



INFLUENCE OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ON TEACHERS' JOB OR WORK PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN NAKURU COUNTY KENYA

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(Received 21, June 2024; Revision Accepted 22, July 2024)

ABSTRACT

The effectiveness of school systems and learners' academic performance in Kenya relies heavily on head teachers' instructional leadership practices and teachers' work performance, raising the need for suitable instructional leadership practices to achieve the desired quality of education outlined in Vision 2030 and the fourth Sustainable Development Goal. However, recent reports highlight concerns about teachers' work performance, especially regarding their classroom pedagogical knowledge, skills, and practices. The purpose of the study was to assess the influence of provision of professional development opportunities by the head teachers on teachers' work performance in public primary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. The research hypothesis was "Provision of professional development opportunities by the head teachers has no statistically significant influence on teachers' work performance in public primary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya". Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) Model of Instructional Leadership and Campbell et al.'s (1993) Theory of Job Performance informed the study. The study employed a mixed methods approach with the convergent parallel design, collecting both quantitative and qualitative data from 466 respondents in 68 primary schools. The study population was divided into 3 strata, namely pupils, teachers, head teachers, and Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs). The sample included 60 pupils, 329 teachers, 68 head teachers, and 9 QASOs. The study samples for head teachers, and Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs) were selected using purposive sampling technique, while that of pupils was selected using simple random sampling technique. Data were gathered through questionnaires, interviews, focus group discussions, and document analysis. Statistical analyses in SPSS version 25 included descriptive statistics, percentages, Spearman rank correlation, and regression analysis. The results show that the provision of professional development by head teachers had no significant influence on teachers' work performance in public primary schools in Nakuru County. The study concluded that teachers' work performance was critical for the overall school outcomes. The study recommends that head teachers should implement internal professional development programs, considering key procedures like identifying teachers' training needs for instructional improvement, encouraging in-service training, providing guidance on performance gaps, organizing peer coaching, and promoting further studies for career advancement.

KEYWORDS: Provision of Professional Development Opportunities, Head Teachers, Teachers' Work Performance, Public Primary Schools

INTRODUCTION

Effective instructional leadership practices by the head teachers is crucial for ensuring teachers' work performance and positive student academic outcomes (Kalim & Bibi, 2024; Aquino, Afalla & Fabelico, 2021; Glanz et al., 2017).

As instructional leaders, head teachers must create a conducive organizational environment that fosters pedagogical ability, innovation, resource allocation, instructional direction, and collegial relationships among teachers (Nooruddin & Bhamani, 2019).

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Studies in England stress the significant role of head teachers in influencing staff behavior and promoting effective teaching and learning (Bush and Middlewood, 2013, as cited in Nkoroi, 2017). Similarly, research in Israel and the United States indicates variations in instructional leadership perceptions and behavior among principals, highlighting the need for greater emphasis on instructional leadership to improve instruction (Glanz, Shaked, Rabinowitz, Shenhav, & Zaretsky, 2017). Likewise, Roul (2012) and a study conducted in Turkey by Murat (2012) cited in Susan (2019) suggest that instructional leadership by head teachers can impact teachers' attitudes and work performance in pedagogy and relationships. To validate these findings in the Kenyan context, particularly in Nakuru County, further research was required.

Teachers' professional development, a key component of instructional leadership significantly enhances their job performance and is of utmost importance for effective education systems, given their crucial role in delivering high-quality education (Mestry, 2017; Usop et al., 2013). Recent research highlights instructional leadership's emphasis on improving teachers' job performance through such practices as promoting teacher professional development (Chiedozie & Akinfolarin, 2017). Hence, head teachers at effective primary schools take responsibility for making sure that teachers have access to in-service training opportunities.

Stronge, Grant and Xu (2021) underscore the fundamental significance of teachers' work performance in attaining educational objectives. In public primary schools, which serve as the bedrock for higher education and future career opportunities, the support provided by head teachers becomes essential in fostering a conducive learning environment. This support encompasses the implementation of advanced curricula, innovative instructional techniques, encouragement of problem-solving skills, and promotion of exploratory learning, all contributing to the overall improvement of teachers' work performance and ultimately benefiting the students' academic success (Kagwiria & Amukowa, 2013).

Griffin and Care (2014) emphasize that teachers' work performance involves executing responsibilities in the educational system to achieve objectives, encompassing teaching behavior and effectiveness. The Code of

Regulation for Teachers (2015) adds that punctuality, pedagogical skills, and syllabus coverage contribute to teachers' work performance. Furthermore, Wills (2016) highlights that teachers' work performance is measured by innovation, organization, and contributions to the learning environment. The Teachers Service Commission's TPAD tool (2018) monitors various aspects of teachers' work performance: professional knowledge and practice, comprehensive learning environment, teacher professional development, teacher conduct and professionalism and professional learning community.

It is evident that for primary schools to achieve their goals they must ensure the quality of its teachers by training and re-training them (Paschal, Nyoni and Mkulu, 2020). Teachers play a vital position in promoting education, learning and professional growth of learners (Paschal, and Mkulu, 2020). The most effective type of professional development opportunities will depend on the specific needs of the teachers and the school context. A combination of different types of professional development opportunities may be necessary to achieve the desired improvement in teachers' work performance. Through professional development, teachers have opportunity to explore new positions, create new teaching strategies, hone their practices, and extend their unique skill sets as a result of their professional development (Mosha, 2017). A teacher who views professional development favorably is more likely to pick up new information, abilities, attitudes, values, and dispositions. Such a temperament embodies pride, self-worth, dedication, self-drive, and inventiveness (Laska, 2016; Mestry, 2017). All of these qualities must be possessed by primary school teachers who are committed to helping pupils improve their academic performance (Mosha, 2017). It is therefore important to understand the influence of provision of professional development opportunities on teachers' work performance.

The Kenyan government has made efforts to enhance instructional leadership practices and teachers' work performance through various initiatives and policy documents (Working Parties, Task Forces, Commissions, Sessional papers 12 of 2012, and Sessional Paper 14 of 2014). The Quality Assurance and Standards Directorate in the Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MOEST) has been strengthened, and

professional development programs for head teachers and Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs) have been implemented. Additionally, in-service training opportunities have been provided to teachers to improve the quality of Science and Mathematics' instruction. Despite these efforts, there remains a gap in understanding the influence of instructional leadership practices on teachers' work performance in developing nations, warranting further investigation. (Citations: MOE, 2009; Kariuki, 2018; Susan, 2019).

