 years and above did not prevent him from experiencing challenges, a factor he attributes to the evolutionary nature of language. For novice teachers like Mr. Ariel (not his real name), whose teaching experience is between 5-9 years, striking a balance

between content knowledge and pedagogical knowledge resulted in occasional challenges. This is evident when he said:

...I experience occasional challenges in my teaching, I don't mean the aspect of content but that one of delivery. Having the content and knowing how to deliver it in class requires a balance. If you miss to strike the balance, I don't think you will meet the lesson objectives. (Pre-intervention interview 30/1/2019).

The summary in Table 4.2 and the pre-intervention interviews reveal that the teachers face challenges in the teaching of various English syllabus content with differing frequencies, with some areas providing regular challenges, others occasional challenges, while some teachers were comfortable and indicated no particular challenge in some content areas. This could mean that the support an individual teacher needs to enable them practice effectively may differ from one content area to another and most probably, from one individual to another. From the pre-intervention interviews, it was evident that the teachers associated the source of their challenges with their learners' inability to understand content easily, learner negative attitude towards certain content, a wide English syllabus and their own levels of English that affected their delivery and efforts 'to make learners understand' content. These views imply that the challenges faced by the teachers are individualized and could also be contextual, requiring very specific and focused support that could possibly take an extended period of time to show results.

Further, the data confirms that teachers at whatever stage of their teaching career face challenges in their pedagogical practices, meaning that no assumption should be made about a teacher's professional needs in relation to the length of their teaching career. This is perhaps due to the fact that all (or almost all) teachers of English in the Kenyan context have English as their second language. This inevitably introduces gaps in their practice and further, the challenges faced by novice teachers will vary from those of the veteran teachers.

The current study involved teachers with varied teaching experiences and contexts, who still indicated that they had gaps in their classroom practice for which they required support to enable them teach effectively and enhance the learning of their students. According to scholars, the teaching of English especially in ESL and EFL contexts is challenging and thus the need to support the teachers to be able to surmount their challenges in the various content areas, so that they can help their learners improve in their language proficiency (Galaczi et al, 2018; Noguera, 2018; Hismanoglu, 2010).

4.3.3 Teachers' Classroom Practices

Section C of the questionnaire (see Appendix 1a) sought to understand the classroom practices of the teachers. The questionnaire outlined five (5) aspects of classroom practice which are: learner involvement, collaborative teaching, development and use of teaching resources, lesson planning and choice of teaching/learning methods. The teachers were to indicate their opinions on a Likert

scale of Strongly agree – Disagree. A score of three (3) and above was considered as agreed while a score of one (1) and below was taken as disagree. Data from the pre-intervention questionnaires that indicated the opinions of the teachers concerning their classroom practices is summarized in Table 4.3 below.

Table 4.3: Classroom Practices of Teachers before the intervention

Aspect of Classroom Practice	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Teaching resources are challenging to find	1 (8.3)	5 (41.7)	2 (16.7)	4 (33.3)
I plan for my English lessons as often as I can	4 (33.3)	7 (58.3)	1 (8.3)	0 (0.0)
My students enjoy the methods I use	4 (33.3)	7 (58.3)	1 (8.3)	0 (0.0)
	Very often	Often	Rarely	Never
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Working with fellow teacher(s)	5 (41.7)	5 (41.7)	2 (16.7)	0 (0.0)
How often do you involve learners in the lesson	7 (58.3)	4 (33.3)	1 (8.3)	0 (0.0)

Table 4.3 reveals that 6 out of 12 teachers agreed to the statement that teaching resources are challenging to find, while 4 out of 12 felt they could find teaching resources. Interview data supported these views as the teachers explained that the most available resources for the teaching of English were text books which the Ministry of Education has supplied to schools in almost all levels of secondary English syllabus. They however expressed a desire for more interactive resources

that would make their teaching more effective especially in the teaching of poetry, speech work, literature and grammar.

Responding to the statement about planning English lessons as often as the teacher can be able to, 11 out of 12 of the teachers agreed while only one teacher was undecided about their planning. However, interview data revealed that the teachers did not plan as often as possible since they felt burdened by the demands of the subject, syllabus coverage and other responsibilities that left them with limited time to engage in planning for the lessons. They mostly ensured they prepared schemes of work at the start of the school term but had challenges preparing daily lesson plans and would find themselves in the classroom with the lesson notes and class texts. There was little indication of joint planning of lessons as they teachers felt it was not viable since ‘teachers are busy’ and their schedules are not synchronized making it difficult to have joint ventures.

Teachers indicated that their students seemed to enjoy the methods they use in class, with 33.3% strongly agreeing and 58.3% agreeing. Interview data revealed that the teachers viewed excitement and sometimes a noisy lesson as evidence of enjoyment. However, when probed about the particular methods used to make the lessons enjoyable, the teachers referred to their sense of humor, questioning techniques and how they delivered the content. The teachers even expressed disappointment that usually the excitement did not yield good performance nor did it enhance their learners’ understanding and remembrance of the concepts taught.

When asked how often they involved their learners in the lesson, 11 out of 12 teachers agreed that they involved learners in their lessons. However, the pre-intervention interviews revealed that majorly teachers talked while the learners were ‘silent’ listeners and were expected to respond by doing written exercises or answering oral questions. During the teacher talk, explanation of concepts was done, although teachers indicated that they felt frustrated when their efforts did not result in students understanding or remembering content. Additionally, the kind of involvement teachers used majorly was questioning where learners were expected to give ‘correct answers’ but not to engage in a discussion at either group level or as a whole class.

On the issue of teacher collaboration, 41.7% of the teachers indicated they very often work with fellow teachers, while 16.7% said they rarely did this. The interview data however revealed the different ways in which the teams perceived and practiced collaboration. Ms. Raquel (not her real name) excitedly explained how collaborative teaching happens in her school and the benefits when she said:

We have tried it as a department of English and it worked. Like for example, in the year 2018, we decided that when students were in Form 4, any teacher could enter any class and it really worked wonders for us. At the end of the day, we realized a good mean and we were celebrating when the results came and so it is something that definitely worked for us (Pre-intervention interview, 5/2/2019).

According to Ms. Raquel, team teaching in her school involved any teacher of English going for a lesson with the candidate class. Her excitement was because

this yielded good results. Ms Sophie (not her real name) on the other hand said this to explain collaborative teaching in her school:

...currently in Form 4 I am handling *A Doll's house*, Mr. Enzo is good in grammar but he is not very good in these set books, so I go in for set books and he goes in for grammar... (Pre-intervention Interview, 8th Feb, 2019).

For Ms. Sophie and her colleague, collaborative teaching involves exploiting the abilities of a colleague to close the gaps that one teacher has in content knowledge. On the other hand, for Ms. Celine (not her real name) and her colleague, collaboration happened every time she would negotiate with a colleague to step in her class while she was away. She described it as follows:

...we just share, then I tell him or her to come and teach for me this or that topic, then I give reasons and ask if it is ok. Then he just goes and teaches and gives an exercise which I mark. Then I go through the books to find out if they have grasped the concept, if they are doing well in the exercise, then I am ok with the teaching (Pre-intervention interview,6/2/2019).

While the questionnaire responses indicate that 11 out of 12 teachers worked with each other in their classroom, interview data revealed that what the participants engaged in were activities where a colleague would step into another's class to teach for them in their absence. This finding suggests that teachers had a hazy understanding of what collaboration in a classroom looks like and therefore the possibility that they missed out on its benefits. According to Mizell (2010) and Garber (2014), collaboration among teachers should among others: eliminate teacher isolation, enhance teacher learning, enable teachers to support each other

to solve instructional dilemmas, develop in teachers' skills, confidence and self-esteem and, enhance collegiality.

The hazy understanding by participants in this study was probably due to the fact that they lacked information on the collaborative practice and strategies because such information does not form part of the topics handled in most workshops and seminars. According to Gathara (2011), the available continuing professional development for secondary school teachers in Kenya mostly focuses on teaching methodologies, subject content matter, school administration and leadership. Moreover, the initial training for teachers does not also include a component of how teachers can collaborate in the classroom, a factor that socializes teachers to embrace the idea of working alone in the classroom with the learners as their only audience. While collaborative teaching has been established as an avenue for teacher learning and has long been embraced in the West, in Kenya and Bungoma South sub-county, it is yet to gain ground. This means that Kenyan teachers could be lacking in current information concerning collaborative teaching that would enable them to be more effective in how they practice and perhaps increase the learning outcomes for their learners.

4.3.4 Workshop/Seminar Attendance

Section D of the pre-intervention questionnaire (see Appendix 1a) sought to establish the workshop or seminar attendance of the teachers. Data from the pre-intervention questionnaire and interview revealed that the teachers are exposed to

externally organized workshops. 9 out of 12 (75%) of the teachers indicated they have attended workshops/seminars on the teaching of English language while 3/12 (25%) had not attended any workshop/seminar. This left the study with only 9 out of 12 teachers to focus on. Most of the teachers who did not get an opportunity to attend said it was often due to financial constraints on the part of the schools or that they were newly employed teachers. The issue of some teachers being selected to attend workshop is captured in the following excerpt by Ms. Raquel, who has taught English for less than five-years:

Researcher: And in that duration of being in this school, you have not attended any workshop?

Ms. Raquel: No, I have never attended any workshop or seminar

Researcher: is it out of choice or?

Ms. Raquel: No, it is not out of choice. The last time they attended they just choose the people who were going for the seminar, so I was not among them (Pre-intervention interview, 5/2/2019).

Arguably, after considering Ms. Raquel's teaching experience, one would expect that she would be considered for opportunities for professional development, however this does not seem to be the case. This finding suggests that schools may not have a clear structure on how to support teachers to attend the available professional development programs and therefore some teachers may be in a school for some time without getting the opportunity to attend PD programmes. This finding is consistent with results in many studies on teacher professional development programmes in African countries, where PD is limited to a few

teachers due to certain factors that are used to select those who attend the programmes (Gathara, 2011; Akpan & Ita, 2015; Atta & Mensah, 2018). Such factors include the financial implication of sponsoring the teacher(s), the leadership position of the teacher, the importance of the seminar information to school development and the goodwill that the teacher has before the principal.

However, teachers who are heads of department get chances to attend workshops even at national levels. Mr. Richie (not his real name) who is a Head of Subject corroborated this by saying:

...since the workshop took place in Nairobi, very far from our school, the school was only able to sponsor one person and that was me. (Pre-intervention Interview, 5th Feb, 2019).

While the cost implication for sending teachers to attend PD far away from school may be an issue, the unfortunate result is that those who represented the rest do not get to share the 'new' knowledge and if they do, they may not provide support in the implementation process. Yet literature and studies on teacher professional development point to the need for all teachers, despite the phase of the teaching career they are in, to engage in learning (Fullan, 2007). Indeed, according to Atta & Mensah (2015), when PD is limited to few teachers, it becomes less effective and its impact on teachers' instructional practice and student outcomes is minimal. This finding suggests the need for development programmes to be designed to offer all teachers the opportunity to learn, continually.

In regard to the impact of the workshop/seminars on their classroom practice, 4 out of 9 (44.4%) teachers affirmed that they had positively impacted their practice while 2 out of 9 (22.2%) were of the view that workshops/seminars did not impact their practice at all. Those who responded positively indicated that by attending the workshop/seminar, they were able to deal with an area in the teaching of English which they considered difficult. About the focus of the workshops that the teachers attended, all of them (9 out of 9) indicated that many workshops dealt with the teaching of literature set-books and how to train students on examination techniques, however, their personal challenges like those indicated in Table 4.2 were not addressed. Data from pre-intervention interviews confirmed this as captured by Mr. Adrian (not his real name), who said:

...I think when you attend a workshop, there is normally this generalized kind of approach. Rarely do they narrow down to individual challenges not unless you follow up yourself and ask. Then there is the fact that you are there, let's say teachers of English from the entire county, you don't want to embarrass yourself by stating that this one I really don't know. (Pre-intervention Interview, 30th Jan, 2019).

This finding confirms the long established fact that workshops are often designed to offer one-size-fits-all information to many teachers. According to Alberth et al (2018), a fundamental drawback of traditional PD is the absence of discussions and exchange of ideas that leave the participants with unanswered questions and the facilitators, ignorant of the uptake of knowledge by the teachers. This view therefore suggests the possibility that teachers may attend the workshop/seminar

and return to their schools with little or nothing to share and consequently little or no change to their practice and student learning outcomes.

The last part of section D also sought to establish how the teachers handled the knowledge gained from workshops/seminars. From the questionnaire, 7 out of 9 (77.7%) teachers indicated that they shared new information with colleagues at departmental level while 2 out of 9 (22.2%) did not share information with colleagues. Those who did not share information felt there was nothing to share as little had been learnt. In the pre-intervention interviews, teachers indicated that they shared information and practices in the following fora: 5 out of 9 (55.5%) did it during departmental meetings, 2 out of 9 (22.2%) during lesson observation, 1 out of 9 (11.1%) through team teaching and 1 out of 9 (11.1%) by sharing workshop/seminar materials. For those who indicated that they shared information, it was not clear when this was done, as most respondents indicated that departmental meetings were only held twice in a term: at the beginning and closure of the school term. Even the claim about sharing new information from workshops was not well supported by interview data that showed lack of focused sharing as captured in this response by Ms. Sophie:

.... Mostly we briefly share in a conversation like manner... (Pre-intervention Interview, 30th Jan, 2019).

This response by Ms. Sophie implies casual exchange of information that is so common in school corridors and staffrooms and which cannot be relied on to

change a teacher's classroom practice. However, if teachers are already sharing information even casually, then they can be supported to engage in more meaningful dialogue that is focused on understanding their practice or sharing what has worked in their classrooms.

While responding to the question on follow-up support by workshop organizers in order to assist a teacher implement what they had learnt, all the nine respondents indicated that no follow-up was made. This finding has consensus in literature and other studies that reveal the drawback of traditional PD as the lack of follow up support for teachers especially when they seek to implement what they have learnt in the workshops/seminars (Putnam & Borko, 2000; Gathumbi, Mungai & Hintze, 2013; Bett, 2016). Even so, 7 out of 9 (77.7%) of those who attended the workshop/seminars felt that their classroom practices improved, while 2 out of 9 (22.2%) indicated that there was no change in practice. Those who indicated improvement explained that the areas which improved were classroom management, change in teaching approach, ability to identify learner needs and areas of difficulties and improved understanding of set books and how to teach the literature content. Those who indicated no change explained that the workshop/seminars addressed only certain areas of English language content hence change was difficult to detect.

These preliminary findings have support in the views of scholars like Galaczi et al (2018), who established that there are key realities that undermine English

Language teaching in both English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) contexts. These realities include among others, teachers' low level of English arising from non-native speaker teachers, time pressure, ineffective learning environments and, challenging classroom and pedagogical environments. Arguably, it is only by addressing these realities that teachers of English the world over, will be on a path to support their learners, most of whom have only their teacher of English as a role model and representative of the target language. This view finds great support in the contention by Mizell (2010) that "Good teaching is not an accident...it is a result of study, reflection, practice and hard work" p. 10 and thus the need to ensure spaces where teachers can safely learn about their practice and perhaps do this with the support of a colleague(s).

This preliminary data revealed several important things for the study: first, that all the teachers experienced challenges in teaching English language content and in their classroom practice. Secondly, these challenges were individual and contextual and teachers felt they did not receive answers from external workshops. Thirdly, many teachers indicated that they did not get opportunities to attend workshops/seminars due to financial constraints in the schools. Fourthly, those who attended the workshops were not supported in the implementation of the new ideas and neither did they support colleagues. Lastly, teachers had a hazy understanding of collaborative teaching. These preliminary findings formed the reflections that led to plans for an intervention to enable the teachers to work

collaboratively in their context and with the researcher. The findings from the intervention phase are discussed below according to the research objectives.

4.4 Strategies for Leading Professional Development

The first objective of this study was to establish the strategies that teachers of English can use to lead their own professional development. The twelve teachers were introduced to the strategies during the training on collaborative strategies (see appendix If). Below are the findings about each strategy.

4.4.1 Classroom Lesson Observation

Data from lesson observation forms, journal entries of the teachers and the researcher and post-intervention interviews, show that all the six study teams easily embraced lesson observation and used it to clearly establish their challenges with practice and to learn from each other. The twelve teachers were asked to respond to an item in the post-intervention questionnaire concerning if they appreciated observing and being observed in a lesson. Figure 4.1 aptly captures their opinions about lesson observation.

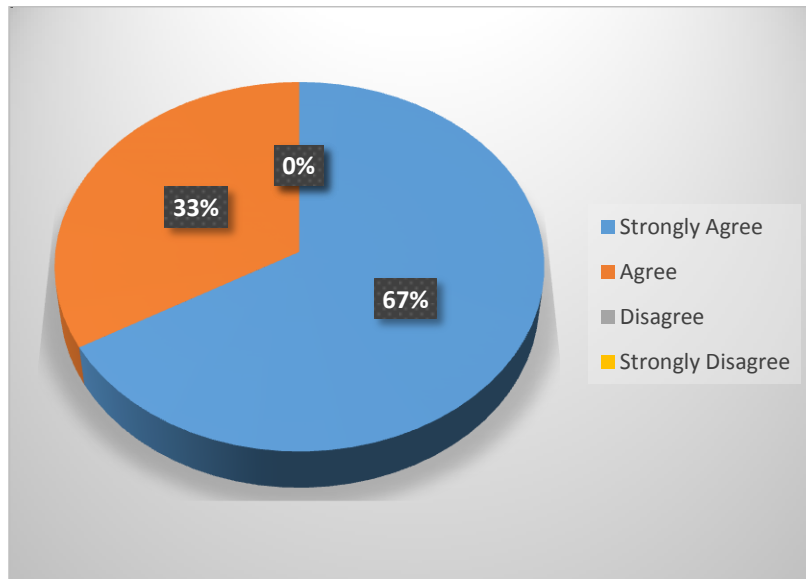


Figure 4.1: Teachers' appreciation of observing and being observed

From Figure 4.1, it is evident that all the twelve teachers either agreed or strongly agreed to the post-intervention questionnaire item that sought to establish their experiences with the strategy. This was probably due to the fact that lesson observation as a strategy is not new to the teachers as a similar activity is expected of them by the Teachers' Service Commission, through the TPAD tool. To describe her experience with lesson observation, Ms. Celine said:

...Working with Madam Celestine has been a pleasure... it has enabled me to learn a lot from her, being my elder sister. I learnt a lot from the way she was handling students, her closeness to her students and the way she ensured they got the concepts, was very admirable. I copied what she had done with her students and it really helped me (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

According to Ms. Celine, classroom lesson observation was an opportunity to learn new and useful strategies which she replicated in her classes, while at the same

time enhancing her relationship with Madam Celestine. For Ms. Sophie, lesson observation was an eye-opening experience that enabled her to be aware of her abilities and those of her colleague. Her observations also informed her future actions in class and her continuous efforts to improve. This is captured in her words:

...I am a better teacher by far. This whole thing has really helped me especially when it comes to observation. I have observed him 3 or 4 times and I realize the mistakes he makes normally do not come from the students. When I get back to my class I have this at the back of my mind and so I am always trying to involve them and make them more attentive and it has worked wonders for me (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

In a journal entry made on 14/3/2019, Mr. Antonne (not his real name) wrote the following:

I observed Mr. Ariel teach intransitive verbs in Form 3 Red, after I had taught the same class Transitive verbs. His technique of asking the learners questions was captivating and learners seemed to enjoy the lesson. Most of them participated actively in the discussion, unlike in my case where I used examples from various books, revision materials and even my lesson notes. He tended to use examples from students and his own examples without referring anywhere

What needs to be changed

-Although the lesson was captivating and enjoyable, the teacher seemed to use many questions and so time caught up with him.

According to Mr. Antonne, what he observed enabled him to think about his colleague's practice and what can be done to improve it. This finding on classroom

lesson observation agrees with those of Zaare (2012) who found that teachers learned a lot about how to teach by observing their qualified peers, a factor that helped them to improve their self-awareness and reflective practice. Additionally, Zaare found that observing and being observed enhanced a teacher's ability to describe instructional processes, improve classroom practice and appreciate the practice of a colleague.

These findings indicate that lesson observation was useful in enabling the teachers to identify gaps and weaknesses in their practice or that of a colleague. According to Paraskevas & Wicken (2003), the ability of teachers to identify their own challenges with practice is the beginning of any attempt to engage in seeking for improvement. In this study, lesson observation was also viewed positively by all the teachers who associated it with enabling them to learn a lot from each other; enabled them to identify their weaknesses and those of a colleague in terms of classroom practice; enabled the development of professional relationships of trust and enabled them to understand how students learn or don't learn.

The uptake of this strategy in the study can be associated with the fact that it was non-evaluative and thus enabled teachers to be open with a colleague by exposing their challenges without fear of judgement. This is consistent with what Noguera (2018) and Shing (n.d) found in their studies, that non-evaluative lesson observation enhanced the teachers' ability to observe each other with more openness and willingness than the evaluative lesson observation. In the current

study, the teachers did not work with the threat that comes with evaluation and that could have implications for their job security nor were they constrained to defend their choices before ‘an evaluator’.

Additionally, the uptake of lesson observation by the teachers can be attributed partly to the training they received on collaborative strategies that enabled them to understand the importance of collaborative teaching as a factor in their professional development. According to Gore et al (2017), effective PD should involve teachers as both learners and teachers, while promoting transformative practice rather than seeking accountability. This proposition concurs with theories of adult learning which posit that adult learning is problem centered and is a process where knowledge is derived and tested in the experiences of the learner (Kolb, 1984).

