

**Perceived Impact of Teacher Professional Development on Students' Learning
Achievement**

**A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English Education
in Partial Fulfillment for the Master of Education in English**

Submitted by

Sumitra Giri

**Faculty of English Education
Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur
Kathmandu, Nepal**

2026

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Declaration

I hereby declare that, to the best of my knowledge, this thesis is original; and no part of it was earlier submitted for the candidature of research to any university.

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Recommendation for Acceptance

This is to certify that Mrs. Sumitra Giri has prepared this thesis entitled "Perceived Impact of Teacher Professional Development on Students' Learning Achievement" under my guidance and supervision. I recommend this thesis for acceptance.

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Dedication

Dedicated to

my family

who devoted their entire life for my study and making me what I am today.

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Sumitra Giri

Abstract

This study, entitled “Perceived Impact of Teacher Professional Development on Students’ Learning Achievement”, which aimed to discover the extent of impact of teacher professional development on learning achievement of students in the classroom. The researcher adopted a phenomenological research design to conduct the study. Five secondary-level English teachers from five community schools in Tarakeshwor Municipality, Kathmandu, Nepal, were selected using purposive sampling. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The Results shows that professional development is a crucial component to bring about a positive change in instructional strategies, classroom management, lesson planning, reflection, and so on. As a result, the teachers also noted an increase in the level of student participation, engagement, and, consequently, academic learning and performance of the students.

The results of this research highlight the importance of ongoing, contextual, and applied professional development to enrich the quality of instruction in community schools. The study highlights the need for teacher professional development to be supported by the institutional setting, teacher mentoring, and collaboration with others to make it possible in the classroom. The information generated from this research is expected to be beneficial in helping policymakers and schools plan effective and sustainable teacher professional development programs.

Table of Contents

Declaration.....	i
Recommendation for Acceptance	ii
Recommendation for Evaluation	iii
Evaluation and Approval	iv
Dedication	v
Acknowledgement	vi
Abstract.....	viii
Table of Contents.....	ix
List of figures.....	x
List of Abbreviations and Symbols.....	xi
Chapter I: Introduction.....	1
Background of the Study	1
Statement of the Problem	3
Objectives of the Study.....	4
Research Questions.....	4
Significance of the Study.....	4
Delimitations of the Study	5
Definitions of the Key Terms	6
Chapter II: Review of the Related Literature and Conceptual Framework.....	8
Review of the Conceptual Literature.....	8
Introduction to Teacher Professional Development.....	8
Professional Development and Teacher Performance	9
Role of Teacher Professional Development for Student Learning and Academic Achievement.....	10
Review of the Theoretical Literature.....	11
Self-Determination Theory	11
Constructivist Learning Theory	12
Sociocultural Theory.....	13
Theory of Adult Learning	14
Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning	14
Review of Related Empirical Literature	15
Implications of the Review for the Study.....	20

Conceptual Framework.....	22
Chapter III: Methods and Procedures of the Study	25
Research Design and Methods of the Study	25
Population, Sample, and Sampling Strategy	26
Data Collection Tools and Techniques.....	26
Sources of Data.....	26
Primary Sources	26
Secondary Sources:	27
Data Collection Procedures	27
Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedures	27
Ethical Considerations	28
Chapter IV: Analysis and Intrepretation of Results	29
Teacher Professional Development Experiences	29
Impact on Teaching Practices	31
Student Engagement and Motivation	33
Student Learning and Academic Achievement	35
Reflective Teaching Practices	37
Challenges in Implementing Professional Development.....	38
Institutional Support Systems	40
Chapter V: Findings, Conclusions, and Implications.....	43
Summary of Findings	43
Conclusions	46
Implications	48
Policy-related Implications	48
Practice-related Implications.....	49
Research-related Implications	49
References.....	50
Appendix.....	53

List of figures

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework	24
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List of Abbreviations

ALT	– Adult Learning Theory
CLT	- Constructivist Learning Theory
CPDPs	- Continuous Professional Development Programs
CTML	– Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning
EFL	– English as a Foreign Language
PD	- Professional Development
SCT	– Sociocultural Theory
SDT	- Self Determination Theory
SSDP	– School Sector Development Plan
TPD	– Teacher Professional Development
TU	– Tribhuvan University

Chapter One

Introduction

The background of the study, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions, the significance of the study, delimitations of the study, and the operational definition of key terms are outlined in this chapter. The purpose of the chapter is to establish the environment for the study of the effect of teacher professional development (TPD) on the learning and academic performance of the learners at secondary level schools in Nepal.

Background of the Study

The competence, knowledge, and professional commitment of teachers are crucial to the quality of education in any country. Teachers are critical in influencing students' learning processes and academic performance. With this perspective, teacher professional development (TPD) has been one of the significant factors in improving the quality of instruction and the achievement of learning outcomes in education. TPD is considered a continuous process in which the teacher can continuously increase their grasp of pedagogy and enhance teaching methods (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

It is the responsibility of teachers today to take into account the various needs of learners, introduce new technologies and adopt innovative methods in the teaching process. All these factors necessitate professional learning on an ongoing basis. Through Quality TPD, teachers are able to implement learner-centred teaching, such as differentiated teaching, formative assessment and collaborative teaching. This results in improved learning engagement and improved understanding. The quality of teaching has an impact on student learning, and the better quality of teaching brings better results in academic performance (Nahid et al., 2023). Professional development allows teachers to create engaging learning environments that allow students to be active participants.

Positive learning environments are developed through professional development programs. Students are supported to learn in positive environments. The students are more engaged in learning activities, motivated to learn, and successful in their studies as a result of supportive learning environments (Peng & Zhang, 2024).

Guskey (2000) and Feldman and Capobianco (2007) have found that TPD positively influences teaching methods, and consequently student engagement and learning.

To guarantee the enhancement of the quality of teaching, the structured professional development programmes have been set up worldwide. For instance, instructional coaching in the USA is an effective strategy for developing instructional practices via collaboration and feedback (Knight, 2007). Furthermore, research in Oman shows that good professional development programmes lead to improved teaching and learning outcomes for pupils (Al Shabibi et al., 2019).

In the context of education in Nepal, some initiatives have been undertaken to prioritize teacher professional development. In Nepal, there have been some attempts to emphasise teacher professional development programs to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Several approaches have been used to enhance the competency level of teachers. However, there are still challenges in making these programs sustainable, such as the lack of follow-up actions for many program initiatives (Poudel, 2022). In addition, few empirical studies have been done regarding the effect of teachers' professional development on student learning achievements in Nepal.

In addition, teachers' professional development enhances teachers' confidence, professional identity, and reflection skills. These are the skills that are required for building an inclusive and supportive school community. For instance, studies show that teachers' empathic nature and reflective capabilities are responsible for promoting the emotional well-being and resilience of students (Sarwar et al., 2012). Similarly, according to Danielson (2007), constant professional development allows teachers to develop effective learning activities and meet the needs of students.

To sum up, the teacher professional development has a positive effect on the teaching and learning processes. While several studies have explored the significance of such development from various countries, little information is available on its significance in the Nepalese context. Considering this, the current study aims to examine the impact of teacher professional learning on student learning and success in Nepal.