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The provision of professional development opportunities by head teachers plays a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of instructional leadership practices and teachers' work performance in public primary schools. When instructional leadership practices are appropriately implemented, head teachers create an enabling environment that maximizes teachers' work performance which could positively impact pupils' academic achievement. However, there is a growing concern about the declining state of teachers' work performance in Nakuru County, as evidenced by unimpressive pupils' performance trends in KCPE examinations (Nakuru County Education Office, 2020), which may indicate weaknesses in the effectiveness of teachers' roles in carrying out instructional activities. Addressing these concerns is essential to ensure Nakuru County achieves its vision of quality education as outlined in Vision 2030.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to establish the influence of provision of professional development opportunities by the head teachers on teachers' work performance in public primary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya

Study Hypothesis

Ho₁: Provision of professional development opportunities by the head teachers has no statistically significant influence on teachers' work performance in public primary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Teachers' Work Performance and Instructional Leadership Practices

Teachers play a crucial role in child development and ensuring quality education by passing on information, abilities, and shaping attitudes among

students (Asira, 2011). Teachers' work performance is linked to their effectiveness in teaching and encompasses various aspects, such as proficiency, punctuality, pupils' achievement, effective planning, and creating a positive learning environment (Selamat et al., 2013; Muchelule, 2015). Assessing teachers' work performance is essential to enhance student learning, improve instructional quality, and support professional growth (Stronge, 2012).

According to Hallinger (2015) and Hallinger & Murphy (2013) as cited in Mackey (2016), instructional leadership involves influencing teaching and learning processes through various strategies. Ayiro (2014) emphasizes that effective 21st-century school leaders should be multidimensional, promoting school improvement, innovative teaching methods, and modern resources. Additionally, Mestry (2017) argues that instructional leaders should prioritize professional development opportunities to achieve school goals, a focus investigated in this study.

Professional Development Opportunities and Teachers' Work Performance

Conducted in Cebu, Philippines, the research by Padillo, Manguilimotan, Capuno, and Espina (2021) focuses on assessing the quality of instruction and professional development (PD) activities offered to teachers in a university setting. Utilizing a quantitative-descriptive research design with universal sampling, the study reveals that although teachers demonstrate mastery in instructional planning, delivery, and classroom management, they perceive professional development activities as only marginally beneficial. Additionally, the study found no significant relationship between teaching competencies and professional development activities, suggesting that the perceived benefits are influenced by personal factors and contextual issues. The authors advocate for strategic planning and evaluation of professional development initiatives to enhance their effectiveness and benefit for teachers (Padillo et al., 2021).

The meta-analytic research conducted by Sims, Fletcher-Wood, and Anders (2022) seeks to address the gap in understanding what differentiates effective from ineffective professional development (PD) in teacher training. Drawing on 104 randomized controlled trials, this study develops a new theoretical framework focusing on key components of effective PD, such

as enhancing teachers' insights, motivating practical changes, and embedding these changes into teaching practice. The findings offer empirical support for the proposed theory and highlight the importance of structured PD programs that actively engage teachers in reflective practices and targeted skill development. This research contributes significantly to the body of knowledge by providing a framework that can guide the design and refinement of future PD initiatives.

In their comprehensive study published in *The World Bank Research Observer*, Popova, Evans, Breeding, and Arancibia (2022) explore the effectiveness of professional development programs worldwide, particularly in low- and middle-income countries. The authors introduce the In-Service Teacher Training Survey Instrument to standardize the assessment of PD initiatives. Findings from an analysis of 33 rigorously evaluated programs reveal that effective professional development must include clear linkages to career incentives, specific subject focuses, lesson enactment during training, and face-to-face initial training sessions. The study also emphasizes the importance of follow-up visits and ongoing support after training, which are critical for reinforcing new skills. This insight underscores the disparity between the needs of teachers and the design of existing PD programs, advocating for a reevaluation of strategies to ensure that professional development is genuinely impactful.

A study done in Pakistan by Khan (2012) on the association between instructional leadership and teachers' work performance concluded that professional development is an integral component of the instructional leadership practice of a school head, as teachers need to develop professionally and be informed about new developments in the field. The study further espoused how head teachers as instructional leaders provide professional development undertakings to meet teachers' needs in the class as well as planning staff development initiatives that will enable teachers to reach their full potential. Similarly, in the Czech Republic, Sedova et al. (2016) observed that planning staff development activities was the major method of improving instruction in many secondary schools. However, the studies were done in secondary schools and do not directly link the provision of professional development opportunities to

teachers' work performance, hence the need for the current study.

In Ghana, Kyei and Osei (2019) found that teachers lacked professional development opportunities and were unable to implement learned knowledge at school. The current study assessed the impact of head teachers' professional development provision on teachers' work performance in public primary schools, using mixed methods. A similar qualitative study in Malawi by Selemani-Meke (2013) discovered that teachers' failure to implement acquired knowledge demotivated them and negatively affected work performance. The INEE study in Somalia, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo by Burns & Lawrie (2015) emphasized the importance of head teachers providing professional development, motivating teachers to use effective instructional strategies, resulting in increased student learning levels.

In Kenya, a study done in Kitui West by Ndaita (2015) revealed that principals planned for retreats to discuss instructional matters with the staff, provided professional materials to teachers showing changes in the teaching field, invited professionals to talk to teachers, and encouraged teachers to go for refresher courses and in-service training. Further, the study established that the principals encouraged teachers to go for further studies. The study stresses the need for principals to meet teacher training and development needs through giving induction and orientation to new teachers, planning for regular workshops and refresher courses, encouraging and providing opportunities for teachers to undertake in-service training. However, the study did not explain how provision of professional development opportunities influences teachers' work performance as the study focused on how principals' instructional quality assurance role influenced students' performance.

Theoretical Literature of the Study

This section presents the theoretical review of the study: The Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) Model of Instructional Leadership and Campbell, et al.'s (1993) Theory of Job Performance.

Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) Model of Instructional Leadership

Hallinger and Murphy (1985) developed an instructional leadership model based on primary school head teachers' instructional behavior and school effectiveness literature. The model concerns itself to three areas:

describing the school mission, planning the instructional program, and creating a conducive school environment. Describing the school mission involves identifying and communicating instructional goals to motivate staff. Planning the instructional program focuses on curriculum coordination and monitoring student progress. Creating a conducive school environment includes functions like promoting professional development and providing incentives. Despite early criticism, the model remains applicable and helps improve teachers' work performance (Hallinger & Murphy, 1985; Hallinger, 2009; Leithwood et al., 2004, 2006; Marks & Printy, 2003; Cuban, 1988; Donaldson, 2006; Lambert, 1998; Southworth, 2002). The study assessed how these practices, particularly professional development opportunities, influenced teachers' work performance when implemented by head teachers. Proper implementation of the model positively impacted teachers' performance.

Campbell et al.'s (1993) Theory of Job Performance

The study explored teachers' work performance in educational institutions, using Campbell et al.'s (1993) theory of job performance, which comprises eight elements: work-specific skills, non-work-specific skills, communication skills, effort demonstration, individual discipline maintenance, facilitating peer and team performance, supervision/leadership, and management (Campbell, McCloy, Oppler & Sagger, 1993). The theory helps to understand how teachers apply these components to improve their professional conduct, participate in professional learning communities, and achieve school goals, TPAD scores, and better student outcomes in KCPE examinations.

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

The study employed a mixed-methods approach, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative data. It employed the convergent parallel mixed-methods design, which involved implementing qualitative and quantitative methods simultaneously with equal emphasis. The target population consisted of 680 public primary schools in Nakuru County, with 57,800 pupils, 680 head teachers, 7,741 teachers, and 11 Quality Assurance and Standards Officers (QASOs). Cluster sampling was used to select 68 schools, with 10% chosen from each of the 9 clusters. The study selected pupils using cluster sampling, used purposive

sampling to select head teachers and QASOs, while teachers were selected through simple random sampling.

Data collection instruments included questionnaires, interview schedules, focus group discussion guides, and document analysis checklists. Questionnaires and interview schedules contained closed-ended and open-ended questions, respectively, to gather both structured and qualitative data. Thematic analysis was employed for qualitative data, involving categorization and identification of common patterns and themes. Quantitative data were sorted, coded, and analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential tests such as multiple regression analysis to examine the influence of instructional leadership practices on teachers' work performance.

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

General characteristics

The study targeted 480 respondents, achieving a response rate of 88.33%. Teachers had an 86.93% response rate, head teachers 83.82%, pupils and QASOs 100%. The majority of respondents was in the 36-45 age bracket (44.8%) and held a degree (56.6%), with 42% having worked in their current school for 4-6 years. The high response rate suggests reliable and representative findings, and the education level of respondents bodes well for instructional leadership practices in public primary schools in Nakuru County. However, researchers should consider potential biases based on respondents' length of service in their current school when interpreting results.

Influence of Provision of Professional Development Opportunities on Teachers' Work Performance

The results show that 205 (71.7%) of the respondents agreed that the head teacher in their school identifies teachers' training needs to improve instructional performance, 36 (12.6%) strongly agreed, 40 (14%) were not sure, and 5 (1.7%) disagreed. The results suggest that a majority (84.3%) of the teachers agreed that the head teacher of the school identifies teachers' training needs to improve instructional performance. Exceptional performance was conceptualized as one of the indicators of teachers' work performance. The findings are similar to those by Ogba, et al. (2020) who observed that the identification of teachers'

training needs was a pathway toward enhancing teachers' work performance in schools. This was because training enables teachers to be more committed to service delivery.

Teacher Attendance to In-Service Training on Best Instructional Practice

Out of 286 respondents, the frequencies for the responses are as follows: 122 respondents (42.7%) agreed that the head teacher in their school encourages teachers to attend in-service training on best instructional practices, 113 respondents (39.5%) strongly agreed, 47 respondents (16.4%) were not sure, and 4 respondents (1.4%) disagreed. Therefore, the results suggest that a total of 235 respondents (82.2%) agreed that the head teachers in their school encourage teachers to attend in-service training on best instructional practices. The results are in line with those in a study by Ndaita (2015) who found that attendance to in-service training had a positive influence on teachers' work performance. If teachers are to perform their duties effectively and efficiently and reach their full potential, it becomes imperative for them to acquire training in new skills and modern methodology so as to meet the challenges of school contexts that are ever changing and becoming diverse in nature.

Provision of Guidance on Teachers' Individual Performance Gaps

The findings reveal that 219 (76.6%) agreed that the head teacher gives guidance on teachers' individual performance gaps, 50 (17.6%) were not sure, 15 (5.2%) strongly agreed, 2 (0.7%) disagreed, and 1 (0.3%) strongly disagreed. Therefore, the results indicate that 219 teachers out of N=286 (81.8%) agreed that the head teacher provides them with guidance on their performance gaps. The findings are in agreement with those in a study by Hegwood (2022) where it was revealed that when teachers are provided with guidance on the individual performance gaps, they can improve their work performance.

Peer Group Coaching Programmes to Solve Work Challenges

Out of 286 respondents, the frequency and percentage of their responses regarding whether the head teacher in their school organizes peer group coaching programs to solve work challenges are as follows: Agree: 201 (70.3%), Strongly agree: 36 (12.6%), Not sure: 42 (14.7%), and Disagree: 7 (2.4%). Overall, the frequency and percentage of teachers who agreed (including those who strongly agreed) that the head teacher

in their school organizes peer group coaching programs to solve work challenges are 237 (82.9%). Reduction in work challenges contributed favourably to the teachers' work performance. The findings concur with those in a study by Mestry (2017) where it was found that peer group coaching programs were effective in solving work challenges and this positively influenced teachers' work performance.

Encouraging Teachers to enroll for TPD to improve their Competencies in Teaching

Out of the total sample size of 286, the frequencies for each response option are as follows: 123 respondents (43%) agreed that the head teacher encourages teachers to enroll for teacher professional development to improve their competencies in teaching, 102 respondents (35.7%) strongly agreed with this statement, 54 respondents (18.9%) indicated that they were not sure about the head teacher's encouragement towards enrolling in teacher professional development (TPD), 6 respondents (2.1%) disagreed with this statement, and 1 respondent (0.3%) strongly disagreed. Overall, the findings suggest that a large majority of the teachers (225 respondents or 78.7%) agreed that the head teacher encourages them to enroll in TPD to improve their competencies in teaching. Enhanced competencies are necessary for the enhancement of teachers' work performance. The findings are in agreement with those in a study by Opere (2022) which revealed that teacher professional development programmes ensure that the professional knowledge and skills of practicing teachers are up to date and that teachers are able to deliver high-quality professional service that meets the expectations of the education sector and other stakeholders and ultimately, impact on pupils' academic outcomes.