4.4.2 Peer Coaching

Data from journal entries and post-intervention interviews indicated that peer coaching was another strategy that was applied by all the six teams in modelling practices that work in the classroom. The successful application of peer coaching is captured in the following excerpt by the two teachers from Tumaini secondary school (not the real name of the school):

Mr. Prolific: ...from my side, this is my first time doing peer coaching and I did this because I felt this is the area (*where*) I gained most. To sit down and listen to a teacher who is professionally younger than me explaining concepts in class, to

me I can say it was such a refreshing experience and I enjoyed it and I learnt that indeed many years of service does not indicate that you know everything. There is a lot to learn from those who are new and energetic in the field. Thank you.

Researcher: Ok Ms. Belinda?

Ms. Belinda: All I can say is that I have learnt a lot through the interaction with the four processes of collaborative teaching, I have come to realize that apart from the normal teaching we have, we can also integrate our learning through the ICT and through that I have also gotten that the learners are able to understand different learning skills that they were not able to acquire easily. So as an individual, I have also learnt a lot and also getting more from somebody who is a bit older than me in the field. It was the best experience in teaching so far (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

For this team, peer coaching brought them to the realization that they can model for a colleague what has worked in their classrooms, without consideration of whether they are novice or veteran teachers. This view was also held by other teams in the study who realized that every teacher has some strategy that has worked in their classroom practice and which they can share. Ms Raquel observed:

I have learnt a lot from this experience, it has made me a better teacher and I think it is something I would like to embrace because I have learnt from the other teacher and if I had weaknesses, right now I have worked on my weaknesses and indeed if I have strengths, then the other teacher has gained from me (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

The findings show that peer coaching was viewed positively by teachers who also associated it with enabling them to learn from each other; enabled them to identify their weaknesses and work towards eliminating or reducing them; turned their

colleagues into role models whose practice could be copied and, demonstrated that both novice and veteran teachers have professional knowledge to share. This positive perception is evident in phrases like ‘the area where I gained most’ ‘a refreshing experience’ ‘I learnt a lot from this experience’ ‘I enjoyed it’ Further to this, the data shows that the phase of the teaching career does not matter as teachers can still be able to gain from ‘those who are new and energetic in the field’ as captured in the words of Mr. Prolific or ‘from somebody who is a bit older than me in the field’ as described by Ms. Belinda (not her real name). According to Gulamhussein (2013), modelling like that done in peer coaching is a highly effective way to introduce a new concept and support a teacher in understanding it and implementing it in their classroom.

However, the findings from this study also provide a differing perspective from what Hismanoglu (2010) found in a study of 50 language teachers, that aimed to explain what professional development strategies language teachers preferred. In his study, Hismanoglu found that 84% of teachers of English considered professional development an important part of their profession but they generally neglected collaborative activities, with only 4% preferring peer coaching, 9.3% preferred team teaching and 9.3% preferred study groups. While teachers in the current study described their experiences with peer coaching as ‘refreshing’ and ‘the best experience’ those in Hismanoglu’s study felt that collaborative activities were too demanding and they risked exposing their weaknesses. This view may be

a result of a school culture that does not support collaboration or perhaps, lack of a clear understanding of the benefits of collaboration. According to Nemsar (1983) cited in Chirure (2010), when a school culture is against you, you cannot achieve anything and without a school culture that supports learning from teaching, then the potential in teaching experiences cannot be exploited and teacher learning will face resistance.

Peer coaching is a very collaborative strategy underlined by professional relationships of trust and thus the need to approach its implementation with an understanding of teacher attitudes towards their own professional development and the school culture within which the new ideas will be implemented. Additionally, peer coaching is guided by the tenets of the Situated Perspective on Cognition (Greeno, 1997) which contends that cognition is distributed and can be spread out to others and is thus not the sole property of an individual. This is important in teacher learning which relies heavily on experience and sharing of what has worked in class, so that teachers do not 'hoard' information but are able to share it with a colleague for the sake of improved outcomes and school improvement.

4.4.3 Team Teaching

Data from journal entries and post-intervention interviews show that team teaching was a popular strategy employed by all the six teams in the study, to support each other and student learning. An example of the experiences of teachers with this strategy is captured in the excerpt below from Ms. Sophie's journal entry:

I must say the whole experience was very eye opening, you know normally, we just do our own thing of going to class to complete our lessons and not giving much thought to the idea of going to class together. Teaching as a team has really opened my eyes. Observing my colleague teaching I notice even my mistakes in him and I have been able to make a lot of corrections in the way I teach. Even for the students, the lessons have been more interactive and when they see the two of us going in and teaching together they pay more attention and the lessons become more exciting (Post-intervention interview 21/6/2019).

For Ms. Sophie, team teaching was a strategy that enabled her to focus on her teaching practice and that of her colleague and in the process she learnt and made adjustments to her practice. According to Mizell (2010), schools are places where teachers like their students can learn from each other and their context, necessitating the creation of spaces where this can happen. Additionally, the combination of teaching strategies in a lesson results in enjoyable lessons, a factor which has considerable effect on the scores of students in the subject making team teaching a preferred strategy for students (Jang, 2006). This is important for teacher learning which finds consolidation when several teachers are involved and the outcomes lead to better and enjoyable lessons.

Interview data further reveals that teachers preferred team teaching for a number of reasons including the ability to enhance content coverage and to make learning fun. Mr. Ariel said:

I really was at home with team teaching...I think that one, the learners responded positively and as a teacher, you realize that when sharing a class, you cover a lot

such that what you have not explained, your colleague covers for you (Post-intervention interview, 1/7/2109)

This finding is consistent with what studies like Jang (2006) and Degan (2018) found about team teaching as a strategy that ensures sharing of teaching experiences, resources and delivery of the curriculum in ways that result in a collaborative culture in a school. Another reason for the popularity of team teaching was its ability to ‘diffuse ownership’ of teachers. To explain this phenomenon, Mr Prolific in the post-intervention interview stated that:

...we have this situation where students imagine that Ms. Belinda is our teacher or Mr. Prolific is our teacher of English, period. In a situation where I am incapacitated by a flu or something and they do not see me, it becomes a lesson for her to teach. By team teaching, we have diffused ownership of teachers by students. In my absence they will walk to her and say “Madam, it is time for English” and the same (*will happen*) to me in her absence and this has happened many times since we started this program (Post-intervention interview 19/6/2019).

According to Mr. Prolific, team teaching enhances confidence in the ‘other teacher’ thus increasing the number of teachers that learners can consult thereby meeting diverse learner needs. This is a departure from the traditional classroom situation where a single teacher is associated with a single subject and students are uncomfortable seeking assistance from other teachers, even teachers of the same subject. This finding also implies that teachers in the team have to take on other learners from a colleague’s class who may consult them or seek them when their teacher is unable to make it for a lesson.

The written reflections of the teachers further reveal their challenges with the collaborative strategies. In a journal entry, Ms. Raquel noted this about a team teaching session she had with her colleague:

Time was another challenge, because the lesson was so interactive, the students tended to derail the lesson out of excitement. This was kept in control by ensuring learners did not take too much time discussing one issue (Journal entry, 20/3/2019).

While team teaching had an effect on the learners who became more attentive and active, it also presented the teachers with the challenge of classroom and time management. This points out an important consideration for teachers who set out to apply team teaching in their lessons, that of classroom control.

Further to this, the increased participation by learners may have been encouraged by what they observed in their teachers: increased confidence and thus they seemed to look forward to such lessons. According to Degan (2018), team teaching is a powerful way for teachers to model collaboration to their learners in ways that will enable them observe sharing of ideas, resources, teachers and learners, all with the intention of achieving a common goal. However, even with such a strategy, findings reveal that time was a challenge in implementing a joint lesson while at the same time there was fear that students were comparing the teachers' knowledge and skills.

These findings show that team teaching is one strategy that provided space for teachers to work in synchrony with one another to deliver a lesson. This process implies some level of a trusting relationship that binds the two together enabling them to identify without exposing, the professional strength or weakness in a colleague. This is probably because working as a team demands trust and understanding from the participants so as to function as a single unit. According to Degan (2018), team teaching can lead to the development of social capital which is the positive relationship between members that enables them to trust each other, share resources and collaborate. However, this development of an understanding of what a colleague can be able to do or is unable to do, requires some time together and is a gradual process. The support that teachers in this study received included support in content coverage or where a colleague had a challenge in practice, a process that ultimately benefits learners as it has an effect on their learning outcomes. Additionally, teachers exercise a great influence on other members of a school community and their unity of purpose can be critical for any effort in school improvement, thus the need to support them to work as a team in the domain of the classroom.

4.4.4 Lesson Study

Data from the journal entries of the teachers, post-intervention interviews, lesson study reports and the researcher's notes indicated that lesson study was used by some teams (3 out of 6) to understand student learning, especially how they learnt

or did not learn. For Mr. Adrian and his colleague, lesson study lead to a change in the way they taught and how their students understood the literature set book. This is captured in his journal entry:

...I have learnt something by thinking about how my students understand what I teach them. We realized that our students were poor in understanding the setting of “Blossoms of the Savannah” because they struggle to answer questions in class, but after lesson study, we changed how we explained setting and involved learners, then there was some change. I think we will do more (Journal entry, 1/4/2019)

Lesson study enabled learning for Mr. Adrian and his colleague, in agreement with what Arslan (2018) found that lesson study increased the confidence of student-teachers and contributed to PD.

While lesson study seems to hold great promise in informing the teaching and learning process, data from the researcher’s notes show that lesson study was one strategy that received less attention compared to the other three strategies. Three out of six teams implemented it in their classrooms. The following excerpt tries to explain why this happened:

Mr. Ariel: The most difficult to implement was the bit of lesson study.

Researcher: What was difficult about it?

Mr. Ariel: The process. What you have to capture according to the form provided.

I think it makes it difficult from the word go... (Post-intervention interview, 1/7/2019).

According to Mr. Ariel, the process of carrying out lesson study was demanding in terms of paper work and time. This effort in preparing the lesson study report is

evident in the work of Mr. Akes (See Appendix 1h) who provided a detailed account of a lesson study implementation in one of their lessons. The demands of lesson study reporting are a view that was corroborated by Ms. Belinda who said:

...Basically, it wasn't easy for us to get the time to sit down and discuss, identify the issue and then go to class to study it, then again meet to discuss and repeat the process. Time was not there. When I have the time, my colleague is busy and vice versa, therefore striking a balance was a challenge. But we tried those strategies that required less planning and meeting. (Post-intervention interview 19/2/2019)

The views of Mr. Ariel and Ms. Belinda could explain why lesson study was not given a lot of attention as the teachers preferred those strategies they could plan for and implement with ease. Data from the lesson study reports shows that 3 out of 6 teams (50%) in this study were able to discuss and plan experiment lessons which they implemented and documented in the lesson study report form adapted from the SMASSE report (see Appendix 1h). Data from interviews explain this by revealing that teachers found the preparation for an experiment lesson long and demanding requiring a lot of time in the planning, enacting the lesson, writing the report and undertaking a follow-up lesson to try out the recommendations and watch the effect. Indeed, data from the researcher's reflective journal showed that even the teams which implemented the first cycle of lesson study, made minimal efforts to carry out a follow-up lesson to try out the recommendations from the first experiment lesson (Researcher's diary, 2019).

The views of the teachers in this current study are inconsistent with findings from other studies that have explored the use of lesson study like Arslan (2018) and Coenders & Verhoef (2018). In a study by Rock and Wilson (2005) that investigated Japanese education, it was evident that despite the Japanese teachers following eight steps in their collaborative lesson study, they still remained committed to it as they have a strong believe emanating from their pre-service training that studying their lessons will improve their teaching and lead to school-wide improvement. In another study by Coenders & Verhoef (2018) participants found lesson study a non-threatening way of learning because it focused on students and their learning and not the teachers, thus minimizing anxiety.

The minimal attention given to lesson study in this current research is probably due to the fact that the teachers have heavy teaching loads and hold other school responsibilities that did not leave them a lot of time to engage in a demanding activity like lesson study. This finding is supported by Rock & Wilson (2005) who found that the lesson study process requires substantial time and commitment and thus the need to ensure separate school time for the teachers to plan and implement it, a factor that may prove challenging in an examination oriented education system like that practiced in Kenya and Bungoma South sub-county. To mitigate this challenge of time and paper work, teachers in the current study were encouraged to specifically meet at the end of the school day to discuss and plan an

experiment lesson and to record their experiences in their journals instead of the form.

The findings from both Rock & Wilson (2005) and Coenders & Verhoef (2018) provide significant insights that could guide the uptake of lesson study among teachers. First, is the issue of lesson study being infused in the education of pre-service teachers to enable them develop the skill and appreciation of the benefits of undertaking it in their classes. Second, the need for teachers to understand that when they study and understand how their students learn, then they will be able to teach more effectively in ways that will enhance the learning outcomes for their learners. According to Arslan (2018), lesson study is an important strategy as it contributes to professional growth and confidence of teachers through observing and reflecting on teaching practices used in the experiment lessons. While lesson study as a strategy to enhance teacher learning was not well implemented in this current study, it however remains one strategy that provides an opportunity to study learners and their learning with a view to improve how the teacher can exploit pedagogical practices to improve learning outcomes. The study therefore recommends the inclusion of lesson study in the curricular of pre-service teachers to enable them to study and understand student learning.

4.4.5 Social Media Interaction

Data from the post-intervention interviews and the WhatsApp Teacher Collaboration platform showed that 8 out of 12 (66%) of the teachers found useful

ideas for classroom practice and were motivated through social media interaction.

Commenting on her experience, Ms. Sophie said:

It was very useful, getting experiences from other teachers from other schools and reading about their challenges encourages you and you want to learn (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

For Ms. Sophie, the WhatsApp platform was a space that would allowed teachers to share experiences from their different contexts, while at the same time helping them to appreciate common challenges that exist in the teaching of English. The observation that social media interaction enhances learning from colleagues in other contexts, agrees with the opinion of Mr. Prolific who said:

At times I would open up the wall 2 or 3 days after everybody has shared their experiences. But at one point I would go through and realize that a few things I had ignored in my station of work are actually problematic issues experienced elsewhere. So I would go back and give certain areas more attention. So it helped me to 'up' my skills in the teaching of these areas (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

For Mr. Prolific, the social media platform allowed him to revisit information at a convenient time, as well as add his voice to the issue being discussed. According to Alberth, Mursalim, Siam, Suardika & Ino (2018), in the digital era, social media is a key conduit for ensuring on-going discussion and sharing of ideas that may not be affected by time as the teacher can go to the platform at their own time away from the school schedule. The WhatsApp platform helped Mr. Prolific to appreciate that challenges faced by a colleague are learning points that can inform

his practice and help him to be better than the colleague. However, Ms. Celestine (not her real name) had a different experience with social media interaction as aptly captured in this extract:

Researcher: Now, in the process of collaboration, we had a WhatsApp forum, Teacher Collaboration, was it useful?

Ms. Celestine: In fact, I was not very active.

Researcher: Why perhaps?

Ms. Celestine: I have phobia for social media because I feel that people may never really understand you...it is just a phobia, especially in groups, unless I know you, I am more of an introvert...you know I am more of old school, it would have helped me if I saw whom I am communicating with. (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019)

For Ms. Celestine, her excuses for not interacting on social media could be associated with her age (45 years and above) and her teaching experience (19 years) which some studies have identified as important delimiting factors for why teachers do not take up changes easily (Rock & Wilson, 2005). On the other hand, data from the researcher's journal indicates that she was not the only one facing challenges with social media interaction. Although most of the teachers in the current study (58.3%) were in the age bracket of 25-29 years, their interaction on the wall was not consistent with the expected engagement of young people with social media. They read what was posted on the wall but only a few made any comments. To explain this disconnect, Ms. Belinda commented:

On my part, the best thing that could be done was for us to meet, you know the WhatsApp was created but we never met, the 12 of us never met. The communication is done, you don't know who this person is, you don't know what topic he or she is teaching, the best way could be for us to meet. After (*meeting*), we could then discuss some of the challenges, what are some of the success things we have in this group (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

For Ms. Belinda, the fact that there was no face-to-face interaction before the formation of the WhatsApp group meant that she was going to interact with strangers whose views and disposition were unknown to her. This was corroborated by Mr. Antonne, who said:

I am young and I am always on WhatsApp but you know I could ask a question or two but those are people whom you don't know or are not sure if the question you are asking is relevant to them. I could instead ask my colleague rather than posting because you don't know who is there, how he/she will take the question...it could have been useful if we met and knew each other (Post-intervention interview 21/6/2019).

The fear expressed by Ms. Belinda and Mr. Antonne is valid given the way WhatsApp groups are formed, majorly by people who are familiar with one another and share common interests. According to pre-service teachers in a study by Alenazi (2018) WhatsApp is a communication tool for staying up to date with peers and sharing information with no obligation. This could explain the detached manner in which the teachers in the current study engaged on the platform, coupled with the idea that they were unfamiliar with each other, apart from their collaborating partners. A study by Alberth et al (2018) proposed blending of face-

to-face sessions with the on-line component to reduce the feeling of sharing ‘delicate’ information with a stranger, a factor that is likely to lead to detachment by some participants. For Mr. Prolific who is outgoing and friendly by nature, the absence of physical connection affected his sharing of information. This was his explanation:

Making friends is one of my hobbies, I would be excited to add to my list of friends, at the same time if you hear something from an individual while looking at him or her, it makes more impact than just reading some information and deleting it...if I look at you as you explain something, I will associate you with that concept and it will stick in my mind for long (Post-intervention interview 19/6/2019)

Interview data shows that the use of the WhatsApp platform was affected by a number of factors which included: phobia for social media, the feeling of being ‘old school’, forgetfulness, reluctance to share information with ‘strangers’ and teachers not prioritizing their engagement on this platform. This is perhaps due to the conceptualization of social media as a space where information that is shared is not to be taken seriously or is not meant for professional learning. While the intention of forming the platform was to connect the teachers and therefore form a community of learners, a few of the teachers were reluctant to interact on this space as they considered members of the group to be strangers and instead proposed face-to-face engagement first.

Arguably, the lack of face-to-face interaction for the teachers denied this study fully realization of the benefits of using social media in informal professional development. This is contrary to what Suardika, et al (2020) established in a study involving students of education, where the group that used WhatsApp reported a stronger sense of community and more benefits of the platform. The lesson learnt here is that before engaging in informal PD on social media, it is important that the teachers meet to create some bonding that will allow them to exercise some level of trust while interacting on social networks. Also of importance is the need to encourage teachers to embrace social media platforms as spaces where informal professional development can happen, especially if ethical use of the platform is adhered to. This is important given the fact that the future of communication and learning is in digital spaces and so the facilitators of knowledge in this century should be well equipped and comfortable with technology, if they have to assist their learners fit in this digital dispensation.

4.4.6 Reflective Journaling

Data from post-intervention interviews and the journal entries of the teachers revealed that all the twelve teachers were able to think and write something about their experiences in class and with each other (See sample journal extract- Appendix 1i). In this extract, Mr. Adrian recorded his impression of a lesson handled by his colleague and his reflections on what can be done better. The

assumption here is that Mr. Adrian's future actions in class will be guided by his new learning, perhaps leading to better learning experiences for his learners.

Writing about her lesson on Tuesday 26/2/2019 on an oral literature topic, Ms. Sophie said:

I went to teach the topic – Legends- in Form Two South although I had not prepared adequately. The students seemed bored and quiet throughout the lesson so I talked most of the time.

-Later in the day when thinking about the lesson, I realized the students may not have related to the narrative examples I had given.

-I resolved to look for more relevant examples, then re-teach the lesson. Also, I think I can allow a colleague to teach as I watch (*sic*).

Ms. Sophie's journal entry captures her reflections about what happened in the lesson that resulted in the conclusion that her students could not relate to the examples she used, most likely because she did not prepare for the lesson. This reflection informed her plans for future lessons and even the idea that she can consider allowing a colleague to model effective use of examples and questioning. For Mr. Ariel, these were his notes in one entry made on 12/3/19 showing his reflection-about-action that prompted him to reconsider his pedagogical strategies.

On Monday in my Form three literature lesson, I had a feeling of dissatisfaction with my delivery. **Reason.**

-I was disappointed when a good number of learners could not remember what I had taught in the previous lesson on the plot of "Blossoms of the Savannah"

Way Forward

-Be patient and allow learners time to review what was taught

-Re-teach what they did not understand

Interview data however revealed that journaling was not a procedure that the teachers adopted easily. Indeed, 4 out of 12 teachers (33.3%) expressed the fact that engaging in journaling was demanding, especially given their busy schedules and heavy teaching loads. Ms. Sophie was polite in describing it like this:

Yeah, at a certain point it was a challenge because I don't want to say it was cumbersome, I don't know which word to use. If you were to write something and you don't, you forget, so the need to rethink what to write at the end of the day which may not be 100% like if you had written after class. So to some extent it was a challenge (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

These views reveal the struggles that teachers had with the process of journaling and thus pointing to the fact that reflective journaling is not a common practice for teachers in contexts like Bungoma south sub-county. This finding suggests the need to introduce both student teachers and practicing teachers to the reflective practice. According to Mathew, Mathew & Peechattu (2017), reflection is a significant paradigm that education programs and teacher training institutions should develop in pre-service teachers to enable them to be deliberate about their learning. Indeed, this study had some teachers who had rewarding experiences with journaling and in the process they were able to isolate learning points from what they wrote down. Ms. Raquel was one such teacher and she said this about her journaling:

Personally, I had no problem writing the journal and I actually updated it, what I was doing was that after every lesson, I would just write down the experiences, I

did not wait for the ideas to disappear...it is something I can continue doing because when I go back to the various activities that I have taken part in, I feel I am able to enact them as I move on, I can know whether I am improving or not (post-intervention interview 20/6/2019)

For Ms. Raquel, journaling provided useful information in the event that she wished to re-enact a strategy or when she wished to gauge her progress in terms of what she had learnt and used in her classes. According to Otieno (2009), journal writing provides an avenue to think about an experience, mull over it and evaluate it, resulting in what Ashraf and Rarieya (2008) call transformative thinking and learning. This is important for teacher learning given the fact that it relies on inquiry and critical thinking which are two skills that find meaning when they are captured in written form.