Statement of the Problem

Professional Development of Teachers (TPD) is regarded as one of the most important ways to enhance teacher performance and improve the learning experiences of students. In Nepal and other countries around the world, there is a greater emphasis on the importance of continued professional learning for improving teachers' instructional skills, practice in classrooms, and overall professionalism. Although there are a lot of national-level initiatives to implement TPD programs, there is no significant difference in the implementation of TPD programs as compared to any improvement in students' performances and results. These are usually short-term training sessions during which the main aim of a participant is to acquire knowledge of various theories of instruction. The issue is that there is not enough mentorship or supervision in the process that guarantees the knowledge is put into practice in the classroom (Poudel, 2022). Research from around the world has demonstrated that effective teacher professional development can affect teacher performance, student engagement, and student learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

This discrepancy reveals the importance of investigating teachers' experiences concerning professional development in order to gain more knowledge about how professional development affects their practice and the educational results achieved by the students. Nepalese students in community schools have been identified as performing inconsistently, and a possible explanation for this may be because of the teacher preparation, teacher motivation, and engagement (Nepal, 2020). Studies in the field are mostly quantitative studies, which makes it hard to analyse the complex mechanism of the link between TPD and teaching practices. In this context, Ekmekci and Serrano (2022) point out the need for qualitative studies that would clarify the impact of specific aspects of professional development on classrooms. Notwithstanding, this study aims to investigate the perceived impact of TPD on students' learning and academic performance in the context of secondary schools in Nepal. The topic was selected due to its significance for creating efficient professional development programs.

Objectives of the Study

The study aimed to achieve the following objective;

- a) To explore the perceived impact of teacher professional development on student learning and academic achievement, as perceived by secondary level teachers of English from community school.
- b) To suggest some pedagogical implications.

Research Questions

The study is guided by the following research questions:

- a. How do secondary level teachers perceive about the contribution of teacher professional development to student learning?
- b. How does teacher professional development correspond to students' academic achievement?

Significance of the Study

In terms of relevance and context, this study offers insights regarding the impacts of professional development of teachers on the quality of students' learning and academic performance at secondary level schools in Nepal. By investigating teachers' experiences and opinions about professional development, the present research helps to identify how better approaches to pedagogy and reflective practices influence the process of students' learning in class.

This research is useful for policymakers who can use it to gain information about designing and implementing professional development programs for teachers. The experience-based insights acquired throughout this research can help them design such programs that could be relevant to the classroom setting and professional needs of teachers. This information could facilitate policymakers in developing effective systems for teacher professional development through training systems and resources (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

This study's results also apply to teachers and school administrators. As the study demonstrates how continuous professional learning can affect the quality of teaching and learning, it encourages teachers to engage more in professional learning programs. In this manner, teachers and school leaders may be able to get a glimpse into how collaboration, reflection, and mentoring can improve the quality of teaching practices and boost student engagement. Schools that are interested in implementing professional development strategies that will help improve instructional practices on the basis of needs or learning-centered strategies might find these lessons helpful. (Knight, 2007)

This study can also be used to obtain indirect benefits for students and parents. These effective professional development programs and quality instructional methods make classrooms more engaging, conducive, and attentive to learners' needs. Motivated and competent teachers are more able to stimulate involvement of learners, improve learner participation in learning activities and motivate learners to continue learning efforts. By improving classroom learning conditions, better learning experience and/or learning performances can be achieved for learners (Sarwar et al., 2012).

This work can also be used as empirical evidence in the field of academia for the relationship between professional development of teachers and student achievement outcomes in the context of Nepal. This research can be used as a foundation for further studies on teacher development and student achievement in the context of education in South Asia, as there is little research on this association. The findings of this research can also be used as a reference for future research in the field of teacher identity, emotional intelligence, and student-centred teaching in education (Zeng, 2023).

Delimitations of the Study

This study had the following limitations:

- Only selected community schools in the Tarakeshwor Municipality within the district of Kathmandu were considered for this study.

- The study included only those teachers who taught in the secondary educational level from grade 9 to grade 12. Teachers of the primary and tertiary educational levels were not included in the study.
- Only teachers' opinions were taken into consideration, and thus, the views of the students could not be included in this study.
- This research involved teachers participating in professional development programs like workshops, training programs, peer collaborations, and self-development. Preservice education programs for teachers were not covered by the current study.
- The data collection was done within one week, and thus the impact of the professional development activities of teachers on their performance could not be measured beyond this time span.

Definitions of the Key Terms

The key terms used in this thesis are defined below:

Teacher Professional Development (TPD): Teacher Professional Development is an organized and continuous activity of teacher development in terms of professional knowledge, teaching skills, and teaching methods. The activities conducted by the teachers for developing the skill of their teaching include workshops, in-service trainings, peer learning, and a self-learning program, which are included in the research process for TPD.

Student learning: In the process of teaching and learning, student learning is the process of learning and understanding various concepts. In this research, students' learning is the students' improvement of participation, understanding, and the application of knowledge as a result of the teacher's professionally informed teaching strategy.

Student Achievement: Student achievement means the academic performance or learning outcomes of students in a school setting. The achievement of students in this research is in the form of increased student learning results, which are the results of increased student academic performance in the classroom stemming from enhanced teaching performance by teachers.

Secondary School Teachers: These are teachers who teach children from Grades 9 to 12 in secondary schools. The present study has focused on English teachers working in secondary schools and their attitudes towards teacher development and its impact on learners' learning process.

Community School: Community schools refer to governmental educational institutions, following the national curriculum, where the education of students is provided on a free-of-cost or low-cost basis. In this study, only community schools were considered, and five community schools were selected for the purpose of exploring English teachers' experience in terms of teacher professional development.

Semi-Structured Interview: A semi-structured interview is one of the forms of qualitative data collection, which is a technique in which an interview is conducted using open-ended questions and some room for probing. The purpose of the application of the Semi-structured interview technique in the current study was to find out the experience and perception of teachers about teacher professional development.

Chapter Two

Review of the Related Literature and Conceptual Framework

This chapter aims to critically examine what literature exists in relation to teacher professional development (TPD) and the outcomes of such professional development for students' learning and academic performance. Through this, the chapter is intended to examine theories and empirical evidence that are pertinent to TPD and its impacts on students. Furthermore, this chapter will identify some gaps in the existing literature and give reasons for the need for further research, such as that undertaken in this thesis. The chapter also examines the theoretical perspectives that account for the impact of TPD on teaching and learning.

Review of the Conceptual Literature

In this section I have discussed the key concepts of the study.

Introduction to Teacher Professional Development

Teacher professional development is a phrase that is used to describe the ongoing efforts of teachers to enhance the quality of their teaching. These comprise enhancements of professional understanding and abilities. TPD is seen as a needed component to improve the education system. Effective TPD is ongoing, cooperative, and tightly linked with teachers' instructional practices (Guskey, 2000).

The modern education system demands the ability to fulfil the needs of various learners, the application of technology in education, and the adoption of student-centered approaches in education. This means that teachers must continually develop themselves. Well-structured TPD can provide teachers with an opportunity to look at their teaching and share ideas with other teachers, and develop new teaching strategies that might improve their teaching.

Professional development should include things such as mentoring, coaching, working with colleagues, and receiving feedback from others at all times. All of these qualities enable teachers to slowly change their approach and implement new strategies. The pedagogical knowledge, increased confidence, and development of

professional identity for teachers are by-products of participation in professional development programs.