Recommending Teachers to Pursue Further Studies to Advance their Career

The results show that 117 (40.9%) of the respondents agreed that the head teacher in their school recommends teachers to pursue further studies to advance their career, 82 (28.7%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 75 (26.2%) of the respondents indicated that they were not sure, 9 (3.1%) of the respondents disagreed, and 3 (1%) of the respondents strongly disagreed. The findings imply that a majority of the teachers (199 out of 286, which is 69.6%) agreed that their head teacher recommends teachers to pursue further studies to advance their careers. Career

advancement is necessary as it makes teachers perform better in their teaching career. The findings were contrary to those in a study by Kyei and Osei (2019) where it was revealed that teachers were not provided with professional development opportunities by the school leadership and not allowed to put into practice at school what was learned at seminars, workshops, and conferences which posed a challenge in enhancing human performance.

Descriptive Statistics for Provision of Professional Development Opportunities

The mean scores for the statements describing the provision of professional development opportunities were in the range between 3.69 and 4.00. These scores when rounded off fall in the scaling of 4.0, which has the response strength of 'Agree'. All the statements had skewness ranging from -0.5 to 1, and thus, the data is positively skewed. The skewness is moderate. The range of values for a negative kurtosis is from -2 upwards and thus was also in the normal range. Provision of professional development opportunities was thus positively influencing teachers' work performance. The results thus suggest that the teachers had noticed and appreciated the provision of professional development opportunities by the head teachers. The findings were in agreement with those in a study by Selemani-Meke (2013) where it was found that teachers' lack of implementation of the knowledge learned during continuous professional development programs in schools was a demotivating factor that impacted negatively on teachers' work performance.

The head teachers were asked during interviews to indicate what opportunities for professional development are made available for teachers in the school. The results show that 51 out of 57 of the head teachers explained that they provide opportunities for teachers to attend workshops, conferences and seminars to enhance their knowledge and skills. One head teacher responded:

I encourage regular in-service training for the teachers to ensure that they stay up-to-date with the latest teaching methodologies and trends. This includes attending workshops, seminars, and conferences, which are conducted externally. Source: Head Teacher 57

The responses indicate the presence of diverse professional development opportunities for teachers, including in-service training, mentoring,

coaching, and career advancement, all aimed at keeping teachers abreast of the latest teaching methods and trends and enhancing their skills and knowledge for improved teaching practices.

According to head teachers' responses, the availability of these professional development opportunities fosters innovation and creativity among teachers, leading to effective teaching and subsequently better academic performance for pupils in the KCPE. One of the responses was as follows:

Professional development opportunities for teachers can provide new teaching techniques, keep them up-to-date with the latest trends. This makes teachers creative and innovative and use the knowledge in coming up with diverse teaching strategies which are effective. Source: Head Teacher 17

According to yet another response from the head teacher:

Professional development allows for networking and collaboration and improve morale and job satisfaction impacting the academic achievement of the pupils positively. Source: Head Teacher 10 Overall, the head teachers acknowledge the importance of professional development opportunities in improving teachers' work performance in various ways such as providing new teaching techniques, keeping up with the latest trends, improving morale and job satisfaction, reflecting on teaching practices, and addressing weaknesses and challenges experienced when teaching. The head teachers also recognize the impact of professional development on student outcomes, collaboration, and career development.

The head teachers were also asked to explain how provision of professional development opportunities for teachers help in improving their performance. The results show that 36 out of the 57 head teachers explained that professional development opportunities allowed teachers to stay updated with the latest teaching methodologies and educational technology, thereby enhancing their teaching skills. The response from one of the head teacher was:

Professional development opportunities are crucial for teachers to keep up with the latest teaching methodologies and technology. Source: Head Teacher 54

Another respondent said: Through professional development, teachers learn new strategies to

engage pupils and improve academic outcomes. Source: Head Teacher 7

The findings align with Mugambi and Kimemia's study (2021), which demonstrated that professional development opportunities for teachers significantly improve student learning outcomes, emphasizing the importance of investing in teachers' professional growth to enhance education quality. Similarly, Owolabi's study (2016) found that teachers' participation in professional development programs led to notable improvements in teaching skills, classroom management, and students' academic performance, as evidenced by increased engagement and motivation. Kihara's study (2021) in Kenya also supports the significance of professional development in enhancing teachers' work performance, subject matter knowledge, teaching skills, and attitudes, resulting in increased teacher motivation, improved student outcomes, and a supportive school environment.

The QASOs were asked to indicate what professional development opportunities were there in the sub-county for teachers to engage in so as to improve their work performance. According to one of the respondents:

Professional development opportunities for teachers in the sub-county include workshops, seminars, conferences, mentorship and coaching programs and in-service training. Source: QASO 5

Another respondent said:

I have observed head teachers provide and make available resources for peer observation and lesson study. The head teachers also encourage collaboration and peer learning among teachers. Source: QASO 6

According to yet another respondent:

There is support for teachers to attend workshops, seminars and conferences, and support for pursuing advanced degrees or certifications. Source: QASO 3

These findings are consistent with a study conducted by Orodho, Serem, and Mutisya (2018), which found that professional

development opportunities, including coaching and mentoring, were positively associated with teachers' work performance in Kenyan public primary schools. The study also highlighted the importance of creating a supportive work environment and providing incentives to motivate teachers to improve their performance.

The QASOs were also asked to explain how professional development opportunities provided to teachers influence their work performance. One response from the QASO was that:

The professional development opportunities provided to teachers such as in-service training, seminars and workshops can empower them professionally and make them be effective and responsible as they carry out their instructional activities through putting into practice the new knowledge and skills learnt during the seminars and workshops. Source: QASO 4

Another respondent said:

Teachers become more creative and innovative because they adopt new teaching methods thus improving the quality of instruction. Source: QASO 2

The responses suggest that by providing opportunities for teachers to attend in service training, seminars and workshops, teachers become empowered to take ownership of their work and create a sense of responsibility towards their profession. This can increase teachers' job satisfaction, motivation, and commitment to their work, ultimately leading to improved work performance.