These findings on reflective journaling show that to a certain degree, the teachers were able to question and analyze their actions and the outcomes of these actions, by writing them down in their reflective journals. However, this was majorly done after the lessons in what Schon (1983) termed as reflecting-on or about practice that examines why something was done the way it was done. This is probably due to the fact that writing down a description of an experience like that of a lesson taught forces one to look for what went well, what did not go well and what needs improvement. Perhaps it might require more practice, time and effort for teachers to reach a level where they can reflect at more levels, like reflecting-for-practice which helps to shape what they are about to do and reflecting-in practice which

allows them to reshape what they are doing in the classroom. This study was carried out for a limited duration of time and so all the levels of reflection could not be explored. However, the data gathered demonstrates the fact that the participants were able to reflect on their teaching and conduct in the classrooms and this informed their future actions in the classrooms.

The foregoing discussion of the findings regarding the strategies that teachers can use to lead their own professional development show that if teachers are equipped with strategies for collaboration, then they can make efforts to learn about their practice and from one another. It is important to note that the above strategies were undertaken through the process of classroom action research where actions were planned, implemented, observed and reflected upon, leading to new learning. This action finds support in the contentions of Corey (1953), in his seminal work *Action Research to Improve School Practices* cited in Sandretto (2007) where he posits that action research is done by educators because they believe that by doing so, they can make better decisions and engage in better action.

Indeed, all the strategies used in this study were important spaces where learning could be created by the teachers and knowledge from experience was shared without regard to ownership. This agrees with the argument made by Mizel (2010) that schools are places where teachers like their students can learn from each other and from their context. In many instances in the study, it was found that teachers felt that they had gained ideas on how to work around a gap in practice from their

collaborating teacher. Phrases like “a mirror” “my elder sister” “someone who is older than me in the field” and “those who are new and energetic in the field” all point to the respect and professional relationships that developed through collaboration. Greeno’s (1997) Perspective on Cognition, emphasizes that the process of learning is social and the role of others goes beyond stimulation and encouragement to determining what is learnt and how it is learnt. Additionally, collaboration was responsible for the development of social capital, a collaborative culture among the participants and enhanced teacher efficacy.

4.5 Contextual Factors that Influenced Teacher-led Professional Development

The second objective of the study was to establish the contextual factors that influence teacher-led professional development. Contextual factors that were considered in this study included all aspects of a teacher’s milieu that include the school administration, colleagues, students, school culture and local community. These were not part of the research participants but their influence was evident in their support or otherwise of the professional growth of the teachers. Those factors that had a negative influence are discussed under challenges faced by a teacher who leads their own professional development. Below are the contextual factors that emerged clearly in the study as having positively influenced the efforts by the teachers to improve their classroom practice and performance.

4.5.1 Support from colleagues

Data from the post-intervention interviews and the researcher's journal notes reveal that the six teams felt they received support from a number of sources as they charted their path to professional development. This is captured by Mr. Antonne who said:

In fact, I want to thank the school management because whenever we asked for extra lessons to conduct an activity, each member of staff was willing to give out lessons and we compensated later. (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

For Mr. Antonne, the fact that colleagues agreed to give them lessons to enable collaborative teaching is closely linked to the fact that even the school administration represented by the Principal seemed to support their efforts, for good reasons. Mr. Enzo's response reveals one of the reasons:

Mr. Enzo: Yes, they were very supportive...in fact, they would accept to give us lessons with ease so that we compensate later. Then also the Principal supported us because when we went to photocopy our resources or when we wanted to use any facility, he was cooperative because you know to a certain extent, it was going to benefit the learner (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

The support offered to the teachers included confirmation that what they were doing was something other departments were admiring and willing to try out or were already trying. This is evident in the response of Mr. Ariel:

...of course there were those who asked "what is this?" I shared with them and others told me that there is something that they are trying out in their departments that is also almost related to what we are doing and this was like the humanities department. There is a colleague teaching geography, she told me that they have

always done it with the principal, including lesson observation (post-intervention interview, 1/7/2019).

This emotional support is very important especially to anyone undertaking change since they are operating in unfamiliar spaces and are likely to give up in the face of challenging situations. There is a possibility that for Mr. Ariel, the confirmation by colleagues that what the team was doing was not strange was in itself support to continue with the efforts to collaborate.

The office of the Timetable master/mistress was an important supporter of the efforts of the teachers especially in helping them to create synchrony in their schedules. Mr. Prolific said:

...in reality, when I have time, my colleague does not have time and when she has time I am involved in something, so to strike a balance of when we can go to class and work together was a challenge and at one time we had to request the timetabler to put our lessons at the same time so that at least we can have time together (post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

While Mr. Prolific and the other teachers in the study grappled with finding time to have joint lessons, they had no mandate to alter the timetable to achieve this and so the timetable master/mistress was an important person in this area. According to Gulamhussein (2013), the learning curve for teachers is greatest at the implementation stage and so part of the greatest support they can receive is in terms of increasing their time together, a task that was done by the timetable masters/mistresses in the research sites.

4.5.2 School Culture of Classroom Lesson Observation

Data from post-intervention interviews and the researcher's journal notes show that all the teachers related easily to the process of identifying their classroom challenges and then observing a colleague in the classroom because they were already doing it. Ms. Celine explained that working with her colleague was not a challenge. She said:

...it is easier for them (*other teachers*) to observe me or me to observe them in class because we have been doing it for our TPAD. There was even a time when our head of subject came to observe me and I observed the other teacher...I think it may not be a problem (Post-intervention interview 19/6/2019).

Ms. Celine explains that engaging in classroom observation is a practice they are already used to and thus the likelihood that it may not pose challenges to them. Mr. Richie corroborated this by explaining that:

...apart from observation which we have already done in TPAD, the other strategies can be done and be integrated into our teaching (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

According to Mr. Richie, the discipline they had acquired from engaging in lesson observation as required by the TSC appraisal tool was a strength they would build on as they undertake the other three strategies. This view agrees with Stoll & Fink's (1989) argument that the effect of implicit cultural rules is evident in the way a school responds to change. The researcher's reflection notes document her efforts to understand the uptake and implementation of the four strategies for

teacher collaboration that include: lesson observation, peer coaching, team teaching and lesson study.

The culture of classroom observation introduced by the Teachers' Service Commission (TSC) through their Teacher Performance Appraisal and Development (TPAD) tool, made it easier for all the teachers in this study to open their classes to each other and to teach before a colleague. According to Stoll & Fink (1989), organizational culture includes (but is not limited to) dominant values of an organization, and in the research sites in this study, classroom observation was one evident value arising from a new requirement by the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) that teachers and schools engage in performance appraisals. The TPAD tool developed by TSC is used to evaluate a teacher's performance and promote professional development for enhanced learning outcomes. The tool contains the appraisal procedure, performance evaluation, evaluation criteria, teaching standards and teacher support and, PD planning.

It is clear from interview data that all the teachers(12 out of 12) liked the interaction that happened during collaborative teaching. This finding is contrary to what Park & So (2014) found in their study on the conditions and qualities of collaborative learning activities, where the teachers reported they were nervous about teaching in front of a colleague, with some claiming that they felt 'sick to the stomach' According to Park and So, this is a result of the Korean teaching

culture that enhances teacher isolation, does not encourage sharing ideas or constructive criticism and relies on unquestioning acceptance of ideas.

4.5.3 Students

Data from post-intervention interviews and journal entries point to the support that all the twelve teachers felt they received from their learners who were the recipients of improved classroom practices as well as the audience of the teachers' performance in the classroom. The study relied on what the teachers reported to gauge the support given by learners, since learners were not part of the research participants and so their opinions were not sought. Mr. Enzo (not his real name) felt that student engagement in learning and interest in his colleague worked to enhance their efforts in collaborative teaching. He said:

Mr. Enzo: ...it is like when it comes to teaching and the teachers present the lesson collaboratively, it makes learners have the urge to learn and also to develop an interest in the other teacher. Then, also another advantage is that it makes the learners to be free with the two of us...they say that is our teacher, she normally comes to our lesson (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019)

For Mr. Enzo, the success of the collaborative lesson depended on the learners being free with the other teacher and accepting her as being worthy to teach them alongside their own subject teacher, a factor that enhanced efforts to collaboratively teach. The involvement and excitement of the learners in lessons taught collaboratively is also evident in this extract from Mr. Adrian's reflective journal on 16/5/2019:

It was a Form four revision lesson where we covered paper three. According to what I observed, it was a success. The things that made me to be satisfied with the experience are:

-the excitement of learners seeing the two of us ready to teach them at a go in the same lesson.

-willingness of learners to take part in the lesson through role play, question and answers and general contribution.

For Mr. Adrian, the participation of the learners in lesson activities together with their excitement at seeing the two teachers in their lesson, counted for the success of that lesson. Arguably, if the students had resisted the presence of the second teacher and remained inactive, the collaborative teaching strategy of team teaching would have failed. This view is further corroborated in the excerpt below:

Ms. Sophie: ...I am a better teacher by far. This whole thing has helped me especially when it comes to observation. I have observed him 3 or 4 times and I realize the mistakes he makes...when I get back to my class I have this at the back of my mind and so I am always trying to involve them and make them (*learners*) more attentive and it has worked wonders for me (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

For Ms. Sophie, her learners have been like a sounding board where she tried out what she thought as solutions to challenges observed in her colleague's classroom and the cooperation by her students helped her to solidify her understanding and use of certain strategies. The cooperation by her students made Ms. Sophie feel she was a better teacher since she was able to change her performance by discarding

what was not working and adopting what seemed to make her learners active and excited.

4.5.4 School Administration

The greatest support that all the twelve teachers reported was from the school leadership represented by the Principal. This was evident from the data gathered from the post-intervention interviews. This excerpt aptly brings out how the support manifested:

Mr. Enzo: Yes, they were very supportive...in fact, they would accept to give us lessons with ease so that we compensate later. Then also the Principal supported us because when we went to photocopy our resources or when we wanted to use any facility, he was cooperative because you know to a certain extent, it was going to benefit the learner (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

For Mr. Enzo, apart from the support from the colleague teachers, the Principal allowed the team to make use of the school resources because the ultimate beneficiary was going to be the learner. This observation about support from the school administration represented by the principal is corroborated by Mr. Antonne who said:

In fact, I want to thank the school management because... the school gave materials like printing papers. If we wanted to conduct a group discussion, then we needed to photocopy papers for each group. The school gave us the resources where we could photocopy (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

This finding deviates from what Gathara (2011) found in a study on continuing PD for secondary school teachers where the participants indicated that one

impediment to their professional development were the Principals who hid the invitation letters, transferred teachers who were involved in PD or even selected who was to attend a PD programme. For the current study, the situation was different probably because teacher-led professional development did not take the teachers away from their schools, since it is embedded in the daily routine of the school; did not demand much in terms of finances; it held the promise of solving the pedagogical gaps identified by the TPAD tool and, it held promise for better teaching which would likely result in good grades and thus school improvement.

Indeed, Bredeson (2000), Mushira (2008) and Mburungu (2010) in separate studies were able to establish that the role of the head teacher is crucial in PD, since they can create a positive and enabling environment that supports learning. This is important given that the school leadership are the custodians of the strategic plans of the institution that include recruiting and maintaining an effective and motivated staff that will support student learning and thus good grades, a dream which every school aspires to achieve. Harwel (2003) posits that high quality PD can only succeed in a setting or context that supports it.

4.6 Ways in which Teacher-led Professional Development Improved

Classroom Practices

The third objective of this study was to ascertain how teacher-led professional development can enhance the classroom practices of teachers of English. Since all the six teams had applied various strategies in their classrooms, it was important to

ascertain if this had an effect on their classroom practice and performance. The findings from the study are as follows:

4.6.1 Teacher-led Professional Development Encouraged Teacher

Collaboration

Data from journal entries by the researcher and the teachers, lesson observation forms and notes, and post-intervention interviews showed that all the teachers in the six teams were able to plan and teach together. To capture this, Ms. Raquel said:

What I liked was the interaction part, where a teacher can come in and boost your lesson as opposed to one person just coming in. I ended up learning a lot in certain areas. I realized that I had certain weaknesses and through interaction you can actually overcome those weaknesses. The whole process was a learning and interactive process (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

For Ms. Raquel, having a colleague in the same lesson provided an opportunity for professional interaction while at the same time enabled her to get support in her classroom practice. This finding concurs with propositions of the situated perspective on cognition by Greeno (1998) that contends that the process of learning is social and the role of others in the learning process goes beyond stimulation and encouragement, to joint construction of knowledge that is useful in bringing change. This implies that teachers can be their own best resource when they collaborate especially in connection to their teaching practice.

Collaboration in teaching also provided stimulus variation that may have resulted in interesting lessons. Mr. Enzo describes it like this:

...I have learnt a lot from her especially when I go to her classes as she presents and I have been in the position to learn from her mistakes...I have been in a position to make my students have the urge to learn more because stimulus variation is very important to the student and I have discovered that it has worked because when my students see Ms. Sophie in my lesson, they want to impress her... (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

Data from journal entries also provided a description of the teachers' experiences of collaboration in the classrooms. In a journal entry made on 26/3/2019, Ms. Sophie wrote:

Today I observed my collaborating teacher in Form 4E at 11;10-11:50am. He was handling themes in "A Doll's House" I realized that learners were not actively contributing during the lesson and the teacher seemed to be explaining everything. Some students seemed eager to contribute but the teacher did not give them enough time to contribute. As a result, majority of the class seemed distracted and disinterested.

Lessons learnt

-I should allow students time to contribute since they had read the book. Even put them in groups and allow them to discuss and present their findings.

For Ms. Sophie, observing her collaborating teacher got her thinking and planning about what she can do in her own class to ensure learner engagement and interest. This finding is consistent with what literature on teacher learning proposes as the benefits of collaboration that include providing teachers with an opportunity to professionally support each other in solving instructional dilemmas, eliminating teacher isolation and enhancing their understanding of how they and their colleagues teach (Mizell, 2010; Garber, 2014; Degan, 2018).

Further to this, data from the lesson observation forms and lesson study reports written by the teachers reveal that they were able to implement the four collaborative teaching strategies of lesson observation, peer coaching, team teaching and lesson study, with some significant success. This was perhaps due to the benefits they seemed to get from working together in the classroom as captured in phrases like 'I have learnt a lot' 'I have been in a position to learn from her mistakes' and 'I have discovered it worked' These phrases reveal the excitement among the teachers especially when they discovered that teaching with a colleague works and has benefits for practice.

Data from the researcher's classroom observation of collaboration also established that most teams (5/6) earned well done for collaboration, while only one team (1/6) earned the remark 'need more effort'. This was because the teacher who was observing interjected more than necessary leading to a chaotic lesson. This interjection could have been informed by the belief that the two teachers are required to make equal contributions in the lessons, however, since the contributions were not synchronized, the result was a chaotic lesson that must have affected the learning process.

These findings show that the practice of collaboration as applied in this study was embraced by the teachers as it helped them to interact, learn from each other's practice and support each other in their contexts. Learning through collaboration is different from what teachers in this study were used to in the workshops where

they are the recipients of knowledge and ideas, rather the creators of knowledge. This could be the reason why they were excited about the outcomes of collaboration that included new learning that transformed what they did in class.

Mezirow (1991) postulates that “the goal of transformative learning is to help the individual become a more autonomous thinker by learning to negotiate his/her own values, meanings and purpose, rather than uncritically acting on those of others” pg11. Throughout the study, the teachers had a number of planning meetings characterized by explanations, discussions and negotiations as the participants organized their collaborative lessons and reflected-about and for practice. Collaboration is important given that it provides spaces where one can observe practice as well as get support in the implementation process.

4.6.2 Teacher-led Professional Development Enabled teachers to understand student learning

Data from the post-intervention questionnaire and interviews and journal entries show that all the twelve teachers noticed a number of things regarding how their students’ learn. Figure 4.2 below has aptly captured their awareness of students’ responses to content.

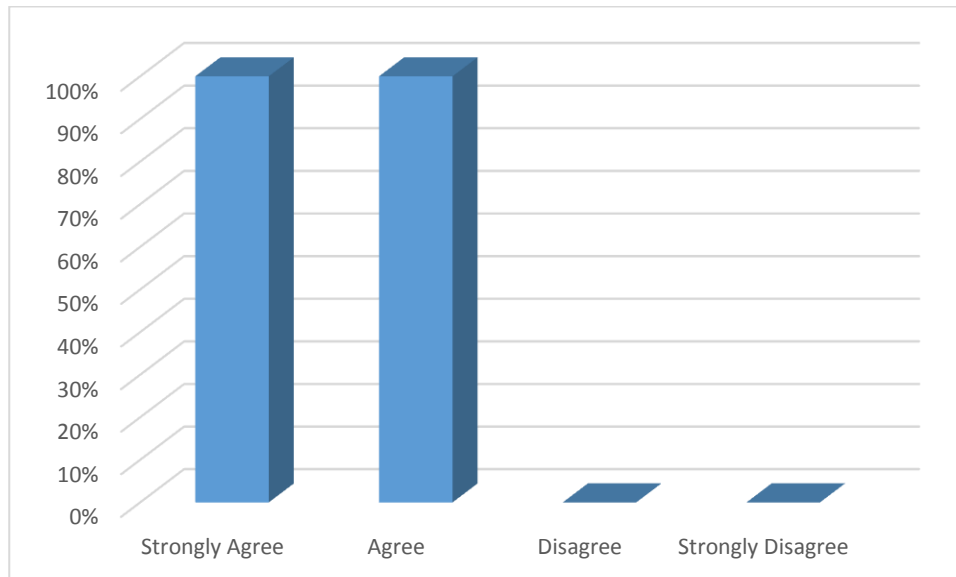


Figure 4.2: Teachers’ awareness about students’ response to content

Figure 4.2 shows that the teachers either agreed (6/12) or strongly agreed (6/12) with the statement that required them to indicate whether they were now more keen about their students’ responses to content. This is corroborated by the documented experiences of the teachers. A journal entry by Mr. Adrian on 16/5/2019 captured his reflections on the issue of learner experiences when teachers taught collaboratively:

It was a Form four revision lesson where we covered paper three. According to what I observed, the lesson was a success. Things that made me satisfied with the experience are:

- The excitement of learners seeing the two of us ready to teach them at ago in the same lesson
- Willingness of learners to take part in the lesson through role play, question and answers and general contribution
- systematic and careful handling of content by us teachers

According to Mr. Adrian, the lesson was a success because collaboration in teaching resulted in learner participation and excitement. This could be as a result of the students witnessing their teachers working together and modelling active engagement on a task, as well as team work. On the other hand, the response of the learners could be linked to the fact that collaborative teaching was a new experience and was therefore received with excitement. This finding points to the need to study students' experiences with collaborative teaching in order to establish if the excitement and change in classroom participation remains a characteristic of such classes.

Interview data supported the view that when teachers taught collaboratively, it enriched learning for the students. Mr. Richie captured this aptly by saying:

...For one it has enriched learning. It makes learning rich because of variety, when you involve more than one person, the learning becomes interesting. There is variety in learning, interaction and voices... (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

This finding shows that collaborative teaching significantly changed the experiences of the learners by introducing variety in the teaching styles, content delivery and even response to learners. This result confirms the finding by Jang (2006) who in a study on the effect of team teaching on teachers and students established that more than half of the student participants preferred their teachers

to teach collaboratively as this made the lessons more interesting and students were able to benefit from the teaching styles of the two teachers.

For Mr. Enzo, students seem to enjoy learning when they can consult other teachers apart from their own subject teacher. He said:

...it is such that when the teachers present the lessons collaboratively, it increases the students urge to learn and interest is developed towards the other teacher. Then also another advantage is that it makes the students free with the two of us or any other teacher because they associate them with their presence in class during English lessons...someone called it the diffusion of ownership of the teachers, so that students don't feel that they own madam Sophie because she is their teacher, they may also make consultations (post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

Data from reflective journals also showed that collaborative teaching enabled the teachers to deliver content in a systematic and careful manner, probably because there was lesson planning and deliberate choice of what content to deliver in the lesson. This is captured in Mr. Adrian's journal entry on 16/5/2019 where he reflects on what would have led to the success of a revision lesson he and his colleague had with their Form Four class. This deliberate planning may have led to delivery of well thought-out lessons, resulting in more understanding for the learners and therefore more enjoyment of the lessons.