Also, professional development needs to be a key component of supporting change in the educational context, and it must be used to acclimate teachers to changes in the curriculum, new policies, and technologies. The long-term TPD schemes are far more advantageous than short-term workshops. This, in turn, allows teachers to establish an engaging and effective learning classroom.

Therefore, teachers' training serves as a cornerstone in achieving the goal of teaching effectively and achieving good teaching outcomes. It lays a foundation for developing good practices in teaching and significantly contributes to the influence of these practices on student learning and success.

Professional Development and Teacher Performance

In terms of achieving good educational outcomes, teacher performance is an integral part. Professional learning has a significant impact in teachers' performance, specifically in their ability to teach better, manage classrooms, and enhance their content knowledge. Through participating in various forms of professional learning, teachers are more likely to adopt good practices that foster learning among students.

Teachers have opportunities to participate in professional development to enhance their strategies, including differentiation, formative assessment, and technology. Such strategies work well as they enable catering for the diversity of pupils' needs and making classrooms welcoming for all. Investing in teacher professional development is one solution to good teaching, according to Hargreaves and Fullan (2012).

Professional development also facilitates reflective practice, whereby teachers analyze their teaching strategies and identify ways of improving them. Reflection helps teachers make adaptive decisions about their teaching practices based on student needs and classroom experiences, and, as a result, they become better teachers and classroom performers.

Another important dimension of professional development that has an impact on teacher performance is the increased teacher collaboration in the form of learning communities, where teachers share information and ideas. Collaboration is a way to assist teachers in seeing the problem or a new teaching method from another viewpoint.

In addition to this, teachers' confidence, motivation, and professionalism are enhanced through PD. Effective, self-assured teachers will make good performances in class. Thus, professional development is of paramount importance in order to ensure the optimal performance of teachers.

Role of Teacher Professional Development for Student Learning and Academic Achievement

For teachers, professional development programs are important to improve teaching quality that will contribute to effective learning and high academic performance among learners. Effective teaching is one of the key factors that impact pupils' achievement. Teacher professional development in which teachers are actively involved allows teachers to shape their teaching practices to foster active learning.

Research indicates that professional development has been associated with teachers' increased use of teaching approaches that involve students in learning and collaboration. This kind of learning approach involves the participation of students in the learning process, which results in the improvement of topics understanding (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

Professional development helps teachers develop appropriate lessons, plan for formative assessment, and provide constructive feedback to students. These help the learners to identify what they are good at and what they need to work on, thus enhancing learning experiences. Sarwar et al. (2012) indicated that the awareness and positive attitude of teachers towards students result in enhancing the students' motivativeness and resilience.

The student-teacher relationship is supportive, created by appropriate teaching methods, which also contribute to a favourable learning environment. Respect and

support from teachers is crucial to engagement by learners, which has a positive impact on learning experiences and learning outcomes.

Other studies conducted outside of the U.S. have also revealed that professional development affects student learning. As stated above, Darling-Hammond et al (2017) point out that TPD programs support high-quality teaching, which results in improved children's learning and performance. But the same can't be applied to Nepal as no research focuses on the effect of TPD on student learning in Nepal.

Therefore, it is crucial to have an understanding of how teachers' professional development affects the success of their students. The aim of this research is thus to explore the above-mentioned association in light of teachers' experiences and practices in Nepal. The preceding discussions about the conceptual basis of the research give an introduction to the major factors involved in the current research. The theoretical approaches that underpin these concepts are discussed in the next section.

Review of the Theoretical Literature

The concept of Teacher Professional Development has impacts on the teaching methods, classroom atmosphere, participation of the students, and achievement of students; some of the important theories related to learning and motivation explain how. The theories chosen represent an alternative approach to examining professional development that describes learning and teaching as social, motivational, reflective, and cognitive processes rather than a technical process. The theoretical framework includes such concepts as the Self-Determination Theory, Constructivist Learning Theory, Sociocultural Theory, Adult Learning Theory, and Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning.

Self-Determination Theory

Self-Determination Theory (SDT) proposed by Deci and Ryan (1985) is a theory of human motivation that posits that three psychological needs (autonomy, competence, and relatedness) are the drivers of human motivation. People are said to be intrinsically motivated when they feel competent, autonomous, and related

regarding their actions. Teachers need to develop an environment that will address these needs with regard to instruction. (Deci & Ryan, 1985)

In terms of applying the SDT theory on teachers' professional development (TPD), this theory states that if a teacher is effective and relevant in TPD, then the teacher will have a sense of professional confidence. This study found that professional attitudes improved following the teachers' mentoring and coaching. The above fact substantiates the statement given by the SDT theory that more competence is better for teachers.

It is also worth noting that the theme of student motivation and involvement is also part of the scope of SDT theory principles. The teachers' opinions that were obtained from the results of this study and their participation in different activities (discussion, role plays, etc.) helped students to be more motivated and participate in education. These techniques foster autonomy, competence, and relatedness.

It should be mentioned that teachers' capabilities in implementing innovation in the classroom were improved by the support of institutions and interaction with peers. The following is one of the applications of the relatedness facet of SDT, which stands out; it shows how the motivational system of Occupations facilitates the motivation of teachers as well as their learners. So, based on these reasons, it is confirmed that there is sufficient theoretical background of SDT to explain the effect of TPD on motivation.

Constructivist Learning Theory

Constructivist learning theory is a theory that states that learning is an active process that occurs when a person constructs new knowledge by interacting with the environment and their experiences. Theory that focuses on inquiry learning, collaboration, problem solving, and learner-centered pedagogy. (Daniels, 2002)

Obviously, the use of constructivist learning theory in the research is carried out. The evidence shows that teachers' traditional teacher-centred didactic approach was modified by them as a result of their involvement in professional development activities. Differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, and formative

assessments all reflect a certain constructivist approach since it focuses on meaning-making.

The results of the effects on the teaching method have shown that the constructivist method has been applied. Teachers reported a shift from a teacher-centered approach to knowledge transfer to a student-centered approach that encourages them to engage. This reflects the constructivist theory that states that the construction of knowledge is a social process and that it is constructed from experience.

Additionally, the findings suggest that the enhancement in students' conceptual understanding, critical thinking skills, and communication skills supports the constructivist approach. The teachers did not concern themselves with the results of the exams and focused on improving students' concept understanding and skills. It is clear that this change in perspective not only helped teachers improve their teaching practices but also changed their mindset about teaching and learning.

Thus, Constructivist Learning Theory gives the definition of the effects of TPD in changing pedagogical development that can stimulate active learning in learners.

Sociocultural Theory

According to the Sociocultural Theory of Vygotsky, learning takes place by interacting with other more knowledgeable persons. The main concept of this theory is the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). According to Vygotsky, the human being develops cognitive abilities better when he or she is able to communicate with people who are more knowledgeable within his or her ZPD. (Ha et al., 2004)

The outcomes of this study can be related to the sociocultural theory from several perspectives. One, teachers mentioned that students were more engaged when they did collaborative activities, discussed, and worked together. It made it possible to develop the social interactions and thinking skills of the students in their ZPD.

Furthermore, the support systems in institutions have sociocultural aspects. The study showed that mentoring, peer support, and administrative support were needed to encourage successful professional development. Teachers' professional

learning is also possible through collaboration, just as learners' learning is possible in their ZPD.