Additionally, by encouraging creativity and innovation in teaching, head teachers can help teachers adopt new teaching methods and improve the quality of their instruction. This can lead to improved student learning outcomes and overall educational performance. In the context of teachers' work performance in Kenya, a related study by Oyaró, Ojwang, and Odundo (2020) found that leadership practices, such as participatory decision-making, mentoring, and support, had a significant positive effect on teachers' work performance in secondary schools. The study highlights the importance of leadership in improving teachers' work performance and overall educational outcomes in Kenya.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Provision of Professional Development Opportunities

	N	Mean	Std. Dev	Skewness		Kurtosis	
				Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Identifies teachers' training needs to improve instructional performance	286	3.69	0.80	-0.899	0.144	0.314	0.287
Encourages teachers to attend in-service training on best instructional practice	286	4.00	0.97	-0.846	0.144	0.234	0.287
Provides guidance on teachers' individual performance gaps	286	3.72	0.70	-1.205	0.144	1.548	0.287
Organizes peer-group coaching programmes to solve work challenges	286	3.82	0.74	-0.698	0.144	0.631	0.287
Encourages teachers to enroll for TPD to improve their competencies in teaching	286	3.94	1.00	-0.849	0.144	0.249	0.287
Recommends teachers to pursue further studies to advance their career	286	3.80	0.98	-0.503	0.144	-0.423	0.287
Valid N (listwise)	286						

Source: Researcher (2023)

Association between Provision of Professional Development Opportunities and Teachers' Work Performance

To establish the association between provision of professional development opportunities by the head teachers and teachers' work performance, spearman rank correlation was computed and the results are provided in Table 2. The findings show that there was a positive spearman rank correlation between the provision of professional development opportunities (PDO) and teachers' work performance at $r_s = 0.131$; $p = 0.026$. The results show that there was a positive association

between the two variables. This is to say a unit increase in provision of professional development opportunities attracted an increase in teachers' work performance by a unit 0.131. Given that the p-value (0.026) was less than 0.05, the test significance level, the association is interpreted as being statistically significant. The results show that providing professional development opportunities effectively enhances teachers' work performance, aligning with Sedova et al.'s (2016) study, which found professional development as a key method for improving instruction in secondary schools

Table 2: Association between Provision of Professional Development Opportunities and Teachers' work performance

				Provision Professional Development Opportunities	of Teachers' Work Performance
Spearman's rho	Provision	of	Correlation	1.000	.131*
	Professional		Coefficient	.	.026
	Development		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.026
	Opportunities		N	286	286
	Rating of Teachers'		Correlation	.131*	1.000
	Work Performance		Coefficient	.	.
			Sig. (2-tailed)	.026	.
			N	286	286

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Source: Researcher (2023)

A further correlation analysis in Table 3 was conducted to examine associations in schools with different levels of KCPE marks. A Spearman rank correlation based on average KCPE marks showed the following results: In schools with average mean scores (201-250 marks), there was a positive but statistically insignificant correlation ($r_s = 0.107$, $p = 0.079$) between provision of professional development opportunities and teachers' work performance. For schools with Good KCPE marks (251-300), the correlation was significant ($r = 0.689$, $p = 0.013$), indicating a positive relationship between the two. In schools with Very Good KCPE marks (301-500), the

correlation was also significant ($r = 0.833$, $p = 0.039$), suggesting a strong positive relationship. The findings suggest that higher-performing schools had more favorable provision of professional development opportunities, leading to higher levels of teachers' work performance. The results are in agreement with those in a study by Burns and Lawrie (2015) whose findings revealed that the knowledge acquired through the provision of professional development opportunities helped in motivating teachers to use effective instructional strategies when they receive professional development on a particular strategy.

Table 3: Association between Provision of Professional Development Opportunities and Teachers' work performance by Performance in KCPE examinations

Average KCPE mean scores				Teachers' Work Performance
Average (201-250 marks)	ρ (rho).	Provision of Professional Development Opportunities	Correlation Coefficient	.107
			Sig. (2-tailed)	.079
	Teachers' Work Performance	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	
Good (251-300 marks)	ρ (rho).	Provision of Professional Development Opportunities	Correlation Coefficient	.689*
			Sig. (2-tailed)	.013
	Teachers' Work Performance	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	
Very Good (301-500 marks)	ρ (rho).	Provision of Professional Development Opportunities	Correlation Coefficient	.833*
			Sig. (2-tailed)	.039
	Rating of Teachers' Work Performance	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	
			N	6

Source: Researcher (2023)

Teachers' Work Performance as per the Job Appraisal Results

The results related to teachers' work performance as per the job appraisal results were as shown below.

Performance Rating for Professional Knowledge and Practice

The responses are as provided in Table 4 show that out of N=286 respondents, the frequencies for the ratings of professional knowledge and practice were reported as follows: 234 respondents (81.8%) indicated a rating of 61 to 80% (fully met their targets), 43 respondents (15.1%) rated their

performance as 41 to 60% (met most of the targets), 4 respondents (1.4%) gave a rating of 81% to 100%, and 2 respondents (0.7%) gave a rating of 21 to 40% (met some of the targets). Thus, based on the results in Table 4, it can be concluded that the majority of the teachers (81.8%) believed that they fully met their targets related to professional knowledge and practice. The teachers were asked to indicate the rating of their performance on professional knowledge and practice teaching standard according to the latest job performance appraisal (TPAD) tool at their current school.

Table 4: Performance Rating for Professional Knowledge and Practice

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Did not meet the targets (0-20%)	0	0
Met some of the targets (21 – 40%)	2	0.7
Met most of the targets (41-60%)	46	16.1
Fully met the targets (61-80%)	234	81.8
Fully met and exceeded the targets (81-100%)	4	1.4
Total	286	100

Source: Researcher (2023)

Performance Rating for Comprehensive Learning Environment

Based on a total sample of N=286 respondents, the frequencies for the results in Table 5 are as follows: 164 respondents (57.3%) indicated that their score for comprehensive learning environment was 61 to 80% (fully met their targets), 81 respondents (28.3%) gave a rating of 41 to 60% (met most of the targets), 39

respondents (13.6%) gave a rating of 81% to 100% (fully met and exceeded the targets), and 2 respondents (0.7%) gave it a rating of 21 to 40% (met some of the targets). Overall, the results suggest that over 60% (F=203) of the teachers were convinced that they had fully met the targets related to the comprehensive learning environment standard.