Ms. Raquel noted that students learnt when they are actively involved, a factor which she observed during a team teaching session:

... because the lesson was so interactive, the students tended to derail the lesson out of excitement. This was kept in control by ensuring learners did not take too much time discussing one issue (Journal entry, 20/3/2019).

This result supports the principles of learning that reveal that a social environment with experiences that foster inquiry, collaboration and educational play is key to interactive and enjoyable learning (OECD, 2001). In a journal entry made on 14/3/2019, Mr. Antonne observed that the questioning techniques used by his colleagues made the lesson interesting and students participated actively:

I observed Mr. Ariel teach intransitive verbs in Form 3 Red, after I had taught the same class Transitive verbs. His technique of asking the learners questions was captivating and learners seemed to enjoy the lesson. Most of them participated actively in the discussion, unlike in my case where I used examples from various books, revision materials and even my lesson notes. He tended to use examples from students and his own examples without referring anywhere

On the other hand, some journal entries revealed that a number of practices by the teachers did not seem to support student learning. Mr. Ariel noted in an entry on 12/3/2019 that impatience in handling his learners made them to be withdrawn and thus affecting the progress of the lesson. For Mr. Antonne, his entry on 13/3/2019 revealed his poor questioning skills which led to the passive behavior of his students in one of his lessons. This was his observation:

Today we had a lesson observation and I was observed by Mr. Akes in Form 3 Red, where I taught Transitive Verbs. My colleague observed that I had a challenge with questioning and time management. This was because the class was not very lively and

being our first lesson observation, learners seemed perplexed and didn't relax throughout the lesson. I therefore opted to re-teach the lesson.

In a lesson where she taught oral literature, Ms. Sophie wrote on 26/3/2019 that she used examples which she later realized were unfamiliar to the learners resulting in a quiet class where learners said very little. These journal entries reveal the fact that teachers were able to identify certain classroom practices as hindrances to student learning and that therefore required to be addressed to improve the experiences of the students.

The above findings show that during collaborative teaching, teachers became more concerned about how their learners responded to their actions in class and the content they taught. They were able to notice that students learnt when they were actively involved; when teachers used the right questioning techniques; when they could consult other teachers apart from their own subject teacher and when teachers taught collaboratively. For the teachers, this increased keenness could probably be due to the fact that they were now more engaged in reflection where they noticed and observed their own and student responses, thought about their actions and how these would enhance or otherwise affect learning. According to Ashraf & Rarieya (2008), reflection is an important tool for enabling teachers to engage in transformative thinking and learning which are key to establishing new directions and actions in one's practice. It is possible that after this awareness, the teachers in this study sought to change their classroom practice by adopting some

of the practices they had observed as leading to learner interest as well as enhancing learner participation. This concurs with Ushie’s (2009) case in support for partnership learning which she contends that it allows teachers to identify their own training needs, draws on their experiences and experiments to lead to active learning and collaboration.

4.6.3 Teacher-led Professional Development Improved Teachers’ Content

Knowledge

From the post-intervention questionnaire and interview responses, it is clear that the twelve teachers recorded improvement in their subject matter knowledge as a result of participating in the improvement of their own classroom practices. This is captured in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.4: Teachers’ opinion on their improvement in Subject Matter Knowledge

Subject Matter Knowledge	Improved	Slight improvement	Unsure
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Poetry	4 (33.3)	7 (58.3)	1 (8.3)
English grammar	8 (66.7)	4 (33.3)	0 (0.0)
Oral literature	6 (50.0)	6 (50.0)	0 (0.0)
Speech work	6 (50.0)	5 (41.7)	1 (8.3)
Teaching plays	4 (33.3)	5 (41.7)	3 (25.0)
Short stories	4 (33.3)	7 (58.3)	1 (8.3)
composition writing	4 (33.3)	8 (66.7)	0 (0.0)
Teaching Literature	9 (75.0)	3 (25.0)	0 (0.0)

It is evident from Table 4.4 that most teachers felt they had improved or had slight improvement in all the areas of English content that they handled in their classes.

In Table 4.1 of the pre-intervention phase, there were areas of content that were indicated as posing occasional challenges but now in Table 4.4 they are indicated as improved including grammar (66.7%), poetry (33.3%) and speech work (50%). This feeling by teachers that they had improved in these areas could be because the areas formed the focus of the efforts towards learning as identified by the teachers themselves. Data from the post-intervention interviews and the lesson observation forms and guide show that most of the experiment lessons where the strategies were tried comprised of grammar, poetry, oral literature and oral skills lessons. This does not mean that other areas were not handled, but it also implies that the improvement or slight improvement indicated by teachers emerged from application of new ideas they gathered and employed from their collaborative teaching sessions.

However, there were cases where the teachers indicated being unsure of improvement like in the teaching of poetry, speech work and literature, probably due to the inability by the teachers to identify any change in practice in these areas, which require time for change to emerge. Those who were unsure of improvement still find support in literature which argues that change in practice is not automatic and may require time to be evident (Guskey, 2003; Meiers, 2007).

Further, data from post-intervention interviews corroborated the finding that teachers felt they had improved not only in their content knowledge but also in their delivery of content. By identifying their weaknesses in the practice of a

colleague and then making changes in their own practice, the teachers felt they had improved. Ms. Raquel explained this when she said:

I have learnt a lot from this experience, it has made me a better teacher and I think it is something I would like to embrace to be a better teacher because I have learnt from the other teacher and if I had weaknesses, right now I have worked on my weaknesses and indeed if I have strengths, then the other teacher has gained from me (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019)

For Ms. Raquel, the improvement she had observed in content knowledge and delivery was due to working in collaboration with a colleague and also by consulting about challenging areas. This view could be informed by the fact that the teachers were able to observe what worked in the classrooms of their colleagues and adopted it in their own practice. The finding supports the idea that in schools there are teachers who have found ways to help their students learn and these strategies and practices can be shared with colleagues in an environment that allows them to get support in the implementation (Mizell, 2010). This is important especially given the fact that it is teachers who best understand their challenges and who can be able therefore to come up with viable solutions that can be implemented in their context.

4.6.4 Teacher-led Professional Development Increased the Teachers'

Repertoire of Teaching Strategies

Thirdly, the data from the post-intervention questionnaire and interviews indicated that the twelve teachers felt they had learnt another way of carrying out their

practice and were therefore more confident when practicing. Figure 4.3 below illustrates this view.

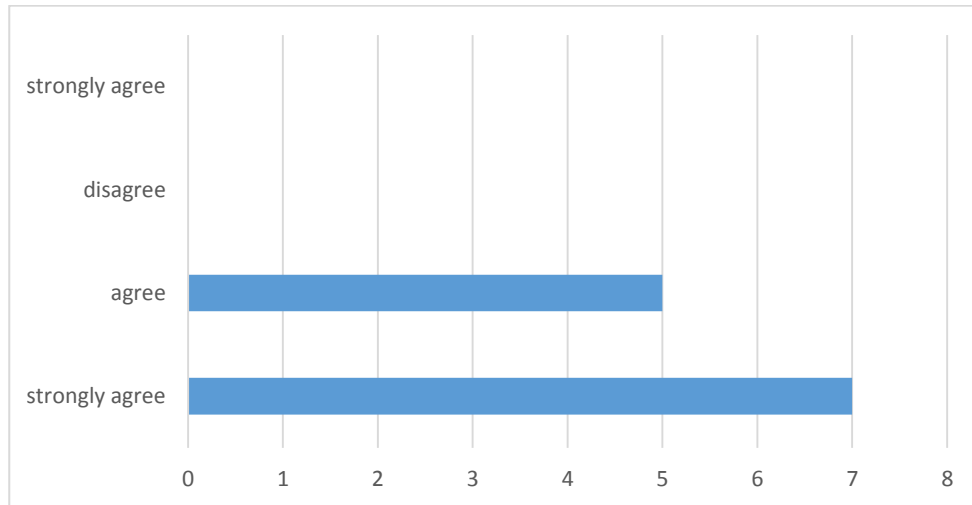


Figure 4.3: Teachers’ opinions about their increased Knowledge of Teaching Strategies

From Figure 4.3, it is evident that most of the teachers (7 out of 12) strongly felt that they had learnt another way of practicing differently in their classrooms while none indicated they had not learnt a new way of teaching. This was corroborated by data from post-intervention interviews.

For example, Mr. Akes stated that:

...it was wonderful, I appreciate because I actually gained new knowledge, new teaching strategies and I believe they will take me a long way in terms of teaching (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

For Ms. Celestine, collaborative teaching had reminded her about involving her learners in the lesson in ways that will enhance their learning outcomes. She described her learning as follows:

I just feel that there are some areas I had ignored and she reminded me through collaboration, like getting students to be more involved in the lesson. I usually just teach and assume they have understood (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

This observation by Ms. Celestine reinforces her colleagues' opinion that through observing a fellow teacher in the classroom, they were able to learn new strategies which they used and will continue to use in their classrooms. This is probably due to the fact that all the collaborative strategies introduced in this study provided an opportunity for one to observe practices that seemed to work and which one could copy with the support of the same colleague. Additionally, the teachers expressed the fact that while observing a colleague, they were able to remember some practices they had forgotten because of disuse or which they had ignored for some time, but which seemed to work in the lessons they observed.

This finding is important because professional development involves reviewing, renewing or extend ones' knowledge, skills and emotional intelligence in order to practice differently (Day, 1999). The finding also suggests that practicing teachers can only enhance their pedagogical knowledge and skills by engaging in PD where they have an opportunity to observe what has worked in the classroom of a colleague, rather than when they attend workshops or read notes on how to improve pedagogy. This is crucial because what is observed has more impact on changing habits and perceptions than what is read and thus the need for teachers to open their practice to each other in order to share what has worked for them.

4.6.5 Teacher-led Professional Development Enhanced Students' Learning

Experiences

Data from post-intervention interviews, questionnaires and journal entries show that the twelve teachers observed change in the experiences of students when the teachers collaborated in the classroom. The opinions of the teachers were given in relation to test scores, confidence when taking English examinations, responding to oral questions and sharing information with a peer and, understanding English content taught in the classroom. This is captured in Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5: Teachers' Perception of the Impact of their improved practice on Students' Classroom Experiences

Student Attributes	strongly agree	agree	Disagree
	n (%)	n (%)	n (%)
Their test scores have improved	3 (25.0)	7 (58.3)	2 (16.7)
Students are more willing to participate in classroom activities	6 (50.0)	6 (50.0)	0 (0.0)
Students appear more confident when undertaking examinations	4 (33.3)	8 (66.7)	0 (0.0)
Students are more willing to share information using the English language	4 (33.3)	6 (50.0)	2 (16.7)
Students are more confident working with peers	6 (50.0)	5 (41.7)	1 (8.3)
They have fewer difficulties in understanding English content	2 (16.7)	8 (66.7)	2 (16.7)
They seem to enjoy the lessons when I teach with a colleague	9 (75.0)	3 (25.0)	0 (0.0)
Student are more confident when responding to oral questions	3 (25.0)	9 (75.0)	0 (0.0)

From Table 4.5, it is evident that all teachers perceived some changes in the classroom experiences of their learners as captured in the eight student attributes. The study depended on self-report information from the teachers because students were not included in the scope of this study and therefore, they were not interviewed nor were their examination papers analyzed. Interview data from the post-intervention phase supported the perceptions of the teachers. This is aptly captured by Mr. Richie, who said:

...For one it has enriched learning. It makes learning rich because of variety, when you involve more than one person, the learning becomes interesting. There is variety in learning, interaction and voices... (post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

According to Mr. Richie, students enjoyed lessons which were enriched with variety in teaching styles, voices and even interaction. For Mr. Adrian, collaborative teaching enhanced students' participation in classroom activities evident in their willingness to participate out of their own volition. This is evident from his journal entry on 16/5/2019.

It was a Form four revision lesson where we covered paper three. According to what I observed,

the lesson was a success. Things that made me satisfied with the experience are:

- The excitement of learners seeing the two of us ready to teach them at ago in the same lesson
- Willingness of learners to take part in the lesson through role play, question and answers and general contribution
- systematic and careful handling of content by us teachers

Ms. Raquel on the other hand noted that students were active and excited when the lesson was interactive, a strategy was used in most of the collaborative lessons.

This was her observation during a team-teaching session:

... because the lesson was so interactive, the students tended to derail the lesson out of excitement. This was kept in control by ensuring learners did not take too much time discussing one issue (Journal entry, 20/3/2019).

For Mr. Enzo, students seemed to enjoy learning when they had opportunities to consult other teachers apart from their own subject teacher. He said:

...it is such that when the teachers present the lessons collaboratively, it increases the students urge to learn and interest is developed towards the other teacher. Then also another advantage is that it makes the students free with the two of us or any other teacher because they associate them with their presence in class during English lessons...someone called it the diffusion of ownership of the teachers, so that students don't feel that they own madam Sophie because she is their teacher, they may also make consultations (post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

Figure 4.4 below corroborates the opinions of the teachers on whether students enjoy lessons when they teach collaboratively. The position adapted by the teachers could be due to the fact that during collaborative teaching, they realized that their learners behaved differently by being more active in the lessons and showing a lot of keenness with the content. Further, it could be that the learners were reacting to the experience of two different teaching styles, voices, content knowledge and even personalities.

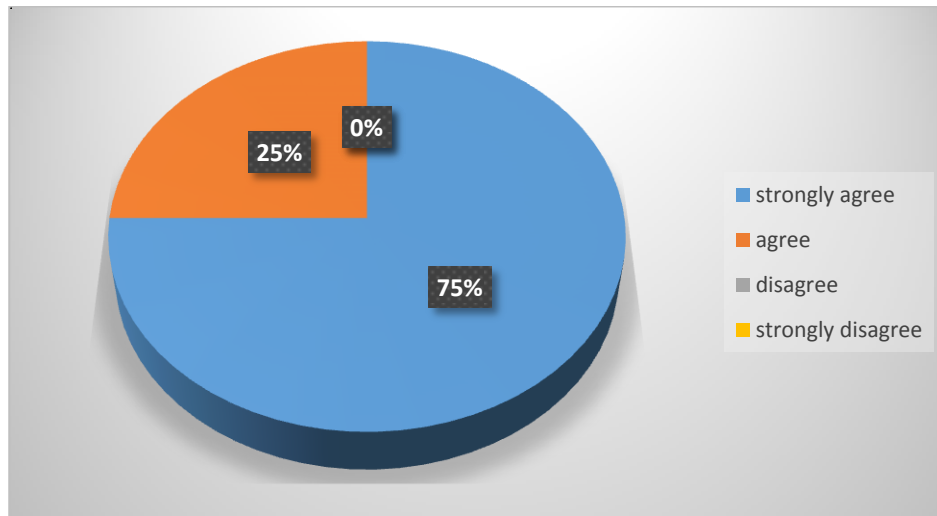


Figure 4.4: Teachers' opinion on Students enjoyment of Collaborative teaching

The findings presented in this section were based on the research question that sought to ascertain how teacher-led professional development enhances the classroom practices of teachers of English. It is evident that there was a significant effect on the teachers' classroom practices arising from teacher-led professional development. During the pre-intervention phase, all the teachers cited occasional challenges with the English subject matter they were expected to share with their learners. Additionally, the teachers indicated they had challenges with other classroom practices like the involvement of learners in the lesson and collaborating with a colleague in lesson execution. After teaching collaboratively with a colleague during the intervention phase, the teachers were able to identify many achievements including the development of collaborative teaching, enabled them to study and understand how their students learn or don't learn, improved their

content knowledge, increased their repertoire of teaching strategies and improved their lessons by enhancing the learning experiences of their students.

This is in line with Segal's contention that "when teachers are involved in their own problem solving inside their classrooms, the gains are better and greater" (Segal, 2009:28). While the change revealed by the study may not be associated solely with collaborative teaching, it is however evident in the reflections of the teachers that they had a feeling of being better and practicing better than before. This is important for teacher learning which should show evidence of change in the knowledge, skills and emotional aspects of the teacher who is a change agent in the whole process of school improvement.

4.7 Teacher achievements from Teacher-led Professional Development

The fourth objective of this study was to establish the successes that the study participants achieved from leading their own professional development. Data from the post-intervention interviews and journal entries by the twelve teachers reveal that they were able to identify certain achievements in their professional growth.

The achievements are discussed below as follows:

4.7.1 Development of Trust and Collegiality

Data from the post-intervention interviews showed that the twelve teachers felt close to each other to the level of freely sharing about their challenges in classroom practice. This was evident in the responses given by all the teachers in the study. For example, Ms. Celine said:

...Another benefit (*of working together*) was about sharing my weak areas with her and she accepted to help me. This has also created trust such that if I want something from her concerning teaching, I can freely go to her because we are so close (Post-intervention interview 19/6/2019).

For Ms. Celine, trust in her colleague was enhanced by the fact that she was assured of help with her challenges, resulting in some level of closeness that made her open up about her experiences in the classroom. This finding has support in several studies that have established that trust is not an obvious trait among teachers, yet it is important for open sharing and discussion which are key to how teachers engage with one another (Mizell, 2010; Garber, 2014; Degan, 2018). To support this view is Mr. Ariel's assertion that:

Sure enough, there are a few things I liked about this type of teaching. First and foremost, it has made me a better person as a teacher. It has also helped me to grow experience wise and also in working with a colleague closely as we have done. It has helped me learn more things about the colleague than maybe I could ever have known. This closeness and sharing a class like in team teaching and lesson study makes you learn more about the same colleague and (*you*) grow together (Post-intervention interview, 1/7/2019).

For Mr. Ariel, working collaboratively had revealed more of the colleague's character than he had encountered before, perhaps bringing them close enough to enable trust to develop. Indeed, trust and bonding are the good feelings that arise from knowing a little more about a colleague and knowing that they are out to support you rather than expose or belittle you. The views of the two teachers from Mshindi secondary school show that collaborative engagement resulted in

‘togetherness’ and trust that was evident to members of the school, marking the department as being the best managed. This is captured in the following excerpt:

Mr. Enzo: ...I am grateful together with madam here because your coming has enabled us to begin something that was not there and how I wish we continue to learn from each other as it has also created that togetherness and trust. When madam is not there, I am free to rush to her lesson with a lot of ease, because she trusts me a lot now.

Researcher: Ms. Sophie?

Ms. Sophie: Like Mr. Enzo has said, we are grateful, we are better teachers than before and as Head of Department, I think we have really benefited because we are working more closely unlike initially. We are now together. Even those who have not been in this and are teachers of English have learnt the importance of working together as a unit and even if you ask the principal which department is run well in this school, it is English definitely (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

For Mr. Enzo, the collaboration evident in the department where even those members who were not part of the research have been drawn in, is closely linked to the good performance of the department. This finding agrees with Degan (2018) who found that collaborative teaching enabled teachers in his study to build and maintain relationships where they learnt together and felt more effective, energized and delivered exciting lessons. From Tumaini secondary school, Mr. Prolific corroborated the view that collaborative teaching had enhanced their professional relationships:

...team teaching has made me to bond even more with her, even more than previously...Initially you know we were work mates, but walking to class together and then coming out in our own eccentric ways we could mock each other, ridicule each other 'why did you do that' 'why did you do this'. In that process we bonded more (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

The above data shows that collaboration contributed to professional relationships characterized by bonding and trust. This was evident in the closeness that the participants felt now existed between them; the ability to be free with each other to the level of sharing challenges in practice; the unity in the department due to collaborative teaching and the camaraderie that would be evident as they exit the classes. This could perhaps be a result of new discoveries like a colleague's strength which results in respect and admiration, while a colleague's weakness does portray them as human and fallible, and thus in need of support.

In order to open up their classroom practices and share their challenges with practice, the teachers needed to develop trust which is not an obvious trait among teachers given the fact that teaching engenders feelings of isolation and protection of one's domain: the classroom. When teachers develop professional bonds, the effect is evident even to their learners who end up developing confidence in the knowledge they receive and in their teachers, a factor that could have an effect on their uptake of knowledge (Jang, 2006).

4.7.2 Increased Self-Confidence when Teaching English Content

Data from the post-intervention questionnaire, interviews and journal entries of the twelve teachers revealed that they all felt increased confidence in handling English subject content and in their classroom practice. This is aptly captured in Figure 4.5 below that emerged from the analysis of responses to a questionnaire item that required them to indicate the level of their confidence in teaching English content.