In fact, social interactions are important when it comes to teachers' professional development in the under-resourced settings of Nepali community schools. So, professional development will not be possible without interaction with others.

Theory of Adult Learning

Knowles designed the theory of adult learning, or andragogy. This theory emphasizes the concept of self-directed, experiential learning; problem-based learning; and adults with needs that centered around the practical application. Adults will be able to learn better if the training provided is associated with their day-to-day experiences. (Knowles et al., 2020)

The importance of this theory is that it has a relation to the results of the research conducted. Teachers were found to be more interested in mentoring/coaching than in short training sessions. They had to have some tools that would help them with their work.

Reflective practices in teaching are one of the key themes that can be detected in the research study. Teachers are involved in self-reflection and evaluation, adjustment of the teaching method used, and sharing reflections with other teachers. This is an important aspect of andragogy, as adults will learn from reflective practices based on their experiences.

There are some contextual problems that are faced by teachers in Nepali secondary schools, like the number of students in a class, the lack of resources, etc. As such, in the context of adult learning, it is recommended that teachers be provided with context-relevant PD.

Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning

According to Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning by Mayer (2005), the process of studying happens due to two types of channels – visual and verbal. Appropriate use of multimedia has positive effects on the learning process, because

when using the right media in learning, they can facilitate learning so that the student can better understand the subject matter. (Feldman & Capobianco, 2007)

After professional development, several subjects in the present study cited their explanations of the selection of the use of multimedia in the instructional activities of learning in the learning process. That has positively impacted learners' attitude towards learning and understanding.

In relation to the teaching condition in Nepalese community schools, where teachers do not have access to more advanced forms of technology, it is clear that even the effective application of basic forms of multimedia technology would positively affect students' understanding of the lessons and their level of motivation. Teacher professional development is not only a process to equip teachers with the necessary technical skills but also it has an impact on the efficiency of learning processes.

As a result, the Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning could be used to examine the results obtained during this research.

All in all, these theories give grounds to explain the interrelatedness of teacher professional development and students' learning processes in a multidimensional way. The motivational dimension of change behavior is explained by Self-Determination Theory and the pedagogic shift and the interaction between learners and teacher in class is explained by the Constructivist and Sociocultural Theories.

The findings of this study exemplify all the above, suggesting that teacher professional development in secondary schools in Nepal is not just about skill acquisition, but it is an empowering process, in which motivation, teaching methodology, reflective practice, and classroom discourse are reconceptualized.

Review of Related Empirical Literature

Numerous empirical studies have been conducted on the effects of TPD, instructional strategies and impact on student learning achievement. A focus of such research is the need for ongoing and relevant professional development in order to improve the effectiveness of teaching and achievement.

Joyce and Showers (1988) investigated the impact of professional development in Student Achievement Through Staff Development on a longer-term time horizon. The purpose of this study was to identify training components that would impact teaching effectiveness and student achievement. The study adopted an experimental design of which the subjects were randomly allocated to experimental and control groups during a particular period. The statistical analysis used was the student achievement. The study concluded that the inclusion of professional development elements like theory, practice, feedback and coaching improves teaching and boosts student achievement (Joyce & Showers, 1988).

Knight 2007 explored the potential of instructional coaching to shape teacher practices and involve students in the book *Instructional Coaching: Improving Teaching Through Professional Dialogue*. The research aimed to discover the role of instructional coaching in the promotion of instruction. The methodological approach used was mixed; the participants sampled were selected which comprised a sample of teachers in public schools in the United States. Data were collected by surveys, observations, and semi-structured interviews, and subsequently analyzed with regression techniques. The results suggested that instructional coaching led to effective use of active learning strategies, teacher-student engagement, and teacher collaboration (Knight, 2007).

In this quantitative research, Sarwar et al. assessed the impact of the student-centered instruction techniques that they devised during the process of professional development on student achievement. The study aimed to evaluate the effects of the teacher practices on students' achievement. The data collection method was conducted by making questionnaires and by studying the results of students' academic achievement then analyzed by the regression technique. The finding showed that student-centredness of instruction has a significant effect on enhancing students' achievement (Sarwar et al., 2012).

Powers et al. (2015) conducted a "longitudinal research design" to assess the impact of TPD on the quality of teaching and students' engagement. The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of regular TPD. To select teachers, purposive sampling was employed, and questionnaires were used to collect data from the teachers and observations were conducted in the classrooms. Thematic coding and

trend analysis techniques were used in analyzing the data. Results showed that regular TPD improved teaching practices, boosted student involvement and reduced dropout rates (Powers et al., 2015).

Phillips et al. (2016) did research to investigate the influence of metacognitive training in professional development on the student learning outcomes. To explore the effects of TPD related to metacognition on students' performance. A quasi-experimental design with matched teacher-student pairs was employed by the authors. Data were collected with pre-test and post-test and analyzed by using statistical comparative methods. The results demonstrate that metacognitive training has a positive impact on students' independence and problem-solving ability (Phillips et al., 2016).

Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) research was conducted to gain insight to the characteristics of effective professional development programs. The aim was to determine teachers' perspective on what made the greatest difference in terms of teachers' performance and students' achievement in relation to TPD. Systematic review design was used and 35 peer-reviewed articles were selected by purposive sampling. Document analysis was the method employed for data collection, and comparative thematic synthesis was used for data analysis. The attributes of TPD that seem to be most effective are sustainability, content specificity, collaboration, and resonance with classroom instruction, whereas short-term workshops prove to be quite ineffective without follow-up (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Al Shabibi et al. (2019) aimed to find out the effect of Teacher Professional Development (TPD) on the methods of teaching and the students' experiences at the schools in Oman. The focus of this study was to explore the relationship between professional development and classroom environment, specifically. The authors decided to apply the quantitative survey method with 400 teachers being selected using stratified random sampling method. For the analysis of the questionnaire data descriptive statistics and regression analysis were used. The results showed that professional development stimulates teachers' self-esteem and encourages innovation among the educators and enhances student engagement (Al Shabibi et al., 2019).

A comparative case study was conducted in Nepal (2020) to analyse the community schools and satisfaction of the community schools with the students. In particular, Nepal wanted to investigate the role of teachers' professional development on the school's performance. The author used descriptive statistics and thematic analysis methods to gather qualitative data from selected participants by questionnaires and interviews. Based on the findings, it is concluded that teacher professional development has a positive impact on student satisfaction and performance (Nepal, 2020).

Graham et al. (2022) studied the correlation between teacher competencies and classroom assignments. The research question was to examine if there were any differences in student achievement when the teacher's competency matched the subject the teacher taught. The quantitative method of research was used and secondary method was used to gather the information. The statistical models were used to collect and analyse the performance data and the information on teachers' qualification. The study found that there is a positive relationship between matching teacher competencies and academic achievement of students (Graham et al., 2022).

Ekmekci and Serrano (2022) were exploring the link between professional development and student motivation and achievement in STEM learning. The research was designed to determine if teacher quality (as affected by TPD) affected student achievement. The study employed quantitative correlational research and purposive sampling was used to select teachers and students to participate in the study. Questionnaires were used to gather data which was then analyzed by regression analysis. The quality of instruction was promoted through professional development and was found to be a factor in students' improvement of their critical thinking ability and motivation (Ekmekci & Serrano, 2022).