Table 5: Performance Rating for Comprehensive Learning Environment

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Did not meet the targets (0-20%)	0	0
Met some of the targets (21 – 40%)	2	0.7
Met most of the targets (41-60%)	81	28.3
Fully met the targets (61-80%)	164	57.3
Fully met and exceeded the targets (81-100%)	39	13.6
Total	286	100

Source: Researcher (2023)

Performance Rating for Teacher Professional Development

Based on a sample size of N=286 as shown in Table 6, the frequencies for the performance rating for teacher professional development are as follows: 183 respondents (64%) indicated that their score for performance rating for teacher professional development was 61 to 80% (fully met their targets), 58 respondents (20.3%) gave a

rating of 41 to 60% (met most of the targets), 43 respondents (15%) gave a rating of 81% to 100% (fully met and exceeded the targets), and 2 respondents (0.7%) gave it a rating of 21 to 40% (met some of the targets). Therefore, it can be concluded that more than 183 (64%) of the teachers in the sample were convinced that they had fully met the targets related to teacher professional development standard.

Table 6: Performance Rating for Teacher Professional Development

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Did not meet the targets (0-20%)	0	0
Met some of the targets (21 – 40%)	2	0.7
Met most of the targets (41-60%)	58	20.3
Fully met the targets (61-80%)	183	64.0
Fully met and exceeded the targets (81-100%)	43	15.0
Total	286	100

Source: Researcher (2023)

Performance Rating for Teacher Conduct and Professionalism

Based on the data analysed in Table 7 with a total of N=286 respondents, the frequency calculation shows that 138 respondents (48.3%) rated their performance in teacher professional development as 61 to 80% (fully met their targets), 39 respondents (13.6%) rated their performance as

41 to 60% (met most of the targets), and 109 respondents (38.1%) rated their performance as 81% to 100% (fully met and exceeded the targets). Therefore, it can be concluded that a frequency of 138 teachers (48.3%) believed that they fully met their targets related to teacher conduct and professionalism standard.

Table 7: Performance Rating for Teacher Conduct and Professionalism

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Did not meet the targets (0-20%)	0	0
Met some of the targets (21 – 40%)	0	0
Met most of the targets (41-60%)	39	13.6
Fully met the targets (61-80%)	138	48.3
Fully met and exceeded the targets (81-100%)	109	38.1
Total	286	100

Source: Researcher (2023)

Performance Rating for Participation in Professional Learning Community

The findings in Table 8 show that 176 (61.5%) respondents indicated that their score for performance rating for participation in the professional learning community was 61 to 80% (fully met their targets), 69 (24.1%) respondents gave a rating of 41 to 60% (met most of the

targets), 24 (8.4%) respondents gave a rating of 21 to 40% (met some of the targets), and 17 (5.9%) respondents gave a rating of 81% to 100% (fully met and exceeded the targets). Based on the results, it can be inferred that over 61% of the teachers were convinced that they had fully met the targets related to participation in the professional learning community standard.

Table 8: Performance Rating for Participation in Professional Learning Community

Rating	Frequency	Percentage
Did not meet the targets (0-20%)	0	0
Met some of the targets (21 – 40%)	24	8.4
Met most of the targets (41-60%)	69	24.1
Fully met the targets (61-80%)	176	61.5
Fully met and exceeded the targets (81-100%)	17	5.9
Total	286	100

Source: Researcher (2023)

Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Work Performance as per the Job Appraisal Results

As shown in Table 9, the mean scores for teachers' work performance were: Professional Knowledge and Practice (3.83), Comprehensive Learning Environment (3.84), Teacher Professional Development (3.93), Teacher Conduct and Professionalism (4.24), and Participation in Professional Learning Community

(3.65). Professional Knowledge and Practice had highly negative skewness (< -1), while the other measures had positive skewness (-0.5 to 1), indicating moderate skewness. The kurtosis was normal for all measures (between -2 and upwards). Rounded mean scores were 4.0 , indicating teachers fully met their performance targets in all investigated measures.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Work Performance as per the Job Appraisal Results

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std. Error	Kurtosis	Std. Error
							Statistic	
Professional Knowledge and Practice		286	3.83	0.46	-2.361	.144	9.796	.287
Comprehensive Learning Environment		286	3.84	0.65	.018	.144	-.351	.287
Teacher Professional Development		286	3.93	0.61	-.144	.144	.169	.287
Teacher Conduct and Professionalism		286	4.24	0.68	-.344	.144	-.830	.287
Participation in Professional Learning Community		286	3.65	0.72	-.739	.144	.326	.287
Valid N (listwise)		286						

Source: Researcher (2023)

Distribution of KCPE School Marks for 2017 to 2021

The findings in Table 10 show that there was a slight percentage increase in the number of schools scoring an average of 301 to 400 marks (0.3% to 3.1%), in the period from 2017 to 2021. However, this increase was not sustained in 2021, where the percentage dropped to 1.4%. In the

period studied, the schools with 'Very Good' (401–500 marks) slightly increased from 0.7% to 1%. It is worth noting that majority of the schools (over 95%) fell in the range of 'Average' (201-300 marks) or below. This shows that the performance of public primary schools in Nakuru County was generally low.

Table 10: Distribution of KCPE School Marks for 2017 to 2021

Year	Poor (0 – 100 marks)	Fair (101 – 200 marks)	Average (201-300 marks)	Good (301-400 marks)	Very Good (401–500 marks)
2021	0.0%	0.7%	96.9%	1.4%	1.0%
2020	0.0%	0.0%	96.5%	3.1%	0.3%
2019	0.0%	0.7%	97.6%	1.4%	0.3%
2018	0.0%	11.9%	87.8%	0.3%	0.0%
2017	0.0%	12.2%	86.7%	0.3%	0.7%

Source: Researcher (2023)

Descriptive Statistics for Teachers' Responses on the KCPE Marks in Their Schools

The mean scores for the responses from teachers on the KCPE marks attained in the period 2017 to 2021 were provided in Table 11.