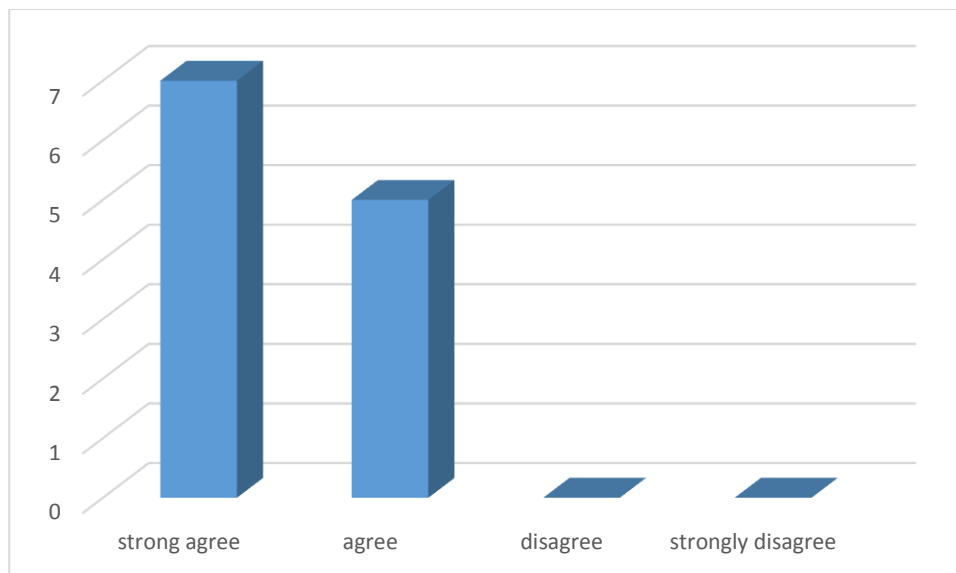


Figure 4.5: Teachers' increased confidence when teaching English content

It is evident from Figure 4.5 that the teachers either strongly agreed or agreed to the fact that they felt more confident when teaching content, most likely due to the fact that they were involved collaboration with a colleague and were learning from the colleague. This view is also captured in the explanations by Ms. Sophie:

...I am a better teacher by far. This whole thing has really helped me especially when it comes to observation. I have observed him 3 or 4 times and I realize the mistakes he makes normally do not come from the students. When I get back to

my class I have this at the back of my mind and so I am always trying to involve them and make them more attentive and it has worked wonders for me (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

Arguably, the confidence the teachers felt could have emerged from the observations they made where their colleagues demonstrated practices that had worked in their classes. Collaborative teaching enabled Ms. Sophie to work on her weaknesses with practice, a factor that could explain her improvement, while suggesting that she was now comfortable with her practice in some areas of English content. She explained:

I must say the whole experience was very eye opening, you know normally, we just do our own thing of going to class to complete our lessons and not giving much thought to the idea of going to class together...Observing my colleague teaching I notice even my mistakes in him and I have been able to make a lot of corrections in the way I teach. Even for the students, the lessons have been more interactive (Post-intervention interview 21/6/2019).

This finding has support in literature and studies that have sought to explain the logical connection that exists between observing a colleague and improved practice. Yoon, Duncan, Wen-Yu-Lee, Scarloss & Sharpley (2007) point to the fact that PD enhances teachers' knowledge and skills and better knowledge and skills improves classroom teaching. For some of the teachers in this study, teaching collaboratively enabled them to gain pedagogical knowledge and skills which they hoped to use for a long time in their teaching career. Mr. Akes explained this by saying:

...it was wonderful, I appreciate because I actually gained new knowledge, new teaching strategies and I believe they will take me a long way in terms of teaching (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

The views of teachers reveal that by working collaboratively with a colleague, they were able to identify their weaknesses with practice and made corrections; they were able to reflect-on-practice and make adjustments to their actions and they also gained new teaching strategies and knowledge that developed in them the feeling that they were better than before.

This is perhaps because collaborative teaching exposes one to practices that have worked in a colleagues' classroom and thus the confidence with which the teachers adopted the strategies. This finding confirms what Sankar and Sankar (2010) found in a study that set out to compare the effectiveness of face-to-face and on-line training on teacher knowledge and confidence. The study found that teacher confidence was improved when they can relate to the models of new strategies in a face-to-face situation and where they can also gain constant clarification of issues. The implication is that if teachers have to imitate new strategies in their classrooms, then familiarity with the models and on-time clarification and support are key determiners. This is important because teacher-led professional development relies on teachers working with colleagues who are familiar or whose practice they admire in order to develop the necessary confidence in the new practices they have observed.

4.7.3 Increased Commitment to Teaching

Data from post-intervention interviews reveals that the twelve teachers in the study felt more involved and committed to their practice as teachers. For example, Ms. Sophie said:

Personally it has really helped me in terms of preparation. Initially you would really use very little time on preparation but through this experience, I do not go to class without preparing. Previously, you would enter a class you are teaching and by twenty minutes you are done, there is no more content because you did not plan. I have really improved on my lesson preparation in this period of time (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

For Ms. Sophie, collaborative teaching has enabled her to be deliberate about her conduct in class, including planning for the lessons and therefore managing her time in the class. This could be due to the fact that collaborative teaching demands preparation, planning, keen observation as one studies their colleague, the content being covered and the experiences and reactions of learners. This finding reveals that by leading the improvement of their practice, the teachers felt more committed to their teaching practice than before. This increased commitment is also captured by Mr. Ariel:

...you realize when sharing a class, you cover a lot such that what you have not touched, your colleague covers and brings it out. And as the colleague is teaching, you are keenly listening for something you can say and also you are learning. You are a teacher and a student at the same time (Post-intervention interview, 1/7/2019).

For Mr. Ariel, collaborative teaching required some level of keenness to enable one make a contribution that will enrich the lesson or will cover a gap arising from what the colleague has shared. On the other hand, Mr. Richie felt that collaborative teaching enhanced content coverage which is an important factor in preparing students (especially candidates) for examinations. He said:

...for one, we want grades, we are competing nationally with others and they are engaging different strategies. So we have to be smart in planning and among the things to put in place is a strategy of sharing content, to ensure that what the other person has mastered, you allow that person to step in, so that you learn from one another. Through that interaction, it helps to drive content faster... (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

For Mr. Richie who is a teacher in an extra county secondary school, collaborative teaching enabled content coverage that would ensure they are well positioned to compete with other schools in the same level. Additionally, it allowed the exploitation of teachers' strengths in terms of knowledge and skills. The views of Mr. Richie and other teams reveal that teachers can actually study and establish the changes in their classroom practices.

According to Sergiovanni (1998) cited in Simiyu (2011), the hallmark of an established profession is the willingness of its members to be concerned not only with their own practices, but with the practice itself. Commitment to the teaching profession is key to seeking opportunities to improve it, a process that should be continuous as captured in the saying that the biggest room in the world is the room

for improvement. In the recent past, teaching has come to be recognized as a profession and thus the need for its members to be engaged in understanding it and what better way than to have the teachers lead their learning by identifying areas and issues they wish to learn about. For the participants of this study, going to class to teach was no longer routine but it had a certain excitement and demand to it. Additionally, since the key purpose of teaching in a context like the Kenyan one and specifically Bungoma South sub-county is to cover the syllabus content, collaboration stood out as a means to achieve this.

4.7.4 Enhanced Awareness of Teachers' Strengths and Weaknesses in Practice

Data from post-intervention interviews shows that all the twelve teachers reported increased awareness of their weaknesses and strengths in their classroom practices.

This is captured in the words of Mr. Richie:

...you may actually think you are rich in content delivery but now if you look at what others are doing, we learn from mistakes and of course we become better teachers...you cannot be your own mirror. When you look at what the other person is doing, that person becomes your mirror (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

Mr. Richie metaphorically referred to his colleague as a mirror, which normally will reflect the true appearance of a figure and thus can be trusted to capture the true state of something without distortions. This view therefore means that classroom observation enabled the exposure of weaknesses as well as strengths.

This view is corroborated in the excerpt below:

Ms. Sophie: I must say the whole experience was very eye opening, you know normally, we just do our own thing of going to class to complete our lessons and not giving much thought to the idea of going to class together. Teaching as a team has really opened my eyes. Observing my colleague teaching I notice even my mistakes in him and I have been able to make a lot of corrections in the way I teach. Even for the students, the lessons have been more interactive and when they see the two of us going in and teaching together they pay more attention and the lessons become more exciting.

Researcher: (*Mr. Enzo*) what are your thoughts?

Mr. Enzo: Okay...I also want to echo what madam has said, actually I have learnt a lot from her especially when I go to her classes as she presents and I have also been in the same position to learn from her mistakes... (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019)

Mr. Akes confirmed the view that collaborative teaching did not just enhance their acquisition of knowledge and skills in the English subject, it also made them aware of their abilities and dis-abilities. This is what he said:

...I have benefited from this arrangement. I had some weaknesses that I had not noticed them myself, but through lesson observation, I was able to note the weaknesses and this program has enabled me to improve and to gain. In peer coaching, I also learnt how to teach and set better examinations than I used to. It has been beneficial (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

It appears that by engaging in collaborative teaching, the teachers' consciousness was awakened to the reality of their abilities or inabilities, resulting in a lot of correction, adjustments and adoption of new practices. This is perhaps due to the fact that during collaborative teaching one is forced to be cognizant of what they perceive as their strong points or their gaps, with a view to show case the strengths

and find solutions to their challenges in practice. Arguably, it is only by acknowledging one's challenges that one can get on the path to mitigating them and thus improvement.

The above findings show that the teachers were more alert and aware of their strengths and weaknesses in practice. Literature in teacher professional development concur on the view that PD is most effective when it focusses on specific content or practice to enable a clear focus on the aspect and an evaluation of the change that has emerged from the adoption of new strategies or practices (Putnam & Borko 2000; Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman & Yoon, 2001; Villegas-Reimers, 2003).

4.7.5 Feeling of a better Teacher

Data from post-intervention interviews reveals that the twelve teachers in the study felt they were better teachers by engaging in collaborative teaching and studying their practice. This is aptly captured in this excerpt where Ms. Celine interjected out of excitement in a question that was meant for Ms. Celestine:

Researcher: Now, Ms. Celestine having worked with Ms. Celine and you working with Ms. Celestine, do you feel like you are a better teacher?

Ms. Celine: I should answer that first, I am much better than the way I was.

Ms. Celestine: I just feel like there are some areas I had ignored and she reminded me through this collaboration, like getting students to be more collaborative in the lesson, since I just assume that they have understood (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

For Ms. Celine, the good feeling could not wait and she pointed out that it was a result of working with her colleague Ms. Celestine who on her part felt that working with Ms. Celine reminded her of some strategies she had not used for some time. Ms. Raquel described her state by saying:

I have learnt a lot from this experience, it has made me a better teacher and I think it is something that I would like to embrace because I have learnt from the other teacher and if I have had weaknesses, right now I have worked on my weaknesses and indeed if I have strengths, then the other teacher has gained from me (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

For Ms. Raquel her feeling of being a better teacher arose from the fact that she had made a contribution to her colleague's learning and improvement in classroom practice, something she would like to keep on doing. On the other hand, Ms. Sophie felt she was a better teacher because she had made efforts to correct her mistakes which she identified through observing her colleague. She said:

...I am a better teacher by far. This whole thing has really helped me especially when it comes to observation and I have observed him 3 or 4 times. I realize the mistakes he makes normally do not come from the students and all that. When I get back to my class, I have this at the back of my mind and so I am always trying to involve them and make them more attentive and it has worked wonders for me (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

For Ms. Sophie, correcting her areas of weakness in practice guided by what she had observed in the practice of her colleague made her feel that she had become better. While proving the feeling of being a better teacher after correcting and

changing practice poses a challenge, it nonetheless a logical consequence of improvement efforts. For the team in Uwezo High school, collaborative teaching placed them in a position where they were admired by colleagues and this must have boosted their self-esteem and engendered good feelings that are key to persistence with a new practice. Ms. Raquel gave this explanation:

I remember at one point there was a colleague who was passing outside and saw Mr. Richie and I in a class, he waited until we finished the lesson and then he called me and asked ‘what is the problem?’ and I said ‘there is no problem we are just doing what we call collaborative teaching’. He seemed mesmerized and said ‘you people of English, no wonder you are doing well, you are so cooperative’ actually, some teachers feel it is something they may want to try (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019)

For Ms. Raquel, the feeling of being a better teacher is implied. The fact that what she and Mr. Richie were doing had been noticed and attracted colleagues who were willing to try it, must have aroused some good feeling.

The above findings reveal the excitement teachers had because of learning and being able to overcome some of their challenges through the support of a colleague. This is evident in the confidence they expressed with being able to practice better than before when they did not engage in collaborative teaching. This is probably due to the fact that when one is able to surmount a challenge, the natural feeling is one of being better, a factor that engenders feelings of confidence as well. Conversely, when one is beset with challenges especially in one’s practice, one may pretend that all is well, but there is always a sense of inadequacy that

affects the ego and practice. This effect is invariably transferred to the learners, who because they do not have an alternative teacher, never get to gain knowledge and skills in a certain subject.

This implies that effort should be made by education stakeholders to enhance the mental state of teachers by supporting them to surmount their challenges and putting them at the point where they have confidence before their learners. In an education system where teachers are always evaluated, they may make efforts to improve but this cannot be compared to the feeling of discovering new strategies and knowledge that have worked in a colleague's classroom. The good feeling is even more enhanced when one realizes that what they are doing is finding admiration among colleagues and that there some who may want to try what they are observing. Arguably, there is nothing in the teaching profession apart from good performance by one's learners, that can create a good feeling like being able to overcome challenges in one's practice and knowing how to continually do this alone or with a colleague.

4.7.6 Expanded sphere of Influence

Data from the post-intervention interviews showed that all the twelve study participants felt they now had more students to handle in the English subject. The views of the two teachers from Mshindi secondary school captured in the following excerpt show how they shared students in the process of engaging in collaborative teaching:

Mr. Enzo: ...I am grateful together with madam here because your coming has enabled us to begin something that was not there and how I wish we continue to learn from each other as it has also created that togetherness and trust. When madam is not there, I am free to rush to her lesson with a lot of ease, because she trusts me a lot now (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

For Mr. Enzo, working with a colleague had established trust thus opening up a colleague's classroom and learners, while eliminating the feeling that one's class is private domain. This was followed by learners feeling comfortable enough to turn to the 'other teacher' when they had issues they wished to consult about as evident in this excerpt from Mshindi secondary school:

...it is such that when the teachers present the lessons collaboratively, it increases the students urge to learn and interest is developed towards the other teacher. Then also another advantage is that it makes the students free with the two of us or any other teacher because they associate them with their presence in class during English lessons...someone called it the diffusion of ownership of the teachers, so that students don't feel that they own madam Sophie because she is their teacher, they may also make consultations with me (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

The phenomena of diffusing ownership points to the possibility that a teacher cannot just deal with learners in their assigned classroom, but they have to give assistance to students in the classes of their colleagues with whom they are collaborating. For the teachers in Mshindi secondary school, this was as an advantage meaning that it was positively viewed perhaps because it allowed the teachers to feel less burdened as students are free to consult more teachers. Mr.

Prolific emphasized this expanded perception of a subject teacher by explaining the phenomenon:

...we have this situation where students imagine that Ms. Belinda is our teacher or Mr. Prolific is our teacher of English, period. In a situation where I am incapacitated by a flu or something and they do not see me, it becomes a lesson for her to teach. By team teaching, we have diffused ownership of teachers by students. In my absence they will walk to her and say “Madam, it is time for English” and the same (*will happen*) to me in her absence and this has happened many times since we started this program (Post-intervention interview 19/6/2019).

According to Mr. Prolific, diffusion of teacher ownership was a great achievement in this study as it pointed to the fact that students would consider a collaborating teacher as good as their subject teacher and would consult them. During the study, the learners were exposed to more than their regular teacher and thus began a relationship where some students feel the ‘other teacher’ is also their teacher who can step in their class in the absence of their regular teacher. This could also be due to the fact that the learners had an experience of the teaching style and content knowledge of the other teacher and thus developed confidence. This is important because variety engenders novelty that could result in enhanced learning for the students. While the expanded sphere of influence for the teachers could imply more work, it is also a rewarding experience that allows showcasing of what one is good at, to the learners and the collaborating teacher, a factor that is good for one’s self-esteem.

4.8 Challenges to Teacher-led Professional Development

The fifth objective of the study was to determine the challenges that teachers who lead their own professional development are likely to face. Research data from the pre-intervention questionnaire, post-intervention interviews, journal entries and the researcher's observation notes revealed the following sources of challenges as summarized in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: Challenges Faced by Teachers who lead their own PD

Challenges	n=12	%
Scarcity of time	12	100%
Busy schedule and heavy workloads	8	66.6%
Negative beliefs and attitudes	4	33.3%
A weak discussion culture	11	91.6%
Poor learner responses towards collaborative teaching	3	25%

Table 4.6 shows that scarcity of time was the challenge that affected all the twelve teachers, especially because of tight school schedules against the demands of collaborative planning and teaching. This was followed closely by a weak culture of discussion ninety-one point six percent (91.6%) with only one teacher who seemed to outshine others in her contributions on the WhatsApp platform, provided detailed entries in her journal and was open in explaining her experiences and sharing new ideas. Sixty-six point six percent (66.6%) of the teachers expressed the fact that busy schedules in their schools, their positions of leadership

in the schools and heavy teaching loads were a challenge to them. Twenty-five percent (25%) said that the learner responses towards collaboratively taught lessons was a challenge, especially at the beginning of the study when the practice was new and a departure from their normal lessons. This however changed as the study went on resulting in students who were at ease when they had two or more teachers in a lesson. These findings are further supported by interview data and notes from the researcher's notes as discussed below.

4.8.1 Scarcity of Time

Data from the post-intervention interviews indicate that the twelve teachers in the study identified time as a key challenge in the implementation of teacher led-professional development. For Ms. Raquel, finding time to meet with her colleague Mr. Richie and plan how to implement a strategy was a challenge. She said:

...this is a big school with many activities and you realize that most of the time, you are occupied. So you realize that it was a bit hard to meet with the other teacher and learn. To synchronize that time, sometimes I am busy and he is free or he is busy and I am free. So synchronizing was a bit hard. But at the end of the day we managed (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

For Mr. Prolific, the challenge was finding time for planning which is a key requirement for collaborative teaching to succeed. He said:

...in reality, when I have time, my colleague does not have time and when she has time I am involved in something, so to strike a balance of when we can go to class and work together was a challenge and at one time we had to request the

timetabler to put our lessons at the same time so that at least we can have time together (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

To mitigate this challenge, Mr. Prolific and his colleague sought the help of the teacher in charge of the timetable, who helped to synchronize their time. Mr. Richie had challenges with finding time to respond to WhatsApp postings on the Teacher Collaboration platform and he said:

... We have comments, at least we have seen something useful only that when you are reading, you sit down and frame what you want to put there. So you are only overtaken by time so that it becomes a matter of forgetting, not that you failed to appreciate, you have appreciated but you did not have time allocated to it to say what you feel about the whole thing and of course it is appreciated, only that you did not have time. (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

For Ms. Sophie, finding time to be together in a lesson was such a challenge that they had to organize to have other teachers to give them lessons which they would repay later. She said:

...the challenge I encountered was maybe I should go and observe madam and perhaps I am attending another lesson, it becomes a challenge, I am forced to look for extra time or maybe look for someone else to go in for you in your lesson as you observe then later you will cover up your lesson (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

For Ms. Raquel and her colleague, managing time during the collaborative sessions in class was challenging:

Time was another challenge, because the lesson was so interactive, the students tended to derail the lesson out of excitement. This was kept in control by ensuring learners did not take too much time discussing one issue (Journal entry, 20/3/2019).

According to Ms. Raquel, during the collaborative lessons, the learners were so excited and participated actively unlike normal lessons and this posed a challenge in time management. The implication for teachers engaged in collaborative teaching is that they should expect active involvement of learners and so careful planning of time should be a consideration.

These findings reveal that time can be a scarce commodity for teachers who are involved in many activities and schedules. It is a truism that any school set-up has all activities in a school day planned and organized to run like clock-work and any interference has an impact on one program or another. In the case of the teachers in this study, the strategies which they were using to lead their learning required significant time for meeting in order to plan, execute the lesson and later for professional dialogue and thus the consensus that time was limited.

This finding is consistent with the propositions of Gulamhussein (2013) that time is never adequate in PD since the learning curve for teachers is greatest at the implementation stage where the teacher needs support over an extended period of time. This finding suggests that any effort to improve practice should not be confined to a limited time frame nor should it be hurried as it may require some time to produce effects that can be counted as improved classroom practice or enhanced learning outcomes. This then explains why traditional PD programs have been described as 'inadequate' since they happened for a short duration of time

and follow up to support the implementation of new learning is usually not a factor of consideration.

4.8.2 Busy schedules and Heavy Teaching Workloads

Data from both the pre-intervention and post-intervention interviews, together with notes from the researcher's diary show that most of the teachers (8 out of 12) 66.6% were very busy in their schools, given the roles they played in the daily running of their individual schools. This is evident from Table 4.7 that shows the teaching loads and other responsibilities held by teachers.

Table 4.7: Teaching loads and Responsibilities held by Teachers

School	Population	No. of Teachers of English	Teacher/Student ratio	Name of Teacher	No. of Lessons per week	Positions held
Uwezo Sec	1538	10	1:139	Mr. Richie Ms. Raquel	23 22	-Head of Department (H.O.D) languages -In charge Library
Tumaini Sec	520	3	1:173	Mr. Prolific Ms. Belinda	24 18	-H.O.D Languages -Class teacher, In-charge music training
Fanaka Sec	637	3	1:159	Mr. Ariel Mr. Adrian	20 20	-Head of Subject (H.O.S) English, Games master -Boarding Master
Mshindi Sec	1000	5	1:200	Ms. Sophie Mr. Enzo	28 20	-H.O.S English, Music trainer, member Disciplinary committee -class teacher, assists in music training
Wema Sec	500	4	1:125	Md. Celestine Ms. Celine	15 20	-Class teacher, In-charge Guidance and Counselling -Class teacher, Coach Volleyball
Pendo Sec	420	3	1:140	Mr. Akes Mr. Antonne	14 22	-H.O.D languages, Drama and Music trainer, class teacher -class teacher, Assistant drama club patron

Table 4.7 is evident that all the twelve the teachers are in schools with high student populations with the least having 420 students and the highest 1538. The teacher-student ratio was also high, with Mshindi secondary having 1:200, while Wema secondary had a ratio of 1:125. The teachers also have heavy workloads with Ms. Sophie having the maximum load of 28 lessons in a week while Mr. Akes had 14 lessons and an average of 20 lessons for the rest of the teachers. This disparity in teaching loads is connected to the student population in individual schools as well as the number of teachers of English present in the school.