Poudel (2022) did a research on teacher professional development within the School Sector Development Plan in the context of Nepal. This study aimed to explore the impact of TPD activities in Nepal. The study design was mixed method and purposive sampling techniques were used in selecting teachers. The techniques used in collecting data were survey, interview and observation, and the method of analysis was statistical analysis and thematic analysis. It turned out that while there are TPD

activities being implemented, they sometimes fail to be context-relevant and supported properly (Poudel, 2022).

Fernandes et al. (2023) aimed to find what kind of impact pedagogical training has on teaching efficiency in their study published in *Teacher Professional Development in Higher Education*. The study aimed to explore the impact of TPD on the process of effective teaching and learning outcomes. Data collection was a mixed method of quantitative and qualitative data with the purposefully selected university professors. The results of the analysis indicated that professional development enhances teaching skills, students' satisfaction, and academic performance (Fernandes et al., 2023).

Zeng (2023) carried out a systematic literature review research aimed at professional development in the field of EFL teaching. The aim was to find out the impact of TPD on teaching and learning effectiveness in different cultural context. Documents analysis was used to collect the data and thematic analysis was used to analyze the results. It was found that culturally relevant TPD is more effective when it comes to the effectiveness of instruction and learning outcomes (Zeng, 2023).

In a quantitative correlational study, Nahid et al. (2023) set out to examine the relationship between teacher motivation, professional development and student academic achievement. It aimed to discover the impact of TPD on teachers' motivation and subsequently on the pupils' performance. Students were purposefully sampled and data collection tools were used, such as a survey. Correlation and regression analysis was used to analyze the data. Their findings concluded that the better the teachers are motivated, the better they create conducive learning environments and the academic achievement of students improves (Nahid et al., 2023).

Dr. Priya and Sangeeta (2024) carried out a qualitative case study to understand the impact of professional development for teachers in under-resourced secondary schools in India. The aim of this research was to explore the effects of TPD in challenging circumstances. Purposive sampling was done in the study and interviews were used for data collection and thematic analysis as the analytical method was used. Conclusively, the results revealed that professional development on

emotional intelligence and inclusive education has made the teachers more flexible and provided more involvement in learning activities for students (Dr. Priya & Sangeeta, 2024).

In the current study, Sarwer et al. (2024) conducted a quantitative survey study to assess the impact of teacher empathy developed as a result of professional development on student success. In particular, the study aimed to investigate the relationship between teacher empathy and teaching achievement. Questionnaire was used to gather information and regression analysis was used for data analysis. According to Sarwer et al. (2024), the higher level of teacher empathy promotes inclusivity and better learning outcomes among students (Sarwer et al., 2024).

The empirical findings from all the above studies in various national, regional and Nepali contexts clearly indicate that teacher professional development is an important facilitator for enhancing the teaching performance and learning outcomes of students. But despite the considerable amount of research that has been done in this specific field, little qualitative research has been conducted on teachers' perspectives, particularly with respect to the impact of professional development in the secondary education system in Nepal. The studies that have been conducted in this area are mainly quantitative studies that focused on the results of teacher professional development, and did not pay attention to the teachers' opinions. Thus, this study tries to bridge this gap and investigates the teachers' perspectives on teacher development and how it affects learners' learning and academic performance.

Implications of the Review for the Study

The existing literature on the theoretical perspectives and research studies is a great foundation to undertake the proposed study. The reviewed literature suggests Teacher Professional Development (TPD) is important for improving pedagogical processes, improving the competency of teachers, and improving student learning outcomes. The theoretical framework of Self-Determination Theory by Deci & Ryan (1985), Constructivist Learning Theory by Daniels (2002), and Adult Learning Theory by Knowles et al. (2020) suggest that the essence of learning happens through creating a conducive environment for students to learn. All these models show that

TPD must be continuous, collaborative and situational and teachers should be able to develop autonomy, competence and relatedness of students.

The empirical review also reveals the merit of professional development to strengthen classroom activities and learning processes. Teachers who get good training throughout their careers are not only able to implement new methods in class, they can also motivate students to engage themselves in the learning process and produce positive overall results (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Sarwer et al., 2024). It can be concluded that professional development is one of the important factors in the training of teachers' skills.

Additionally, professional development has become increasingly important for research scholars of South Asia as well. The results of the studies conducted in Bangladesh and China revealed that the professional development of teachers in the region needs to have some characteristics such as teacher engagement, culture sensitivity and context adaptation (Nahid et al., 2023; Zeng, 2023). It means that while considering professional development of teachers, one should always take into account the context of education.

In this paper, particularly interesting is work carried out in Nepal. Therefore, Poudel (2022) found that professional development programs for teachers have been launched with national education reform such as School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) but most of those programs have no proper follow-up, context-based approach and supportive measures. In turn, Nepal (2020) recognizes that schools that take an active approach to teacher professional development can yield positive outcomes including improvements in satisfaction among students and higher academic performance. As a result, researchers pointed out the strengths and weaknesses of the current professional development of teachers in Nepal. Thus, the teachers' perception of professional development should be comprehensively explored.

The second implication that can be drawn from the previous studies relates to the role of understanding of the importance of learning as the mediator of the impact of teacher professional development on academic achievement. Although a large number of studies have been conducted to establish the positive effect of professional

development on education, few studies have been conducted to analyse the impact of change in teacher's behaviour on better learning process among students, particularly in the context of Nepalese secondary school students. Understanding this process is essential to develop teacher professional development programs that enhance teacher skills and support learning experiences and improved educational outcomes.

Professional development with multiple elements such as collaborative learning, the development of emotional intelligence, digital pedagogy, and inquiry-based teaching is more likely to lead to changes in practice that will benefit both teachers and students. In this way, it becomes possible to motivate teachers to develop creative teaching methods and cater to students' specific needs. Therefore, it appears that research on teacher views about their participation in the aforementioned professional development activities is warranted.

The literature review in general confirms the importance of this topic, both from a theoretical and practical perspective in the study of teacher professional development in secondary schools in Nepal. The need for researching teacher professional development not only in terms of its provision, but also in terms of its relevance, quality, and implications for classroom activities is emphasized. In this study, the researcher tries to analyze the impact of teacher PD on the teacher's teaching process as well as the students' learning and academic success. The findings may have implications for research as well as for the development of educational policy in the country being investigated.

Conceptual Framework

The concept of Teacher Professional Development (TPD) that is applied in this study is the concept of how TPD influences student learning and student performance in terms of improving the teaching methods. From the literature reviewed, it is evident that TPD can be used to develop and enhance pedagogical skills and knowledge, which consequently can improve students' engagement and achievement (Guskey, 2000; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Joyce & Showers, 1988). This is supported by the research of Darling-Hammond et al. (2017), Knight (2007), and Poudel (2022), who showed that teachers can use more effective teaching methods and implement student-centered approaches to teaching when they receive

TPD through workshop/seminar attendance, mentoring, collaborative work with colleagues, and self-development.