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
2021	286	3.0280	.24975
2020	286	3.0385	.21007
2019	286	3.0140	.18679
2018	286	2.8846	.33083
2017	286	2.8951	.37861
Valid N (listwise)	286		

Source: Author (2023)

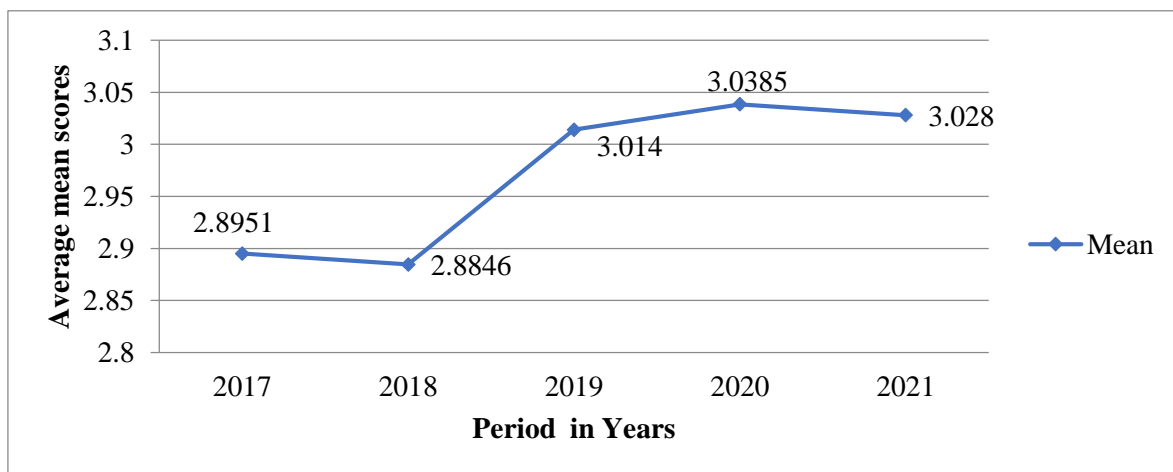


Figure 1: School Performance Trends for the Participating Schools

Source: Researcher (2023)

Regression Analyses

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the influence of four head teachers' instructional leadership practices (instructional resource allocation, instructional supervision, provision of professional development opportunities, and provision of incentives) on teachers' work performance in public primary schools in Nakuru County.

Model Summary

The regression model summary indicates an R Square value of 0.259, meaning that 74.1% of teachers' work performance was influenced by other factors not included in the model. The results imply that the independent variables accounted for 25.9% of the variation in teachers' work performance. The multiple correlation coefficient (R-value) for the independent variables was 0.509. The study suggests the need for further research to identify additional factors that contribute to the remaining 74.1% of teachers' work performance in public primary schools in Nakuru County.

Analysis of Variances (ANOVA)

The p-value ($p < 0.05$) indicates that the predictors (instructional resource allocation, instructional supervision, provision of professional development opportunities, and provision of incentives) in the research are significant in relation to teachers' work performance in public primary schools in Nakuru County. The regression was statistically significant ($F(4, 281) = 24.556$; $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), indicating a significant influence of head teachers' instructional leadership practices on teachers' work performance at a 99.5% confidence level in public primary schools in Nakuru County.

Beta Coefficients for Head Teachers' Instructional Leadership Practices

The Beta Coefficients concerning regression outputs are presented in Table 12. The estimated

equation is as shown: $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1IRA + \beta_2IS + \beta_3PDO + \beta_4INC + \varepsilon$

Teachers' Work Performance = 0.234 IRA- Instructional Resource Allocation + 0.276 IS- Instructional Supervision + 0.081 PDO- Professional Development Opportunities + 0.015 INC- Incentives + 0.212 Standard error

In the multiple regression results, provision of professional development opportunities, had a positive but non-significant beta coefficient of ($\beta = 0.081$, $t = 1.344$, $p > 0.05$). The corresponding t-statistic was 1.344 which was lesser than the critical t statistic: ($t_{cal} [1.344] > t_{crit} [1.96]$). Since the p-value was 0.180, which is greater than 0.05 level of significance, there was no statistically significant influence of provision of professional development by head teachers on teachers' work performance. Moreover, with a p-value greater than 0.05 test significance level, it means that the null hypothesis (H_0) was accepted and the conclusion was that provision of professional development opportunities by the head teachers had no statistically significant influence on teachers' work performance. It also means that provision of professional development opportunities was not a significant predictor of teachers' work performance. This suggests that head teachers who provide opportunities for professional development for teachers may have a positive influence on teachers' work performance, but the influence is not statistically significant. This finding is inconsistent with previous studies that have shown a positive relationship between professional development opportunities and teachers' work performance (Mwita & Orodho, 2021; Kariuki & Njoroge, 2022). In conclusion, the study did not find significant evidence of the influence of provision of professional development opportunities. Further research is needed to explore the factors that influence this variable on teachers' work performance.

Table 12: Beta Coefficients for Instructional Leadership Practices

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	1.816	.212		8.552	.000
Instructional Resource Allocation	.205	.061	.234	3.370	.001
Instructional Supervision	.258	.068	.276	3.813	.000
Provision of Professional Development Opportunities	.051	.038	.081	1.344	.180
Provision of Incentives	.006	.022	.015	.263	.792

Source: Researcher (2023)

The p values were as follows:

Instructional Resource Allocation (0.001), Instructional Supervision (0.000), Provision of Professional Development Opportunities (0.180), and Provision of Incentives (0.792). The results show that instructional resource allocation and instructional supervision had p values less than 0.05, and thus were significant predictors while professional development opportunities and incentives had p values more than 0.05 depicting insignificant predictors of teachers' work performance.

In conclusion, the study did not find significant evidence of the influence of provision of professional development opportunities and provision of incentives on teachers' work performance. Further research is needed to explore the factors that influence these two variables on teachers' work performance.