The researcher also noted that the teachers seemed dependable as they were always engaged in school activities and would be entrusted by their Principals with meetings outside the school. For example, in explaining why he could not find time to plan and teach with Mr. Antonne, Mr. Akes said:

...the challenge was lack of time as mentioned and we do different things like my co-teacher is in boarding, I am in co-curriculum, those sections keep one busy...when your collaborating teacher is ready to do some things, you are busy elsewhere and so it was a challenge (Post-intervention interview, 1/7/2019)

For Mr. Prolific, personal reasons interfered with the time he would have used to engage in journaling or interaction on the WhatsApp platform. He said:

May I first confess my sins, that when it comes to WhatsApp, sorry the whole beautiful study came in when I was also deeply involved in another study that at times, I would open the wall 2 or 3 days after everybody has shared their experience (Post-Intervention interview, 19/6/2019)

It was evident throughout the study that the first term in the school calendar is the busiest. The researcher noted that many planned meetings and even implementation of some of the strategies required a lot of negotiation to materialize due to the programmed activities of the term. These activities included first term ball games, choir competitions at the zonal and district levels and preparations for term two drama festivals. Most of the teachers were trainers or coaches in these activities and therefore they were sometimes away for training meetings or held practice sessions at the end of the school day.

The above data confirm the findings by many studies that busy schedules can be an impediment to efforts by a teacher leading their improvement (Jang, 2006; Hismanoglu, 2010; Shing, n.d). While school schedules are usually prepared in advance and made clear to the educators, personal schedules may sometimes be abrupt and requiring immediate attention. However, schedules will always be there as they are useful guides to how things run and should therefore not be used as excuses for not planning and engaging in professional development. What needs to happen is that teachers should ensure that their development finds a place in their schedules given its importance in making them effective in practice as well as enhancing the learning of their students.

4.8.3 Teacher Beliefs and Attitudes

Data from post-intervention interviews brought out the perception of some teachers (4 out of 12) 33.3% towards the effort of leading their professional

development. To these teachers, developing their own plan of learning and improving their practice was a demanding job which came in between their daily activities. This is captured in the words of Mr. Antonne, who said:

...Just like mwalimu has said, inconveniences like when we are supposed to be doing other things and activities in our school program, we are actually forced to do the strategies and as he said, it was involving (Post-intervention interview, 21/6/2019).

According to Mr. Antonne and his colleague, implementing the strategies of collaborative teaching was an inconvenience and an interference in their 'normal' daily schedule, a factor that implies that they struggled. Ms. Raquel corroborated this idea of interference with reference to her school Uwezo high school, an extra county school in Bungoma south sub-county:

What I did not like is the interruption of my daily planning and activities. You see now, it seems as if I have to introduce a new program into my activities, considering this is a big school with many activities and you realize that most of the time you are occupied... (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

The teachers' responses towards the activities that were intended to help them engage in continuous learning revealed reluctance to in cooperate change in what they are used to. For example, responding to a question about her engaging on the WhatsApp platform, Ms. Celestine said:

...I have a phobia for social media especially in groups, unless I know you, I am more of an introvert...I am more of old school (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

For Mr. Ariel, journaling was a challenge which he almost termed as foreign and an activity that cannot be undertaken and managed by an African. This excerpt captures his views:

Researcher: Now, there was the issue of journal keeping. How was it like for you?

Mr. Ariel: Like a typical African, it was a challenge, I have to be honest and say.

Researcher: Why are you making it an African problem?

Mr. Ariel: I am not making it an African problem but surely it was a challenge although I tried.

Researcher: Now, if it was a challenge to a teacher of English, what of other teachers?

Mr. Ariel: I don't want to imagine that they may be stranded, maybe they can manage with ease compared to what I did but I realized it was a good thing and I wrote once in a while (Post-intervention interview, 1/7/2019)

The findings above give a sneak preview of the feelings of the teachers about engaging in activities that would lead to their professional development. Ms. Sophie was polite in describing reflective journaling as challenging, although she claimed she used the term challenging because she did not want to say it was cumbersome (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019). Clearly, most teams struggled with the process which they felt was demanding and an interference in their daily activities; they insinuated that some activities were foreign; described themselves as 'old school' and perhaps unlikely to change. Some even associated their reluctance to participate in certain activities to phobia or busy schedules.

This could probably be due to the fact that teachers are used to having their professional development programs organized for them and thus leading it, was foreign and too demanding for them. Additionally, teachers are used to one-off development programmes that run for a short duration and so the idea of a continuous program that took slightly over one term could not sustain their enthusiasm and a number of them exhibited fatigue. Additionally, the teachers exhibited lack of self-drive in undertaking activities and thus requiring constant follow-up, sometimes bordering on supervision like that of a quality assurance officer.

On the other hand, interview data and the researcher's notes show that the views above were connected to individuals and at other times represented a team from a single school. For example, the team from Uwezo High school seemed to embrace the strategies and despite having reservations in some activities, they went out of their way to try out all the strategies and recorded their experiences. Apparently the Uwezo High school team had been using the strategies earlier on for collaborative teaching although they did not refer to them by the terminologies used in this study. Ms. Raquel shared this:

...I must add something...maybe we were doing it (collaborating) but we were not aware. Last year we did a lot of team teaching with Form 4 because I remember we would gather them in the academic park and we would all interact with the students...and it helped a lot. Later on we were celebrating good grades...it actually helped (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

The Uwezo High school team appeared more motivated after securing a good position at the school level, in regard to the results they post at the end of the four-year cycle. Mr. Richie gave this explanation:

...for one, we want grades, we are competing nationally with others and they are engaging different strategies. So we have to be smart in planning and among the things to put in place is a strategy of sharing content, to ensure that what the other person has mastered, you allow that person to step in so that you learn from one another. Through interaction, it helps to drive content faster...(Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019)

The positive attitude by the team from Uwezo could be as a result of the school culture that supports collaboration and seeks to maintain their place among other well performing schools in the nation. According to the researcher's notes, the Principal of Uwezo High school was among those who supported the involvement of their teachers and institutions in the study and being a teacher of English, he looked forward to improved performance in this department. This implies that Uwezo as a school has a collaborative culture upon which the study was able to build on and which enabled the teachers from this school to exhibit some level of tenacity even when the study went on for a long time.

According to Bredeson (2000), the principal has a role to encourage, nurture and support teacher learning if they hope for school improvement and student achievement that is dependent on a collaborative culture. The emphasis here is that the ultimate objective for teachers seeking to improve their practice is the need to enhance learning outcomes and in a competitive education system like that of

Kenya, to realize quality grades that are important for career choice and advancement in life. This is an important driver for any effort made by teachers in improving their practice, since it appears to strongly influence the change that teachers may embrace in their practice.

4.8.4 A Weak Discussion Culture

Data from the lesson observation forms and the researcher's journal notes show that most of the teachers (11 out of 12) 91.6%, had challenges with engaging in discussions, either with one another or with the researcher. The lesson observation forms used by the teachers had a feedback section where they were expected to capture their discussions of what they observed, what went well, what needs to be changed and how this should be done. Samples of the forms show very sketchy information and sometimes the teachers provided superficial recommendations to deal with a gap in practice. This could possibly be as a result of the culture of Kenyan teachers who are socialized to disseminate knowledge but not to engage in critical discussions, except when these discussions involve politics of the nation or their teaching conditions.

This concurs with the findings of a study that Park & So (2014) carried out among South Korean teachers which established the lack of a culture that promotes professional talk among teachers and which explained their lack of analytical discussions. According to Park and So, the most difficult part of collaborative learning is engaging in careful analysis of the practice and not just looking at

simple aspects of teaching. In the post-intervention interviews, the teachers indicated that they did not have adequate time to engage in discussion, however, their records did not show effort to focus on salient features of their practice that required to be addressed, instead they dwelt on the superficial aspects of teaching. This could also explain the teachers' reluctance to engage in a discussion on the WhatsApp platform where some participants had posted challenges they had with their practice. This is also illustrated in a post on the platform on 4th March 2019 by Mr. Richie:

How do I treat the issue of overcrowding, such that I can't effectively and satisfactorily reach each child and so manage marking, considering that English is taught daily?

The response to this inquiry was given on 10th March 2019 as follows:

Our classes are all big like yours but we manage by ensuring that all students bring their books for marking and then we take them back to class where we ask the students to exchange books then we mark together. This will enable the teacher to at least handle less work otherwise teaching English is a demanding subject.

While the above response seems to offer a solution to the issue raised by Mr. Richie, it falls short of providing the rationale for the teacher's action, a factor that does not offer a convincing reason for Mr. Richie to try out the proposal. Another example is from a post by Mr. Antonne on 10th March 2109, where he said:

Last week while reviewing what I had taught I got disappointed as a majority of the boys could not remember simple aspects of the plot. I ended up wasting almost the entire lesson while trying to lecture them on importance of having interest in what we teaching. At the end of it all I could not do my lesson as I had planned. I have to request for ideas on how to handle this in future.

This posting did not receive a response until after a week when the researcher engaged the teachers on the WhatsApp platform in questions and answers that sought to provide solutions to the situation. Data from the platform (see Appendix 1j) show a few sentences being posted by the teacher in response to the researcher's questions and generally lack of details in the proposals.

4.8.5 Learner responses towards Collaborative Teaching

Data from post-intervention interviews and journal entries by the teachers indicate that some teachers (3 out of 12) 25% noticed how their students responded to their new practices in class. The interview data reveals the shock that students had when two or more teachers would appear to teach one lesson as opposed to the normal one teacher. Mr. Antonne, his entry on 13/3/2019 associated the inactivity in one lesson where he was observed by his colleague, to the fact that students were perplexed and unsettled. This was his observation:

Today we had a lesson observation and I was observed by Mr. Akes in Form 3 Red, where I taught Transitive Verbs. My colleague observed that I had a challenge with questioning and time management. This was because the class was not very lively and being our first lesson observation, learners seemed perplexed and didn't relax throughout the lesson. I therefore opted to re-teach the lesson.

This scenario most probably resulted in a lesson where the learners were in some state of amazement and inactivity as they watched the lesson progress and the interaction of the teachers. This can be explained from the fact that it is unlike what they are used to, a single teacher in a lesson. Ms. Sophie corroborated this through her observation below:

...the issue of girls' reactions, actually when I went and told them that we are coming here the three of us, they were shocked, you could read their faces, they were asking how? Why? But at the end of the day, they came to realize that there was something (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019)

Mr. Prolific also observed the reactions of the students and described this scenario by saying:

...and then two teachers appearing in class at the same time, I spotted students glancing at me, glancing at my colleague, it is like there is a way in which their interest was a bit disturbed, because you can see them asking, "why are they coming today, why the two of them?" (Post-intervention interview, 19/6/2019).

It is important to note that early in the study, students appeared perplexed by collaborative teaching, but this changed as the study progressed and was replaced with excitement and active participation by learners. For Mr. Richie, he had the feeling that students were not just enjoying the presence of two teachers but also engaged in a comparison of teaching styles and even content knowledge. This is what he said:

...sometimes you know learners instead of focusing on content, they may as well end up comparing and of course missing the point. The learner may end up thinking, who is the better teacher of the two. Sometimes, even the good

intentions of involving someone else may end up losing the objective of learning as the child focusses on competition...you know learners, these younger ones have a tendency to compare (Post-intervention interview, 20/6/2019).

This view was not confirmed by the students, since they were not participants in this study but could be informed by the experiences of Mr. Richie as a student. This finding is however similar to what Jang (2006) found in his study where teachers also felt that their students were comparing them, a factor that affected their self-confidence. This comparison could be a natural response to having two entities that are different in their performance and in the way they impact you. While Mr. Richie acknowledged that they had not been compared openly, he however seems to suggest the need to educate students on the benefits of having collaborating teachers so as to help them focus on learning and not comparing.

However, as the study progressed during the term, the teachers observed that students seemed to enjoy lessons as observed by Mr. Adrian who captured it in his reflective journal on 16/5/2019:

It was a Form four revision lesson where we covered paper three. According to what I observed, it was a success. The things that made me to be satisfied with the experience are:

-the excitement of learners seeing the two of us ready to teach them at a go in the same lesson

-willingness of learners to take part in the lesson through role play, question and answers and general contribution

The findings reveal that the change from the traditional way of lesson delivery to collaborative teaching caused some reactions by the students. First there was shock because of the presence of two teachers in the same lesson that could have affected learning in the initial lessons, then students participated in the lessons and enjoyed them especially given the variety of voices and teaching styles and, eventually the students realized they had more teachers to consult if they have a challenge in the subject. However, some teachers like Mr. Richie felt that some students may be losing the benefits of having two teachers in the lesson through engaging in comparison.

The findings discussed in this section were in response to the question that sought to identify the challenges faced by teachers of English who lead their own professional development, especially in a developing world context. The challenges range from scarcity of time to engage in the demands of leading ones' improvement; teacher attitudes towards charting their own PD that can stifle any efforts towards change; Students' responses to collaborative teaching which is a catalyst to teacher learning; heavy teaching loads and busy personal and school schedules which are contextual and differ from one site to another and one person to another. The study by Hismanoglu (2010) arrived at similar findings where 84% of the participants considered PD an important part of their profession but only 44% gave it consideration citing impediments like time allocation, heavy work schedules, strict working hours and lack of support from the administration.

This finding is important for any teacher who sets out to lead their professional development because they will need to make efforts to surmount these challenges, given the fact that the ultimate objective is to improve practice and enhance the learning of students. For the school administration that is set to support their teachers to lead their improvement, this finding will require them to make efforts to lighten the workload for the teachers to enable them focus on learning to improve practice.

4.9 Chapter Summary

This chapter contains the analysis and discussion of the data gathered in this study. The results are organized under preliminary findings from the pre-intervention phase that were useful in establishing the actual situation of the research participants in regard to their pedagogical practices. This was then followed by findings from the intervention phase that are presented according to the research objectives. The post-intervention phase generated data about the views of the teachers concerning teacher-led professional development. From the findings and discussions presented in this chapter, key findings and conclusions can be isolated. The following chapter presents the summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations for policy, practice and further research.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents a summary of key findings in the study and the conclusions, organized according to the research objectives. The chapter also presents recommendations for policy, practice and further research based on the findings of the study and linked to the conclusions.

5.2 Study Objectives

This study set out to meet the following objectives:

- (a) To determine the strategies that teachers of English can use to lead their own professional development.
- (b) To establish the contextual factors that influence teacher-led professional development among teachers of English.
- (c) To investigate how teacher-led professional development can enhance the classroom practices of teachers of English.
- (d) To determine the possible successes that can be achieved by teachers of English who lead their own professional development.
- (e) To establish the challenges likely to face teachers of English who lead their own professional development.
- (f) To design a prototype model of Teacher-led Professional development.

5.3 Summary of Findings

This section provides a brief summary of the research findings, organized into themes to achieve the research objectives outlined in 5.2 above.

5.3.1 Strategies for Teacher-led Professional Development

The study found that teachers of English in Bungoma South sub-county used different strategies to chart the path to their own professional development. Each of the strategies provided a unique way for teacher learning. The non-evaluative lesson observation in the study was used to identify gaps in classroom practices as a beginning point of working on improvement. Additionally, it exposed the strengths and weaknesses of the teachers with practice, enabled the teachers to describe and reflect on classroom practice and developed professional relationships of trust. Peer coaching was used for modelling practices that had worked in the classrooms of both the novice and veteran teachers, turning teachers into role models whose practice could be copied.

To support teacher and student learning, team teaching provided an opportunity for working in synchrony with a colleague in delivering a lesson. For the teachers, the support was in terms of pedagogical skills and content knowledge, while for the students, their lessons were more enjoyable and enhanced their active participation in class. Lesson study was one strategy that received less attention from the teachers, despite its usefulness in enabling one to study student learning. The cause

of this was identified as scarcity of time to implement the process which requires substantial time and commitment.

The WhatsApp platform was used to share ideas, challenges and solutions in an informal way and to lead to prompt responses that informed the practices of the teachers. However, the use of this strategy faced challenges because some teachers expressed phobia for social media, reluctance to share about one's practice on such a platform and teacher perception of social media as a less serious forum for learning. Reflection through journaling enabled the teachers to capture their thoughts in regard to their actions and their outcomes. Majorly this was done after lessons with very few instances of reflecting-for action or reflecting-on-action. The teachers seemed to struggle with finding time for journaling amidst the busy school schedules and heavy workloads. Through the strategies, the teachers were able to learn and recorded improvement in how they practiced. These study findings suggest that if practicing teachers are equipped with strategies for collaboration, they can make efforts to learn about their practice and from one another.

5.3.2 Contextual Factors that influenced Teacher-led Professional Development

The study identified a number of contextual factors that supported teacher-led professional development among teachers of English in Bungoma South sub-county. The school leadership represented by the school Principal and Deputy

Principal were key determinants of the success experienced by their teachers with teacher-led professional development. This was by allowing their schools to be research sites, allowing the study participants to engage in experiment lessons, selecting and allowing teachers to participate in the program and to use school resources. In second place were colleagues in the English department and the rest of the school who allowed the teachers to use their lessons, gave them moral support and even showed admiration for the close professional relationships that existed among the participants.

The school timetable masters were also supportive in slotting the lessons appropriately to allow for collaborative teaching. The action by the timetable masters resulted in synchrony in the schedules of the collaborating teacher, a factor that relieved them of the task of 'borrowing and returning' lessons to colleagues. The learners in the classrooms of the study participants were also key in enabling the realization of the benefits of collaborative teaching. The teachers felt that they received support from their learners who were the recipients of the improved classroom practices, as well as the audience of the teachers' performance in the classroom. The support was in the form of active participation in the collaborative lessons, excitement at the presence of collaborating teachers and acceptance of the collaborating teacher. All these enhanced the teachers' efforts in collaborative teaching.

The last key factor that influenced teacher-led professional development in the study was the culture of classroom observation arising from the TPAD tool developed by the TSC. This enabled the participants to easily open up their classroom for observation by a peer, as well as to teach in front of a colleague. These findings show that there are contextual factors that can support a teacher who leads their own professional improvement, making it easier for them to collaborate with a colleague and learn.

5.3.3 Ways in which Teacher-led Professional Development improves Classroom Practices

The study was able to ascertain that teacher-led professional development enhanced the classroom practices of teachers of English in Bungoma South sub-county in significant ways. First, it encouraged collaboration in planning and teaching, driven by the benefits that arise from working together. Collaboration was characterized by interaction and excitement especially after discovering that it is doable and that the knowledge and skills of pedagogy can be shared with a colleague. Secondly, it provided a way to study how students learn or don't learn. Students learn when they are actively involved in the lesson, when the lesson is enjoyable and when they experience different voices and teaching styles. On the other hand, students don't learn when poor questioning techniques are used, lessons are mostly teacher centered and when teachers exhibit impatience with them.

Thirdly, collaboration improved subject matter knowledge through observing a colleague in the classroom. Fourthly, by collaborating with a colleague, teachers were able to increase their repertoire of teaching strategies and this enhanced students' experiences in the lessons including making the lessons enjoyable for them. These findings imply that teacher-led professional development that is characterized by collaboration has the potential to enhance the classroom practices of teachers in very significant ways while at the same time enhancing the experiences of learners in the lessons.

5.3.4 Teacher Achievements from Teacher-led Professional Development

The study identified possible benefits for teachers of English in Bungoma South sub-county who lead their own professional development. To begin with, teachers developed professional relationships characterized by trust and collegiality that seemed to excite their learners and enhance active learner participation in lessons. Secondly, teacher-led professional development increased the confidence of teachers when teaching English content especially because they had observed new strategies, had increased their repertoire of strategies and were now practicing differently.

Thirdly, by leading their own improvement in practice, teachers became more involved and increased in their commitment to teaching, a factor that caused them to seek for ways to improve their practice. Fourthly, teachers became more alert

and aware of their strengths and weaknesses in practice resulting in a lot of efforts to correct, adjust and adopt new strategies. Lastly, by leading their own professional development, teachers developed the feeling of a better teacher, a factor that engendered confidence. These findings suggest that a teacher who engages in leading improvement in their practice is likely to experience many intrinsic benefits that go beyond improvement in classroom practice.

5.3.5 Challenges to Teacher-led Professional Development

Lastly, the study identified a number of challenges faced by teachers of English in Bungoma South sub-county, who lead their own professional development. These include the scarcity of time for planning, meeting, collaborating and writing reflections; Heavy teaching loads and busy schedules that are a result of few numbers of trained teachers of English in most schools and the dependability of the teachers of English that has seen them take up other responsibilities in the running of the schools. Additionally, teacher attitudes towards their own professional development and a weak culture of discussion had an effect on the teachers uptake of change and their engagement with knowledge. These findings show that the teacher who sets out to lead the improvement of their practice should expect to face challenges that require to be surmounted in order to realize improvement in one's practice.

5.4 Conclusions from the findings

This study has resulted in five main conclusions as follows.