In this framework, teacher professional development is an independent variable, in which teachers can enhance their teaching skills. The literature on the topic suggests that TPD positively impacts teachers' confidence, flexibility, and reflective processes, enabling them to employ appropriate instructional strategies effectively across different classrooms (Al Shabibi et al., 2019; Fernandes et al., 2023). In other words, the teacher professional development process makes teachers more capable in terms of instruction, which is the first mediator in the proposed process, and contributes to Student Learning and Engagement. The literature review shows that students' motivation, critical thinking, and engagement are enhanced when teachers use TPD (Sarwar et al., 2024; Nahid et al., 2023) techniques.

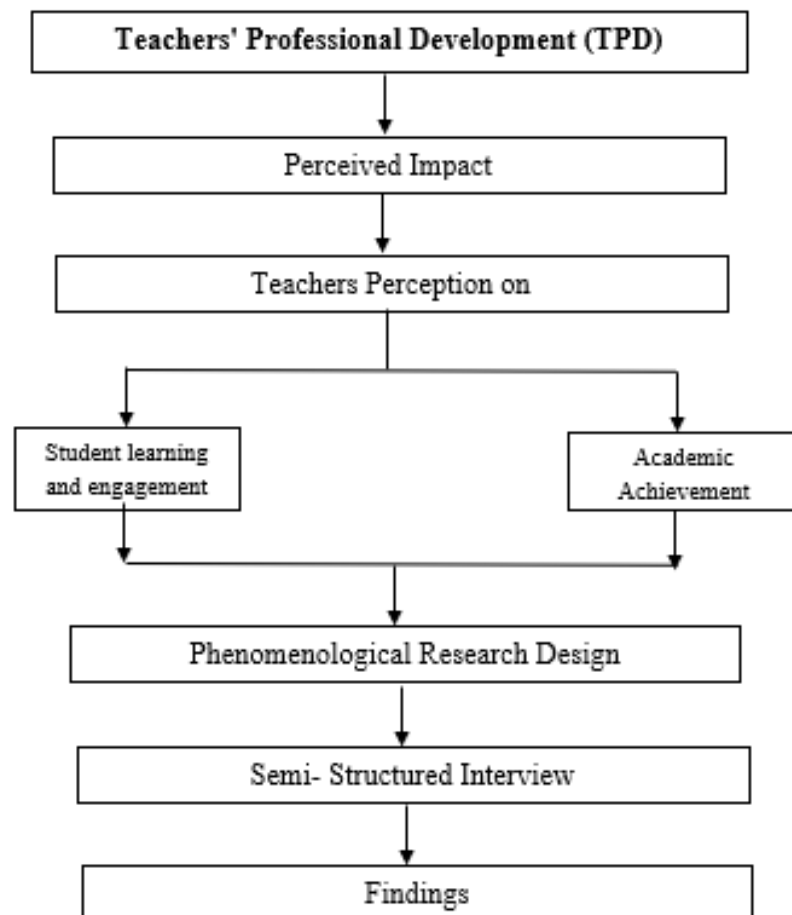
This is followed by improvements in teaching practices, which then results in academic achievement, which is the dependent variable in this model. The research studies conducted worldwide and in Nepal have established that the use of skills acquired through continuous professional development programs (CPDPs) has shown to have improved academic outcomes (Joyce & Showers, 1988; Nepal, 2020; Poudel, 2022). Thus, TPD indirectly affects academic performance through better teaching and learning.

The contextual variables in the model are support from school leaders, resources, and positive school culture. Professional learning is translated into classroom practice through effective school leadership and availability of resources, and a positive school culture helps to promote continued development among teachers (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012; Zeng, 2023).

Ultimately, this association is cyclic in nature: good outcomes for students can encourage teachers to continue their professional development activities, thus forming a cycle of improvement. In total, this conceptual framework, which is derived from literature review, is the basis used to examine the influence of TPD on the practice of teaching and learning in this study.

In this study, the conceptual framework is shown in Figure 1, which implies that teacher professional development has an impact on the learning and academic performance of students.

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework



Chapter Three

Methods and Procedures of the Study

This chapter primarily outlines the design and methods employed in the study, including the population, sample, and sampling strategy, data collection tools and techniques, source of data, data collection procedures, data analysis, interpretation procedures, and ethical considerations adopted in the study.

Research Design and Methods of the Study

This study employed a phenomenological research design which primarily focuses on lived experiences and not on numerical data. The choice of using a phenomenological design is mainly based on understanding teachers' experiences in professional development, the perception that they have regarding the impacts of such activities, and the reason behind their influences on student learning results (Poudel, 2022). This research design has been methodologically appropriate for the present study as the focus of the study is mainly on perceptions, reflections and experiences of teachers.

In this context, the research questions for this study focus on understanding teachers' interpretations of professional development and the way that they interpret the impact of professional development on their practice and with students. Therefore, a phenomenological research design was chosen as the most appropriate one that would enable to understand the experience and interpretations without any statistic relationship.

In the process of data collection for this research study, semi-structured interviews have been conducted to enable teachers to reflect on the impact of TPD on their teaching and relationship with learners.

The phenomenological research design enabled the researcher to examine teachers' perceptions of their professional development experiences, as well as commonalities and uniqueness in teachers' experiences in community schools. The study focused on the participants' experiences and was particular in providing a more in-depth look into how TPD affected teaching and student engagement (Sarwar et al., 2012).

In the context of community schools in Nepal, phenomenology was appropriate as professional development in community schools is influenced by factors such as lack of resources, exam-based teaching system, etc. In the case of phenomenology, the researcher would be able to explore the realities of such a situation from the teachers' point of view.

Population, Sample, and Sampling Strategy

The target population for this research is secondary level English language teachers of five community schools of Tarakeshwor Municipality, Kathmandu, Nepal. The sample population, on the other hand, is five English language teachers. The participants of the study are identified using a purposive sampling method so that the participants have rich teaching experience and are involved in professional development activities.

Data Collection Tools and Techniques

The research instruments employed in the present study were semi-structured interviews guidelines as the main research instruments. Semi-structured interviews were employed to include teachers' experiences related to professional development, alterations in teaching methods, and the influence of the described experience on students' learning outcomes. It was justified to use this research approach as a phenomenological one.

Sources of Data

The study made use of both primary and secondary sources of data to get a complete picture of the research problem.

Primary Sources

Secondary level English teachers from the community school in Tarakeshwor Municipality, Kathmandu, Nepal, were the primary sources of data. Data were gathered directly by the use of the interview guidelines.

Secondary Sources:

Secondary data were collected from various sources such as educational reports, journals, school profiles and national policy papers on teacher professional development. They gave background information for the interpretation of the main data. In addition, the secondary materials were useful in comparing and contrasting the findings with other studies carried out on teacher professional development and student learning outcomes.

Data Collection Procedures

The data collection method used was face-to-face interactions with participants from selected community schools for one week. The school principals for the selected schools were formally requested for permission to conduct interviews before data collection. Having obtained the necessary approval, I have contacted the selected English teachers and made them aware of the importance of the study.

The rights of the participants as participants in research work were clearly pointed out to them, including the voluntary nature of participation and their rights to withdraw from the study at any time they felt like it. The interviews were scheduled at a convenient time to avoid interference with the normal teaching schedule of the participants.

The interviews took about 30 to 45 minutes each. Interviews were audio recorded with consent of the interviewees to facilitate data collection. The participants were encouraged to be honest and express their opinions and views on the issues under discussion. These recordings were transcribed and used as data for analysis.