Tests of Hypothesis for the Study

The hypothesis stated that "Ho₁: Provision of professional development opportunities by the head teachers has no statistically significant influence on teachers' work performance in public primary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya." Since the p-value associated with the provision of professional development opportunities was 0.180 (Table 12), the null hypothesis is accepted and thus, it is concluded that the provision of professional development opportunities by the head teachers has no statistically significant influence on teachers' work performance in public primary schools. Accepting the null hypothesis means that the provision of professional development opportunities by the head teachers did not contribute to teachers' work performance.

The results indicate that staff development had no significant influence on teachers' work or job performance, which appears contradictory to the expected outcomes where professional development typically enhances job performance. This discrepancy may be due to several underlying factors that require further exploration. First, it is possible that the staff development programs provided were not adequately aligned with the teachers' specific needs or the practical challenges they face in the classroom, leading to minimal impact on their job performance. Additionally, there may have been issues related to the implementation of these programs, such as a lack of follow-up support or opportunities for teachers to apply the new skills they acquired, which could diminish the effectiveness of the training. Another consideration is the potential for external factors, such as inadequate resources, high workloads, or unsupportive work environments, to overshadow the benefits of professional development, rendering it less effective. Therefore, while staff development is theoretically beneficial, the practical challenges and contextual factors within the school environment may have limited its impact on teachers' performance in this particular study.

Regression Analysis by KCPE Performance

The study conducted a multiple regression analysis to examine how head teachers' instructional leadership practices influenced teachers' work performance in public primary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya, based on different categories of average KCPE mean scores. The analysis included three models with R-squared values ranging from 0.263 to 0.998,

indicating that the models explained a substantial portion of the variance in teachers' work performance. The highest R-squared value (0.998) was found in the third model, which included all four predictors: provision of incentives, instructional supervision, provision of professional development opportunities, and instructional resource allocation. The adjusted R-squared values ranged from 0.252 to 0.989, with the highest (0.989) also observed in the third model. These results suggest that the combination of all four predictors had the most significant influence on teachers' work performance.

The ANOVA results, based on three KCPE score categories: Average (201-250 marks), Good (251-300 marks), and Very Good (301-500 marks) was as follows. The results show that schools with average KCPE scores have significantly higher teachers' work performance ($F = 23.456, p < .05$). Similarly, schools with Good KCPE scores also exhibit significantly higher work performance ($F = 7.059, p < .05$). However, in the category of Very Good KCPE scores, there is no significant relationship with teachers' work performance ($F = 117.215, p > .05$), suggesting other factors may influence their performance. The results of this study suggest that Average and Good KCPE scores are associated with higher work performance among teachers, but Very Good KCPE scores do not necessarily guarantee higher teachers' work performance levels. These findings can inform policy decisions related to teacher recruitment, training, and professional development in Kenya.

The beta coefficients and p-values for the regression analysis by KCPE performance were as follows: For schools with average KCPE marks (201-250), the beta coefficient for Provision of Professional Development Opportunities (PPDO) is 0.107 ($p = 0.091$), suggesting a weak positive relationship between PPDO and teachers' work performance, but not statistically significant. For schools with Good KCPE marks (251-300), the beta coefficient for PPDO is 0.435 ($p = 0.041$), indicating a moderate positive relationship that significantly improves teachers' performance. For schools with Very Good KCPE marks (301-500), the beta coefficient for PPDO is -0.743 ($p = 0.128$), suggesting a strong negative relationship, but not statistically significant. The findings imply that investing in professional development opportunities can boost work performance in schools with Good KCPE scores. However, in

schools with average or Very Good KCPE scores, other factors may play a more significant role in determining teachers' work performance.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that the provision of professional development opportunities by the head teachers has no statistically significant influence on teachers' work performance in public primary schools. This is evidenced by the fact that in some of the schools the head teacher had not done well in identifying teachers' training needs to improve instructional performance. In some schools, little effort was done to encourage teachers to attend in-service training on best instructional practices. In some of the schools, the head teacher had not provided teachers with guidance on individual performance gaps. In some schools, the head teacher rarely organized peer group coaching programs to solve work challenges. There were schools where the head teacher failed to encourage teachers to pursue further studies to advance their careers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings from the study, the following recommendations are provided. Each recommendation is informed by a specific finding and is categorized into recommendations for practice and recommendations for policy.

Recommendations for Practice

The study found that staff development has no significant influence on teachers' work or job performance. Schools and educational institutions should ensure that staff development programs are closely aligned with the specific needs and challenges faced by teachers in the classroom. This includes conducting needs assessments to tailor training sessions that directly address gaps in teachers' skills and knowledge. Additionally, schools should incorporate practical, hands-on activities in these programs to allow teachers to apply new strategies in real-time, thereby enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of the training.

The study indicated that external factors such as lack of resources, high workloads, and unsupportive work environments may overshadow the benefits of staff development. School administrators should establish stronger support systems for teachers, including providing adequate classroom resources, reducing unnecessary workload, and fostering a supportive

work environment. This can be achieved through better resource allocation, workload balancing, and creating a culture of collaboration where teachers feel valued and supported in their professional growth. By improving these aspects, the impact of staff development programs on job performance can be maximized.

Recommendations for Policy

Finding: The lack of significant impact from staff development suggests potential inefficiencies in the implementation and design of professional development policies. Educational policymakers should revisit existing staff development policies to ensure they are effectively designed to meet the professional needs of teachers. This could involve setting clear standards for the content, delivery, and evaluation of staff development programs, ensuring they are comprehensive, practical, and outcomes-focused. Additionally, policies should mandate regular follow-ups and assessments of the impact of these programs on teachers' performance, allowing for continuous improvement.

There is a potential mismatch between the intended outcomes of professional development programs and the actual challenges faced by teachers. Policymakers should incorporate continuous needs assessment into the policy framework governing staff development. This ensures that professional development initiatives remain responsive to the evolving challenges teachers face. Policies should require that schools regularly assess the effectiveness of training programs and make necessary adjustments to better align them with teachers' needs. This approach ensures that staff development is dynamic and capable of producing the desired improvements in job performance.

The head teachers should scale up internal professional development programs for teachers after taking into consideration key procedures such as the identification of teachers' training needs for the improvement of instructional performance. Head teachers need to also consider encouraging teachers to attend in-service training on best instructional practice, provide guidance on individual performance gaps, and organize peer group coaching programs to solve work challenges. Head teachers should also encourage teachers to pursue further studies to advance their careers.

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