1. Practicing teachers can lead their own professional development if they are equipped with skills of collaboration and learning together with a colleague or colleagues. The collaborative strategies that seem to work in improving practice should be non-evaluative like classroom lesson observation, peer coaching, team teaching and lesson study. This is to encourage open and willing engagement by the teachers. For strategies like team teaching and lesson study, more time should be set aside to allow teachers to implement their findings of the previous lesson in the next lesson.
2. Contextual factors that are part of the teacher's milieu can influence teacher-led professional development by either supporting it or impeding it. These include the school leadership, colleagues in various departments, the timetable masters/mistresses and the learners in the teacher's classroom. This agrees with what is captured in the conceptual framework of the study that points to the presence of intervening variables that can interact with the independent variables, to either support or impede the realization of improved teacher classroom practice.
3. Teacher-led professional development improved the practice of teachers in various significant ways that made learning enjoyable for the learners and hopefully impacted student learning as well. It encouraged collaborative

teaching, provided a way to study how students learn or don't learn, improved subject matter knowledge and increased the teachers' repertoire of teaching strategies.

4. The benefits of teacher-led professional development are immense for the teacher who leads their own improvement. They include: increased confidence when teaching, development of professional relationships based on trust and collegiality, increased involvement and commitment to teaching, increased awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses in practice and the feeling of being a better teacher than before, engendering confidence.
5. There will be challenges to teacher-led professional development that require to be surmounted to ensure teacher learning and consequently improvement of teacher quality. The study found scarcity of time, heavy teaching workloads and busy schedules, poor teacher attitudes towards leading their own PD and a weak culture of discussion.

5.5 A Proposed Model of Teacher-led Professional Development

The study set out to explore the process of teacher-led professional development and to establish its effect on the instructional practices of the teachers of English who were involved in the study. Their activities and reflections captured in this report provide direction on how teachers can lead their own professional development resulting in better teaching and enjoyable lessons for their learners.

Given the findings of the study, a prototype model of teacher-led professional development is proposed below (see Figure 5.1) showing how learning for teachers can happen.

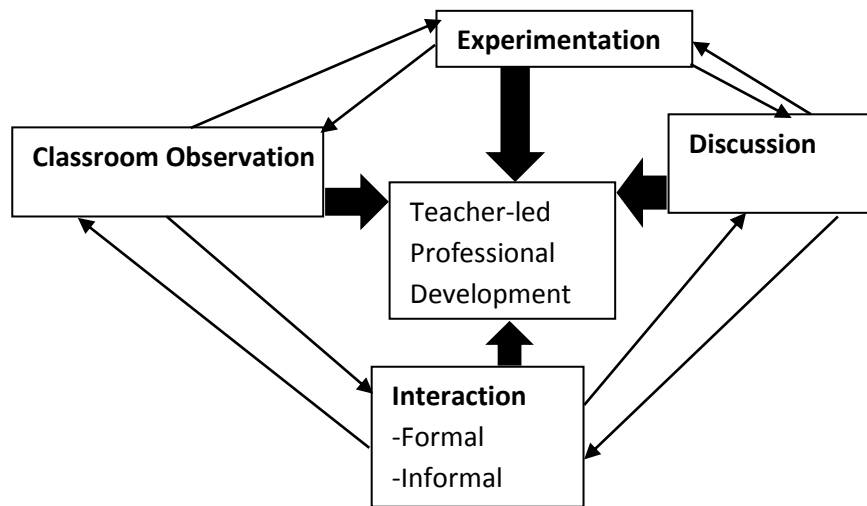


Figure 5.1: A Prototype Model of Teacher-led Professional Development

According to this model, teacher learning can happen through 4 ways that are hinged on collaboration and are informed by theories of how adults learn. Teachers can learn:

- (1) Through observing the pedagogical practices of a colleague in the classroom. Observing and being observed enhances a teacher's confidence when teaching; develops the teacher's ability to describe instructional processes; improves classroom practice and appreciation of the practice of a colleague (Zaare, 2012; Arslan, 2018). This ability means that the teacher is

at a level where they are more aware of the processes and can isolate aspects of the processes for their benefit or that of a colleague.

- (2) Through experimentation with what one has observed or what seems to be working in the classroom of a colleague. On-site experimentation generates practical ways of teaching in a way likely to improve learning outcomes for learners in the context, given uniqueness of learners and contexts (Kamina, 2011; Coenders & Verhoef, 2018). On-site experimentation allows for support in the form of useful feedback in the event that something does not work, thereby enhancing mastery of skills.
- (3) Through discussion of what went well, what did not work and what should be improved. Rational discourse that is driven by teacher experiences in their teaching career which act as a starting point of learning and an anchor for new ideas (Mezirow, 1991). The teachers then become autonomous thinkers who can question their actions and those of colleagues with the intention of learning, unlearning and re-learning thus supporting the idea of life-long learning (Kolb, 1984).
- (4) Through interaction between the collaborating teachers, either verbally or through actions like engagement on a social media platform or modeling practice to a colleague. Learning for adults is social and the role of others goes beyond stimulation and encouragement for individual construction of

knowledge, to determining what is learnt and how learning happens (Greeno, 1997).

Teacher-led professional development is located within these four ways of teacher learning which are actualized through strategies like non-evaluative lesson observation, peer coaching, team teaching, lesson study, action research and interactions both physically and on social media. Once a teacher has been engaged in using the strategies above, change in their practice will begin to show mediated by reflection which should be applied with all strategies and which allows the teacher to think before action, in action, on action and after action. Reflection provides a means to question and analyze actions and outcomes, thus establishing new directions and actions (Ashraf & Rarieya, 2008). Reflection can take the form of informal reflective conversations or journaling where the thoughts of the teacher are captured and referred to from time to time.

Concomitant with the above strategies is the issue of preparation and planning. Teacher-led professional development in this model will rely on planning which involves the prospective partners assessing where they are in their classroom practice; setting a specific goal of what they wish to achieve; what student outcomes they wish to improve and developing a timeline for the process. It is important for the teachers to plan on who to work with and why; which strategies to apply and developing a plan on how to achieve this. Planning will involve

lesson planning, planning for strategy implementation and times for discussion and personal reflections.

While a number of teacher professional development models exist in literature, it is important to note that most of them have been developed and used in developed countries like USA, Canada, UK and Japan which have built a rich understanding of the phenomenon. There are also emerging models which can find application in developing countries because of social - economic factors as well as the ethos of these societies which are now starting to appreciate life-long learning for practicing teachers. The implication of this is that there is need to develop models that apply characteristics of effective PD while at the same time, suit the context. This study proposes the Teacher-led Professional development model that can be managed by small groups like schools or even departments. The rationale for this is that it emerges from the professional needs of the teacher and relies on collaboration and experience, coupled with reflection to make it happen. All this can be done at a minimal cost and for the duration that the collaborating teachers feels is satisfactory to them.

5.6 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study that demonstrated that teachers can identify their challenges with classroom practice and chart their own path for improvement, the study wishes to make the following recommendations for policy, practice and further research:

5.6.1 Policy Recommendations

Evidence from the study shows that if teachers are equipped with strategies of collaboration, then they can chart the path for their professional improvement. This can only happen in the place where the learning will be applied, that is school and classroom, and with the people whom the teacher interacts with at the level of the department. It is in this environment that the teacher should be supported to try out new ideas with practice and even take the risk of exposing their weakness to a trusted colleague. It is in this same environment that the teachers can develop professional relationships that will enhance their sharing and learning, with a view to improve the classroom experiences of the learners. This study therefore recommends that:

1. The Ministry of Education and the Teachers Service Commission should come up with policies that will institutionalize and support school-based PD that is initiated and lead by the practicing teacher.
2. The policy framework on teacher continuing professional development, needs to be revised to recognize teacher-led professional development as a tool for improving the quality of all teachers: novice and veteran.
3. Schools should put in place systems that will allow teachers to have opportunities to collaborate as well as incentives for those teachers who show improvement in their teaching and student outcomes, as a result of initiating and leading their own improvement.

5.6.2 Recommendations for practice

Study findings reveal that practicing teachers have the capacity to learn from one another and to apply this new learning to improve their practice. However, they lack the necessary skills to propel them in this direction. This study recommends therefore that:

1. Pre-service teachers be equipped with the skills for collaboration and collaborative teaching in order to enhance their engagement with each other. Additionally, pre-service teachers should be equipped with the skills of reflecting to enable them become reflective practitioners who can inquire and learn in, on and about their practice.
2. Schools and school leadership should support and allow teachers to collaborate and find spaces of sharing what has worked in their practice, with a colleague. This could include creating time within the school week when teachers can have time to sit together and discuss issues about teaching and plan how to support each other.
3. Practicing teachers take up the challenge to seek to improve their practice by identifying colleagues who they can collaborate with so that they can share what has worked in their practice and in their classrooms. This will help them to deal with their challenges and close the gaps in practice instead of waiting for external assistance which may not be specific and sustained enough to change practice.

5.6.3 Recommendations for further research

Based on the findings of this study that demonstrated that practicing teachers can learn about their practice and improve it, the study wishes to recommend the following:

1. A longitudinal study be carried out that will focus on specific content of the English syllabus in order to ascertain the impact of Teacher-led professional development. Such studies have the potential of revealing more challenges faced by teachers of English in specific content areas and the ways in which teacher-led professional development can be used to close those gaps and thus improve the quality of teaching.
2. A contrastive study should be done with control and treatment groups, to ensure that the findings do not arise from the novelty of the intervention. Such studies will provide knowledge on specific characteristics of teacher-led professional development that can be associated with teacher learning and change of their teaching practice.
3. A similar study can be carried out in Bungoma County with more schools and teachers to result in more evidence of the impact of teacher-led professional development on the classroom practices of teachers of English. Such studies can form the basis of policy formulation on the institutionalizing of PD and the findings can later on be applied to more

schools, resulting in the teacher-led professional development model being escalated.

4. Further research of a similar nature, be carried out to establish the link between teacher-led professional development and improvement in learning outcomes, especially in a developing country context. Such studies will provide empirical evidence that will link quality teaching to improved learning outcomes and thus make a contribution to the existing body of knowledge on teacher professional development.
5. A longitudinal study be carried out with a focus on the effects of collaborative teaching strategies on learner experiences, in order to show the causal relationship between the two variables. Such studies will help to determine the effects of each strategy and when they can be applied to achieve maximum impact for improved learner experiences.

5.6.4 Contribution to Knowledge

This study sought to explore the process of teacher-led professional development and the reflections of the teachers of English in Bungoma-south sub-county, as they led their own professional development. The findings of this study illustrate that practicing teachers of English can identify their challenges with practice and engage in improving their own practice, in collaboration with a colleague(s). This means that teachers can be significant contributors to their own learning. Additionally, that the impact of this process has great benefits for the practicing

teacher and consequently on their classroom practice and learner experiences. Further, that a supportive context will enhance the actualization of teacher-led professional development even though there will be challenges to this process, which can be surmounted. Indeed, this study has demonstrated that PD that improves teachers' classroom practice and performance can be ongoing, intensive and connected to practice while building professional relationships. The study has also presented a prototype model of teacher-led professional development that can be applied in schools or even departments with minimal costs but immense benefits for the school.

5.7 Summary of Chapter

This chapter has presented a summary of the key findings of the study from which conclusions have been drawn, leading to recommendations for policy, practice and further research. The chapter has been concluded by presenting the study's contribution to knowledge.

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APPENDICES

Appendix Ia: Pre-intervention Questionnaire for the teachers

I am IRENE SIMIYU, a student in Kenyatta University undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Communication and Technology. I am conducting a research study on **Teacher-led professional development for Teachers of English**. I request that you fill in this questionnaire and return it to me. All the information provided will be treated in confidence. Thank you.

A. Personal Details

Please tick (✓) the bracket that applies to you

1. Sex: Male Female
2. Age: 20-24 25-29 30-34 35-39 40-44 45 –above
3. Years of teaching experience: less than 1 1-4 5-9 10-14 15-19 Above 19
4. Number of years in the current school: less than 1 1-4 5-9 10-14 Above 15
5. Kindly indicate your level of professional training
 Diploma Post graduate Diploma Bachelors' Degree Masters degree PhD

B. Challenging areas in the teaching of English

Below are areas in the Secondary English syllabus. Please choose the level that describes the frequency of the challenges you face in the teaching of English content. Tick only **one** option for each area.

S/NO	English language content	Never	Occasionally	Regularly	Always
B1	English grammar				
B2	Poetry				
B3	Oral Literature				
B4	Oral skills				

B5	Literature set books				
B6	Imaginative compositions				
B7	Functional compositions				
B8	Reading comprehension				

C. Classroom Practices

Tick (√) appropriately

(i) How often do you involve your learners in the lesson?

Very often [] Often [] Rarely [] Never []

(ii) I work with a fellow teacher or teachers in discussing how we teach English lessons.

Very often [] Often [] Rarely [] Never []

(iii) Teaching resources for an English lesson are challenging to find.

Strongly agree [] Agree [] Undecided [] Disagree [] Strongly disagree []

(iv) I plan for my English lessons as often as I can.

Strongly agree [] Agree [] Undecided [] Disagree [] Strong disagree []

(v) My students seem to enjoy the methods I use in teaching English

Strongly agree [] Agree [] Undecided [] Disagree [] Strong disagree []

D. Workshop/Seminar attendance

Kindly provide short answers for the following questions:

(i) Have you attended any workshop in the area of English language? [] Yes [] No

(ii) Was the last workshop you attended organized Internally [] or [] Externally

(iii). (a) Was your area of challenge addressed in the workshop/seminar? [] Yes [] No

(b) Give reasons for your answer.....

(iv). (a) After the workshop, did you share the new information and practices with members of the department? Yes No

(b) Give reasons for your answer

(v) Was there any follow up that was made by the workshop organizers to assist you implement what you had learnt? Yes No

(vi). In your opinion, did your classroom practice change after attending the workshop?

Yes No

(b) Give reasons for your answer

.....

Appendix Ib: Interview Guide for teachers (Pre-intervention)

1. Kindly explain to me some of the challenges you face in teaching English.
2. Briefly share with me about the workshops/seminars you have attended in the past year.
 - (a) How did you apply the new information/practice in your classroom?
 - (b) Are there any challenges that you faced in using the new information you learnt?
 - (c) What was different about your practice after applying new information/practice?
 - (d) How did your students respond to the new information/practice?
- (3) What is your opinion concerning the following:
 - learning different ways of teaching from a colleague in the department
 - learning from/in your school or classroom environment
 - learning from facilitators in a workshop/seminar
- (4) Is there anything else you want to say about your experiences with workshops/seminars?

Thank you for your time and cooperation

Appendix Ic: Interview Guide for Teachers (Post-intervention)

1. You have been involved in sharing ideas, observing your colleague as well as trying out new ways of teaching.

(a) What did you like about the whole experience? Explain

(b) What didn't you like about the experience? Explain

(c) Do you think you are a better teacher? Explain

2. What successes do you think you achieved from using the new strategies and collaborating with a colleague?

3. (a) What challenges did you experience as you tried out new practices and new knowledge in your classroom?

(b) What challenges do you anticipate as you continue working with colleague(s) in helping each other practice differently?

(4) Comment on the Teacher Collaboration WhatsApp platform. Was it useful? What can be done to improve it to support teachers?

(5) Comment on the support given by your principal, other members of the school community and the researcher.

Is there anything else you would like to say about your experience during this study?

Thank you for your cooperation and time

Appendix Id: Researcher’s lesson Observation Guide

School..... Class..... Time.....

Topic..... Date.....

Sub-topic.....

Strategy Used.....

Aspects to observe	Rating of aspect (Tick one)	Comment on behavior
Interaction of the teachers in the classroom (coordinated actions that enable them to function as a team)	1. Needs more effort 2. Well done 3. Excellent work	
Collaboration in lesson delivery by teachers (through either team teaching, lesson observation, peer coaching or lesson study)	1. Needs more effort 2. Well done 3. Excellent work	
Evidence of new practice (lesson organization, content delivery, giving feedback , learner involvement, use of teaching/learning resources, interaction with learners, interaction with colleagues)	1. No evidence 2. Not clear 3. Evident	
Ability of teacher(s) to use new practices in this lesson	1.Low 2. Fair 3.Good	
Students’ response during lesson (attentive, responding to information, active, enthusiastic, animated discussions, seeking clarifications from teacher, confident when sharing answers in class)	1. Negative 2. Positive 3. Very positive	

Appendix Ie: Teacher’s Lesson/classroom Observation Form

Date: _____ Time: _____
 Observer’s Name: _____
 Teacher’s Name: _____
 Class: _____ Learners Present: ____ Absent ____
 Subject: _____
 Lesson Topic: _____

AREA (S) OF CHALLENGE IDENTIFIED BY TEACHER	WHAT WAS OBSERVED DURING THE LESSON

Notes from Feedback Session

.....

(Adapted from the TPAD classroom observation form MOE)

Appendix If: Guide for Training Teachers in Collaborative Strategies

Broad Objective: By the end of the training session, the teacher should be able to work collaboratively with a colleague using any one of the strategies learnt in the training.

Specific Objectives: By the end of the training session, the teacher should be able to:

- (a) Discuss the rationale for collaboration among teachers.
- (b) Identify and explain one strategy to be used during collaboration.
- (c) Use the strategy in lesson planning, organization and delivery in a ‘mock’ classroom situation.
- (d) Discuss the successes/challenges encountered during implementation.

CONTENT

1. Rationale for collaboration in lesson delivery.
2. Strategies for collaboration in lesson planning, organization and delivery:
 - (i) Lesson Study
 - (ii) Peer Coaching
 - (iii) Team Teaching
 - (iv) Lesson Observation
3. Demonstration of the application of strategies in ‘Mock’ lessons
4. Conferencing sessions to evaluate the implementation
5. Journaling/ Keeping the reflective journal

MODE OF DELIVERY

- (a) Lecture by researcher on the strategies of collaboration
- (b) Group discussions
- (c) Group presentations

EVALUATION OF TRAINING SESSION

- (i) Fill in training evaluation form
- (ii) Oral evaluation

Appendix Ig – Post-intervention Questionnaire for Teachers

Greetings!

Congratulations for being part of the study this far! I hope you have gained some new knowledge and strategies of teaching English language content in a different and enjoyable way. I request that you fill in this questionnaire and return it to me. I want to assure you that all the information you will provide will be treated in confidence. Again, thank you.

A. Subject Matter Knowledge

This section finds out information on how the professional development has impacted your knowledge of English language content that you need to teach your students of English. Please tick (√) where appropriate to indicate your improvement. Highly improved=4, Improved=3, Unsure=2, Not improved=1

S/No	English language Content	Highly improved	Improved	Unsure	Not improved
A1	English grammar				
A2	Poetry				
A3	Oral Literature				
A4	Oral skills				
A5	Literature set-books				
A6	Imaginative compositions				
A7	Functional compositions				
A8	Reading comprehension				

B. Classroom Practice

This section finds out information on the extent to which the professional development has impacted your teaching practice. Please tick (√) where

appropriate as indicated below. SA –Strongly Agree=4, A- Agree=3, D- Disagree=2, SD-Strongly Disagree=1

No.	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
B1	I now know another way of teaching an English lesson to meet the needs of my students				
B2	I feel more comfortable/confident when teaching English subject content				
B3	I am now keen about how my students respond to the content I am teaching				
B4	I have changed the way I used to teach challenging topics				
B5	I can plan and teach with a colleague (s) in the same lesson				
B6	I appreciate observing and being observed in a lesson				
B7	I can now study a lesson and identify aspects that need to be changed to meet the needs of individual learners in my class.				

C. Student Learning

This section finds out information on the impact of your teaching differently on the students in your classes. Please tick (✓) where appropriate as indicated below. SA –Strongly Agree=4, A- Agree=3, D-Disagree=2, SD-Strongly Disagree=1

No.	Statement	SA	A	D	SD
C1	Learners are more confident when responding to oral questions in class				
C2	They seem to enjoy the lessons, especially when I teach with colleague				
C3	They have fewer difficulties in understanding English subject content				
C4	Students are more confident with peers when engaged in group work				

C5	Students are more willing to share information using the English language				
C6	Their test scores have improved				
C7	Students are more willing to participate in classroom activities				
C8	My students appear more confident when undertaking examinations				

Appendix Ih: Sample Lesson Study Report

LESSON STUDY REPORT

Sam 1

Number of teachers in the lesson study: 2
Name of the teacher who presented the lesson: [REDACTED]
Class: FORM THREE
Subject: ENGLISH
Topic: Grammar; Participles

Learners problem: Difficulties to comprehend uses of participles

Strategy used to identify the problem:

- ✓ Poor performance in the question during previous CATs and assignments.
- Inappropriate responses of students ~~down~~ in both classroom and out of class.

Strength Instructional technique used in the classroom during lesson study

- Appropriate questioning that triggered learners responses for appropriate correction to be done
- Learners involved actively in learning activities
- Provision of adequate learning resources - poem that have had varied uses of the participles.

Change Identified

- Learners seem more interested to participate in the lesson
- correct use of participles noted among learners.