Data Analysis and Interpretation Procedures

The thematic analysis model proposed by Braun & Clarke (2006) in the form of six stages was used to analyze the data obtained from the interviews, which were qualitative. This enabled us to detect, classify and explain trends in the data.

The analysis involved the following steps:

- i. **Familiarization:** The researcher read and re-read the transcribed material to get a good grasp of the participants' statements. At this stage, initial ideas and observations arose.
- ii. **Generating Initial Codes:** Phrases, sentences that seemed important in relation to the research questions were highlighted and coded. An inductive coding technique was used to generate codes and themes organically from the data.
- iii. **Establishment of Themes:** The codes identified were further analyzed to identify larger themes, based on the similarities and patterns found in the data.
- iv. **Reviewing Themes:** The initial themes were validated to ensure that they captured the data and that there was a clear separation between the different themes.
- v. **Defining and Naming Themes:** All themes were clearly determined by identifying relevant quotes from the transcribed interviews.
- vi. **Producing the Report:** The final step was the theme development into an analytical report, in relation to the experiences of the participants with the aim and theory of the study.

The researcher used the Taguette qualitative analysis software to organize, code, and access segments of data to assist in coding. This helped to make the analysis more reliable and accurate.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues played a significant role in conducting the research. Before data gathering, ethics approval was sought from the necessary agencies. The participants were briefed on the purpose of the research, and the need for them to volunteer was made clear. The data was kept confidential and proper reference was given to the source of the data.

Chapter Four

Analysis and Interpretation of Results

This chapter presents the findings of this study based on the data collected from five English teachers who teach in community secondary schools of Tarakeshwor Municipality. The data collected was analyzed using thematic analysis to gain insights into the experiences of the teachers in Teacher Professional Development (TPD) and how TPD affects their teaching, student engagement and academic performance. Results are also compared with the previous literature.

Teacher Professional Development Experiences

This theme focuses on the different PD programs that teachers participate in and how the PD experiences positively contribute to their professional development. Professional development is a critical aspect in preparing pedagogical knowledge, enhancing teaching ability, and enhancing teacher self-efficacy. Knowing the types of PD that teachers have been involved in can give insights into how teachers develop professionally to better their teaching practices.

All respondents mentioned being engaged in many PD programs during their teaching career. Workshops, coaching, peer-learning, webinars, and online courses were a few examples of the PD programs.

Participant 1 said, “They learned new strategies and enhanced their classroom management skills through workshops and coaching, and could work collaboratively with other teachers.” Participant 2 agreed, “Online classes and coaching enabled them to adopt new teaching strategies and use digital technologies they never knew before.” Participant 3 said, “In-service training and peer learning provided them with practical approaches and ways to use in their classroom.” Participant 4 was thankful for the opportunity to gain “new teaching skills and ways to use webinars and workshops that allow for interaction.” Lastly, Participant 5 was pleased about “mentoring and long-term coaching in theory and practical knowledge to lesson planning, classroom management, and evaluation.”

In this sense, and after considering all the participants' answers, teachers have the opportunity to view professional learning as a continuous process. Although short-

term training experiences were considered to be educational, long-term training experiences were considered transformational due to the ability to provide continuous feedback in the training experience.

Professional development, teachers pointed out, is most important in terms of being practical. It suggests the importance of strategies that would be applicable in class and not just for theoretical knowledge. Professional development, therefore, involves trying out learned strategies in class and not learning anything new at all.

Under the conditions of scarce resources in community schools in Nepal, the concept of professional development turns out to be professional empowerment. Teachers' initiative and collaborative effort help to implement strategies. Therefore, professional development of the teacher becomes professional reconstruction, not the implementation of policies. This outcome is in line with previous research on what TPD should look like (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

The findings also indicated that teacher professional development helped teachers to build their professional identity and confidence. In addition to learning new pedagogical methods, participants saw professional development as a chance to develop into reflective practitioners who would continually reflect on practice and work to develop themselves as teachers. This means that teachers viewed professional development as an on-going process, rather than as a mandated institutional obligation. These perceptions are especially important in the context of community schools in Nepal where teachers are often faced with the challenge of teaching in contexts of low levels of teaching resources and varied student needs. Professional resilience and motivation that is important, therefore, is through Continuous professional learning.

The results are strongly correlated with Adult Learning Theory by Knowles et al. (2020) that posits that effective learning for adults happens when learning is practical, self-directed and relevant to their work. The participants continually noted that mentoring/coaching and classroom-based professional development are more effective than isolated workshops because they enable new learning to transfer to the actual classroom environment. This is an indication that teachers appreciate experiential learning that faces challenges in their everyday teaching process.

Likewise, the results suggest Self-Determination Theory (SDT) (Deci & Ryan, 1985) which posits that people are more likely to be motivated to perform when their needs for competence, autonomy, and relatedness are met. Professional development, as reflected in the teachers' participation in mentoring and peer collaboration and coaching, helped boost teachers' confidence and willingness in implementing innovative instruction, which in turn increased their professional competence.

Impact on Teaching Practices

This theme addresses the influence of PD on teachers' classroom practices, which include the planning process of lessons, the strategies of instruction, and the classroom management practices, among others. In this theme, the focus is on the ways in which teachers have integrated the new knowledge and skills into their practice, and how learning is made more interesting and efficient for the students.

Participants indicated significant changes that they had experienced in their classroom practices due to the professional development activities.

Participant 1 noted that “The instructional coaching provided was a chance to experiment with new techniques and see how they work”. In a similar way, Participant 2 indicated, “It enabled them to plan for lessons better and utilize digital technologies in enhancing their efficacy”. Participant 3 commented that “They started adopting strategies such as differentiated instructions and using interactive methods in addressing students' individual needs”. Participant 4 reported “Classroom management and use of cooperative learning strategies”. Participant 5 said, “Through mentoring and training via workshops, they became inspired to focus on active learning”.

All narratives share the paradigm shift from pedagogies focused on the transmission of knowledge to others to other pedagogies that focus more on the participatory one. There is evidence of collaborative learning, differentiation, formative assessments, and inclusiveness. Similarity here means that professional development training not only helped professionals to change their pedagogical style but also their attitude towards learning.

It is interesting to note that teachers who tried more with their teaching methods had high levels of professional efficacy. That is, TPD could have increased their teachers' self-confidence, which led to increased teachers' willingness to try new approaches in teaching.

However, there were a number of nuances. Some teachers valued the integration of digital tools, while others focused on a more inclusive and classroom management perspective. Those nuances are not inconsistent, but they indicate the flexibility of teachers as they tailor professional learning to their own needs.

In the case of Nepalese community schools, which offer education designed to achieve exam results, the move towards a pedagogic model that focuses on students is a radical change. That is, PD is not a catalyst for change of pedagogy but pedagogical change through PD. This is consistent with the literature on professional development, which states that the long-term TPD improves the pedagogical responsiveness (Poudel, 2022).

The results suggest that the professional development affected not only what strategies and approaches the participants used in their classrooms, but also their conceptions of effective teaching and learning. The teachers saw themselves no longer as disseminators of knowledge but as facilitators who would help students build their knowledge by actively participating in learning. These represent a huge shift in thinking around professional development and an example of how professional development can impact on teachers' pedagogical beliefs as well as classroom practice.