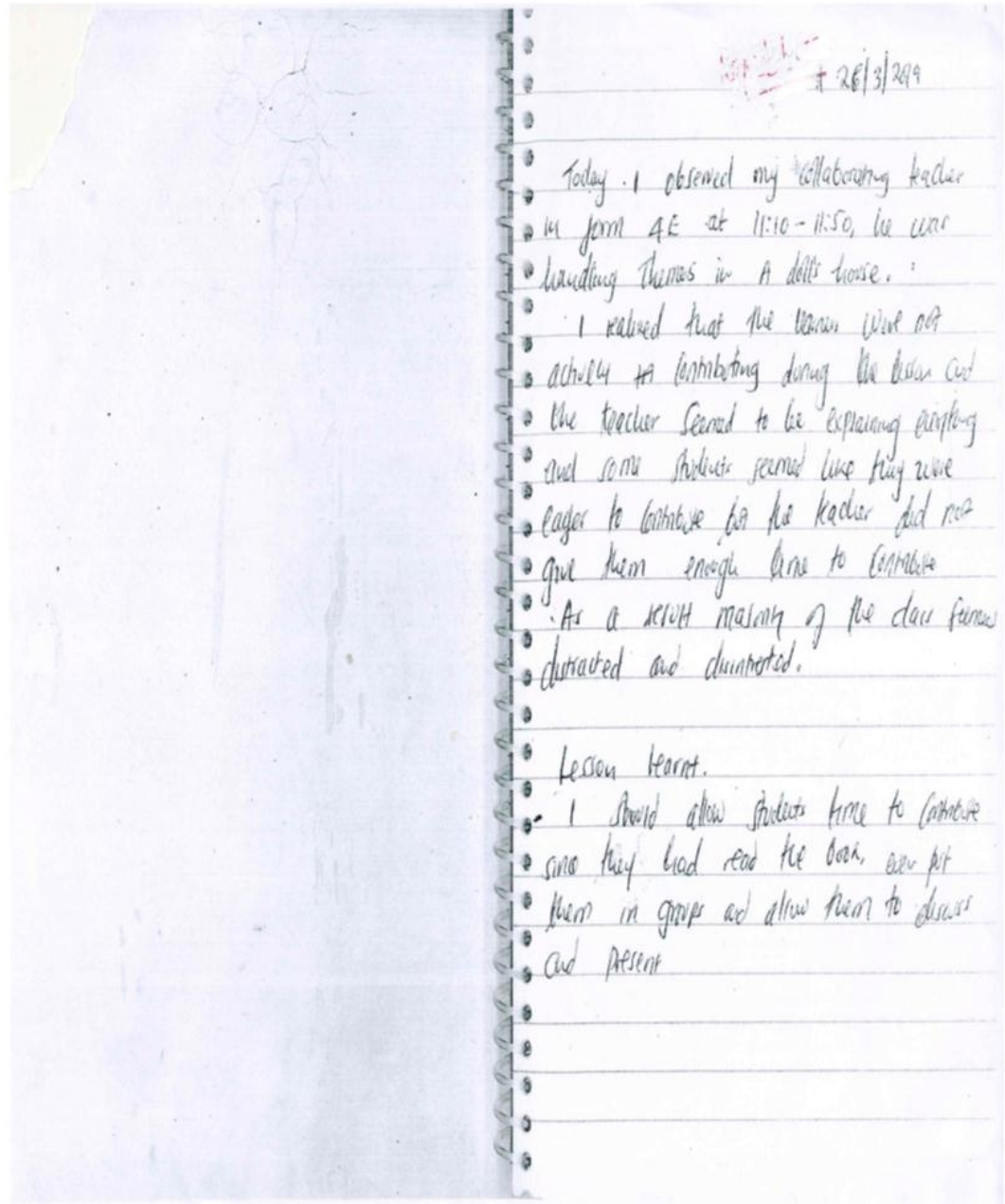
Challenges

- Few learners require individualized teaching as they were not sure of correct response and had difficulty in responding to the question
- Time was limited to allow teacher to reach all learners for individual guidance.

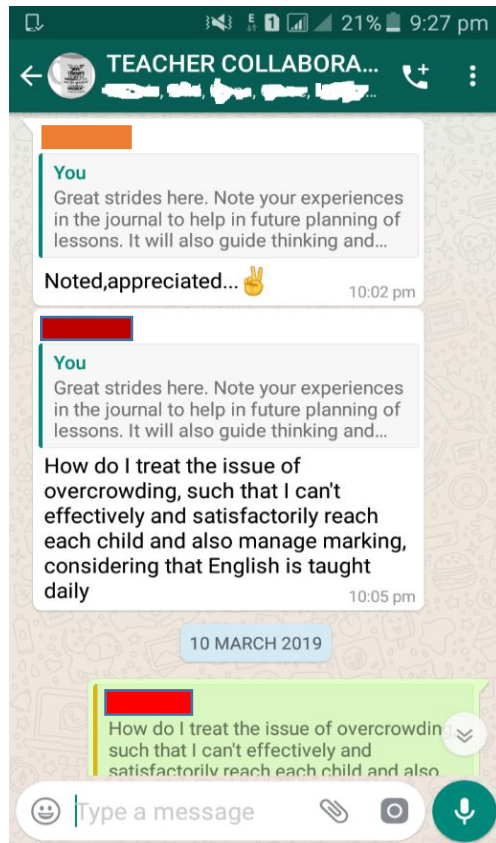
Recommendation

- Plan for group work to allow learners to interact more and learn ^{from} peers.
- Consider planning for a double lesson to enable you achieve individualised teaching for weak learners.

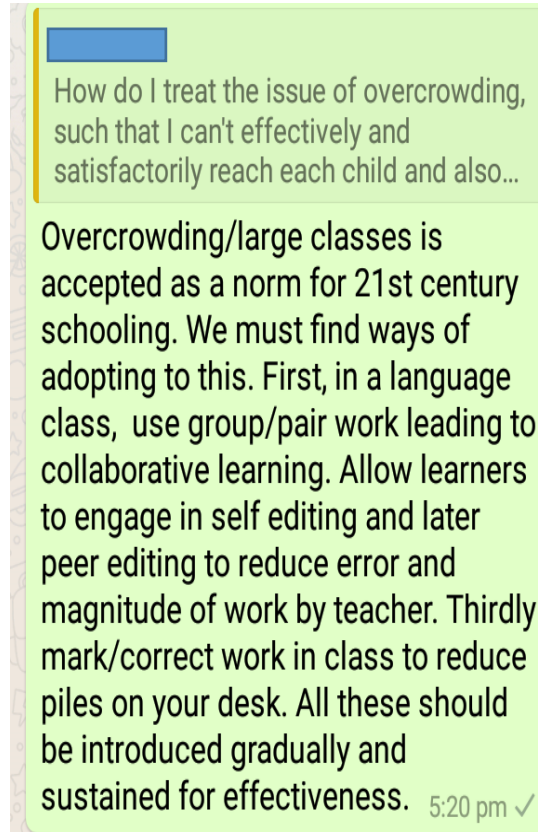
Appendix II: Sample Journal Entry



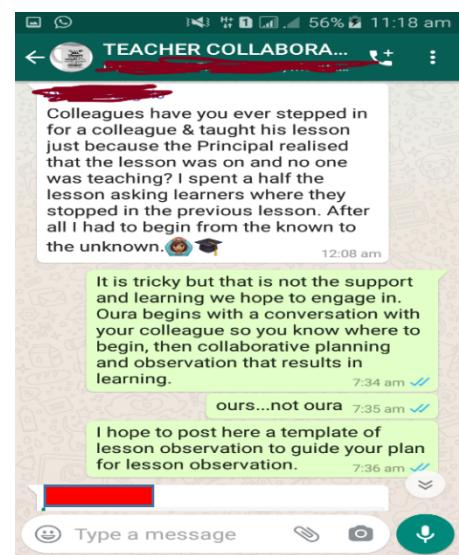
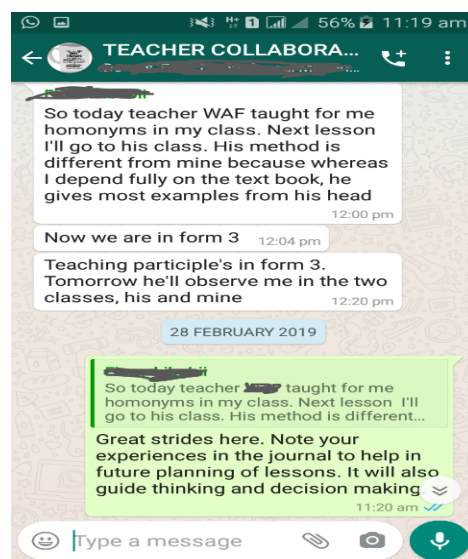
Appendix Ij- Snap-shots of Teacher Collaboration WhatsApp platform



Part 1 of conversation



Replies of Query



Appendix IIa: Information Sheet

I am IRENE SIMIYU, a student in Kenyatta University undertaking a Doctor of Philosophy degree in Educational Communication and Technology. I intend to do a study in the school on **Teacher-led professional development for Teachers of English**. The study seeks to engage teachers of English in improving their own classroom practice by working collaboratively with colleagues in the department.

Nature of participation and duration

This study requires me to conduct face-to-face interviews with the teachers that will last between 10-15 minutes each. This is after they will have responded to a brief questionnaire that will seek to establish their experiences with professional development that is offered in workshops and seminars. The information collected will not be used to evaluate the teacher or their teaching but will only be used by the researcher to plan how teachers can work around their challenges with classroom practice. The study will also involve classroom observation to get a clear picture of the interactions among teachers and with learners in the process of improving practice. Another questionnaire will be administered after the study to evaluate the impact of the intervention on the classroom practice of the teacher.

The study is an action research study that will run for at most one term. The research participants will be duly informed verbally and in written about the nature, purpose and duration of the research. Both verbal and written consent will be sought thereafter. During report writing, I will ensure that I conceal the identity of all who will participate in the study by using pseudonyms and will not link them to information they will provide for this study.

Reciprocity

To reciprocate, I will share with the Principals of the participating schools, information on collaborative teaching strategies for teachers that will help them assist their staff who have challenges with classroom practice.

Appendix IIb: Principal’s Consent Form

I have read the information about the study on **Teacher-led professional development for Teachers of English**. I have understood the procedures involved. I consent that the research be carried out in my institution on the understanding of the following:

The study will involve the researcher working with two teachers from the English department to improve in their classroom practice. The researcher will require to train the teachers to work with each other as they deliver lesson content. During the study, the researcher will carry out lesson observation, administer two questionnaires and carry out interviews which will be audio-recorded. The real identity and the name of the school and the participants shall not be used in the report and the views of individual participants shall not be taken as the views of the institution. I understand that the institution holds the right to withdraw from the study without any explanation, if we feel uncomfortable. Upon completion of the study, I shall receive a report of the findings. Lastly, the researcher will be respectful and abide by the school regulations while undertaking the study.

I understand that for further information in relation to the study, I may contact the Chairperson, Board of Post Graduate Studies, Department of Educational Communication and Technology, Kenyatta University.

I express the institution’s consent to participate in this study by signing this form.

Name.....

Name of Institution.....

Signature.....Date.....

Appendix IIc: Teacher’s Consent Form

I have read and understood the information sheet on **Teacher-led professional development for Teachers of English**. The study will be conducted by Irene Simiyu, and will involve the following:

It will focus on how teachers of English can lead their own professional development by working with colleagues in lesson delivery. Secondly, the purpose of this study is not to judge me on the issues or types of responses given during the study. During the study, I will be taken through face to face interviews which will be recorded using an audio-recorder. There will be classroom observations of my lesson delivery in collaboration with other teachers of English either by my colleague or the researcher. My rights and those of the school will be respected and we may withdraw any time from the study without explanation, if we are uncomfortable. My identity and that of the school will remain confidential and will not be used without my consent. The findings of this study may be used in conference presentations and in academic publications.

I understand that for further information in relation to the study, I may contact the Chairperson, Board of Post Graduate Studies, Department of Educational Communication and Technology, Kenyatta University.

I express my willingness to participate in this study by signing this form.

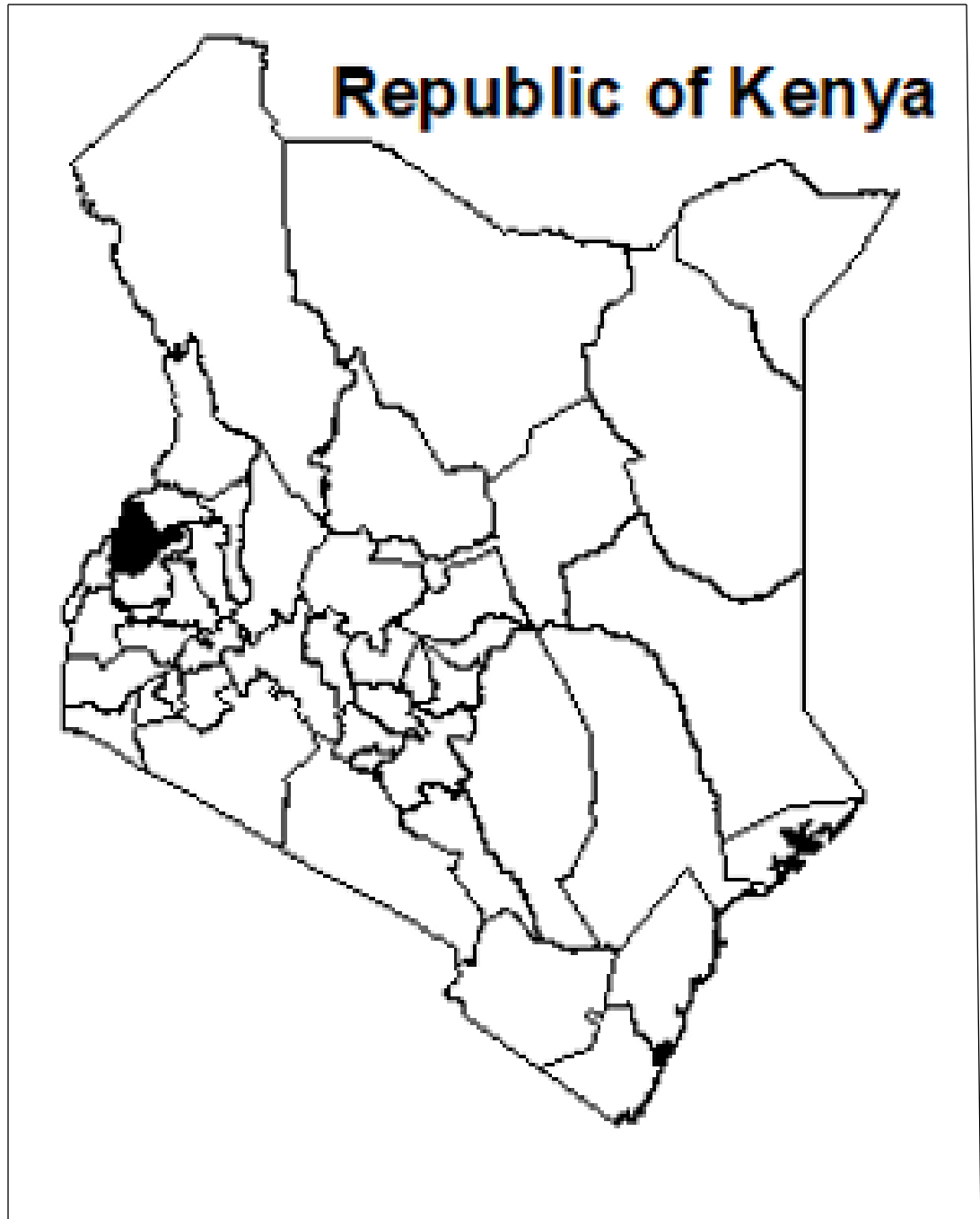
Name.....

Designation.....

Name of Institution.....

Signature.....Date.....

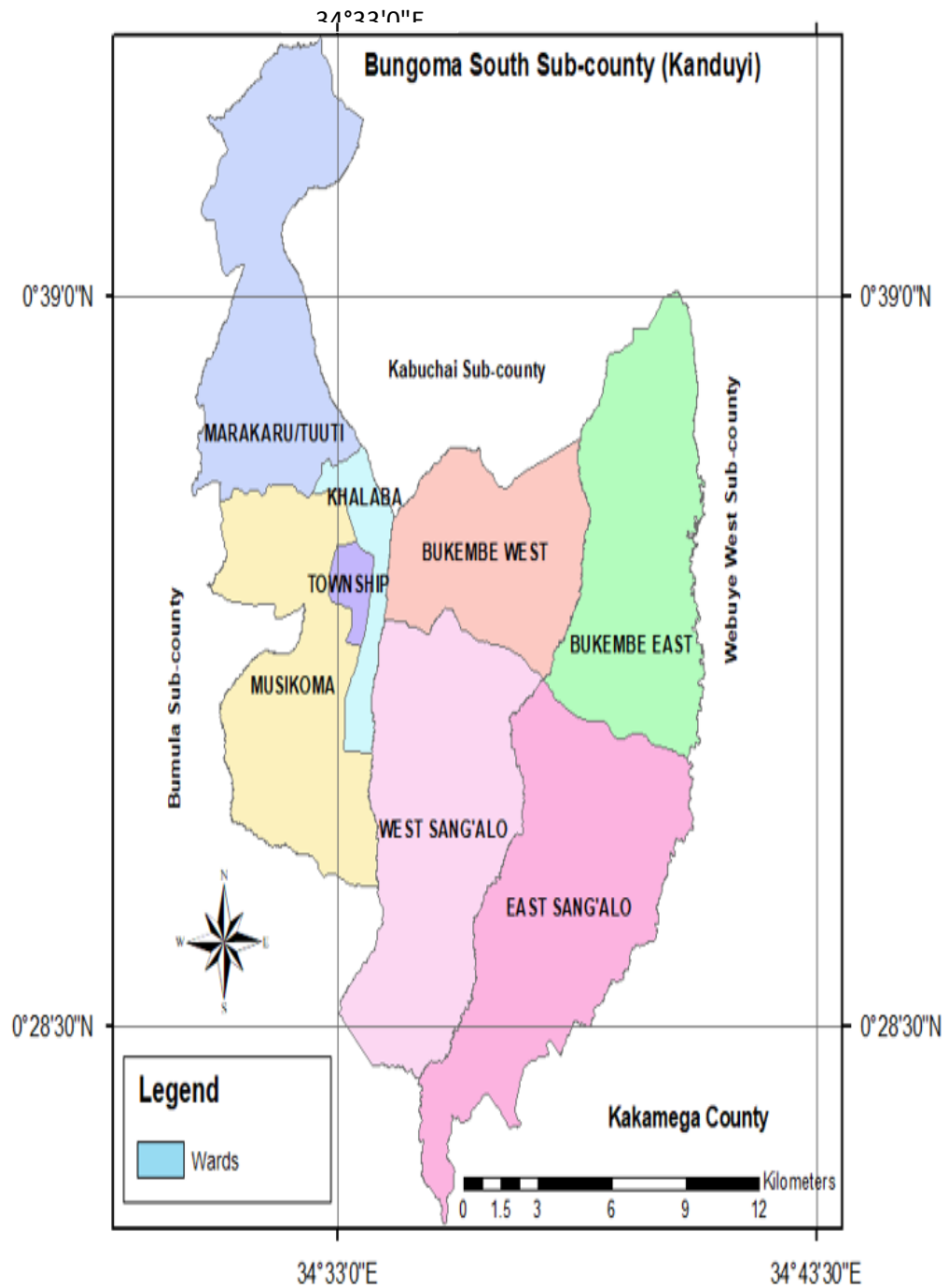
Appendix III: Map of Kenya Showing the Location of Bungoma County



Appendix IV: A Map of Bungoma County Showing the Sub-Counties



Appendix V: A Map of Bungoma South Sub-County (Kanduyi)



Appendix VII: NACOSTI letter of Research Authorization



NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY AND INNOVATION

Telephone: +254-20-2213471,
2241349,3310571,2219420
Fax: +254-20-318245,318249
Email: dg@nacosti.go.ke
Website : www.nacosti.go.ke
When replying please quote

NACOSTI, Upper Kabete
Off Waiyaki Way
P.O. Box 30623-00100
NAIROBI-KENYA

Ref. No. **NACOSTI/P/18/86870/25674**

Date: **11th October, 2018**

Irene Simiyu
Kenyatta University
P.O. Box 43844-00100
NAIROBI

RE: RESEARCH AUTHORIZATION

Following your application for authority to carry out research on "*Teacher-led professional development among teachers of english in Bungoma County, Kenya*" I am pleased to inform you that you have been authorized to undertake research in **Bungoma County** for the period ending **11th October, 2019**.

You are advised to report to **the County Commissioner and the County Director of Education, Bungoma County** before embarking on the research project.

Kindly note that, as an applicant who has been licensed under the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 to conduct research in Kenya, you shall deposit a **copy** of the final research report to the Commission within **one year** of completion. The soft copy of the same should be submitted through the Online Research Information System.


BONIFACE WANYAMA
FOR: DIRECTOR-GENERAL/CEO

Copy to:

The County Commissioner
Bungoma County.

The County Director of Education
Bungoma County.

Appendix VIII: NACOSTI Research Permit


THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT:
MS. IRENE SIMIYU
of KENYATTA UNIVERSITY, 0-50200
BUNGOMA, has been permitted to
conduct research in Bungoma County

on the topic: TEACHER-LED
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AMONG
TEACHERS OF ENGLISH IN BUNGOMA
COUNTY, KENYA

for the period ending:
11th October, 2019

Permit No : NACOSTI/P/18/86870/25674
Date Of Issue : 11th October, 2018
Fee Received :Ksh 2000

2018, 09, 11 16:47



Applicant's
Signature

Director General
National Commission for Science,
Technology & Innovation