The results are very repetitive of the principles of Constructivist Learning Theory in which meaningful learning is achieved when the learner is active in building knowledge through interactions, collaboration and problem solving. The teachers cited higher frequency of using learner centered instructional practices such as group discussion, differentiated instruction, cooperative learning, and formative assessment. This indicates that professional development supported teachers to foster classrooms in which students were actively involved in learning as opposed to passively receiving knowledge.

In addition, the greater integration of digital technologies, as reported by some participants, indicates that teachers gained confidence in their choices of learning approaches for different learning contexts. As Mayer (2005) shows in his Cognitive Theory of Multimedia Learning, the integration of appropriate multimedia can enhance students' understanding by providing them with information through multiple cognitive channels. Thus, there seems to be a positive effect on teachers' technological pedagogical competence and their instructional competence in terms of professional development.

While teachers indicated improvements, the results also highlight the need for ongoing institutional support to implement the learner-centered pedagogy. Professional development is not enough to ensure enduring changes if teachers return to schools where the traditional examination-oriented approach is still predominant. A significant shift in pedagogical practice is consequently reliant on changes in individual teachers' commitment and on the provision of supportive educational contexts.

Student Engagement and Motivation

The theme focuses on researching the effects of professional learning on student engagement and motivation towards learning. It describes how the adoption of improved teaching practices by teachers as a result of professional development makes students participate and react to what happens in class.

According to all participants, using strategies acquired during professional development raised students' level of engagement in classes.

According to participant one, "Discussion group, role play, and student involvement were conducive in the learning and teaching process". Likewise, Participant two mentioned that "During class time, students were asking questions, sharing ideas, and showing interest". Participant three shared, "The collaborative activities resulted in teamwork and increased students' interest in learning". Participant four said, "The student-centered teaching and interactive teaching methods led to interesting and exciting learning sessions".

Though all the interviewees reported an increase in engagement among students, they described engagement not only as behavioral but also as emotional and cognitive engagement. As seen in all the responses, engagement was considered to be a multi-faceted process, including behavioral, emotional, and cognitive engagement. Teachers' perceptions of student engagement, then, increased in parallel with teaching practices. Besides, engagement was seen as a gradual and not an immediate process. Students noted that the more consistently teachers engaged with a classroom using the interactive approaches, the more engaged the students were. It suggests that professional development affects classroom dynamics via the teacher/student interaction.

Furthermore, some students exhibited learning behavior that involved learning actively, while others needed structured learning approaches for active learning. The observation indicates that teachers' awareness of diversity has been enhanced by differentiated instruction.

Greater involvement of students in terms of active participation and collaboration could indicate some cultural shifts in classrooms in Nepal, where active learning styles were not traditionally prevalent. Therefore, professional development affects classroom dynamics because of its effects on teacher-student interaction. This finding is in line with the previous study which explored the correlation between the teaching methods and student motivation (Sarwar et al. 2012).

The students consistently reported that their engagement in the classroom was not just in the form of participation, but also in terms of increased curiosity, confidence, and willingness in communication in English. The results of these observations suggest that the indirect effect of professional development on students' attitudes towards learning was experienced by teachers who can provide a more supportive and interactive classroom. Thus, student engagement seems to be a result of better teaching rather than a result of professional learning.

The results also support Self-Determination Theory (SDT), which suggests that motivational conditions within the classroom and learning environment can foster intrinsic motivation through the provision of autonomy, competence, and positive social relationships. Incorporating collaborative learning activities, classroom

discussions and student-centered instructional strategies created learning environments for students to be physically engaged and be able to voice their ideas. These contexts will likely enhance learners' confidence and motivate them to engage in learning English.

Moreover, the results are in line with the theories of Sociocultural Theory which states that learning is achieved through meaningful interaction with teachers and peers. The use of collaborative activities and classroom discussions reported by participants increased, thus allowing opportunities for students to acquire communication skills through social interaction. As part of this, professional development helped establish positive classroom relationships and helped create learning environments in which students are active knowledge-constructors instead of passive recipients.

Student Learning and Academic Achievement

This theme explores the impact of professional development on student learning and academic achievement. An analysis of how the use of better teacher instructional practices, as a result of professional development, affects student understanding and achievement in the classroom.

It can be concluded that there are noticeable positive changes in participants' understanding of concepts and progress. As participant one says: "Improved test and homework grades". Also, participant 2 says: "The others who were doing poorly even began to improve slowly after that". Participant 4 states: "Better understanding of English concepts and enhanced critical thinking skills". Last but not least, participant 5, highlights: Progress in language skills (reading, writing, and speaking). Meanwhile, some of the participants reported that although positive changes in their students were observed, some of them required additional support to make the best use of the new methodologies.

The analysis of the participants' stories reveals the difference in their views concerning the term academic success, which includes the number of scores gained on tests, conceptual understanding, communication skills, and self-confidence of the learners. Therefore, it would be reasonable to assume that teachers' notion of success expanded because of the professional development program. Another important

observation is related to the fact that both participants spoke about the gradual nature of improvements in terms of academic success. This idea was supported by the usage of such phrases as 'progress' and 'development'. The choice of terminology implies that teachers realize that educational changes are developmental and require more time. Another observation to make is the mention of the causes of differences in academic achievement among the students during the interviews. This means that teachers are aware of how learning outcomes are affected by differences in learners.

From this point of view, then, teachers' professional development is not directed toward improved student achievement. Rather, it affects the way teaching is conducted, leading to higher achievement. The above is in line with the research conducted by Poudel (2022), which indicated that the professional development of teachers affects their teaching practices, which in turn affects learners' academic performance.

The results also indicate that teachers used a wider set of measures to assess academic achievement than just examination scores. Participants reported increases in students' communication skills, confidence, critical thinking, and classroom participation as well as increased scores on tests. This is a more holistic view that is consistent with current thinking in education, which views academic success as the acquisition of a range of cognitive, linguistic, and social skills, rather than just the achievement of higher examination grades.

Professional development thus seems to have a peripheral impact on academic attainment, through its role in enhancing teaching quality. The enhanced lesson planning, interactive teaching, differentiated teaching, and ongoing formative assessment allowed teachers to appropriately meet the needs of the diverse learning styles of their students. These enhancements added to better learning conditions that fostered content understanding instead of content memorization.

Participants also noted that academic achievement was slow and different for students. The various levels of learners' prior knowledge, rate of learning, motivation and home environment had an impact on the level of benefit that students gained from implementing better teaching practices. This discovery is an indication that teacher

professional learning must be considered an element of an educational system, which also involves learner characteristics, institutional support and socio-economic factors.

Reflective Teaching Practices

The theme seeks to explore how the role of professional development can help to inspire teachers to consider how they teach. It illustrates how teachers use reflection to evaluate, adjust, and improve their teaching styles to be more effective.

Every interviewee said that professional development motivated them to consider their teaching practices. Participant 1 replied, "They discuss the techniques that worked and those that need improvement after class". Likewise, participant 2 mentioned, "Keeping a reflective journal to track the strategies that proved successful". Participant 5 commented, "They constantly assess and refine teaching approaches according to learner feedback and outcomes". Participants also emphasized that reflection was not limited to the process of self-assessment but also involved discussions with fellow teachers on how to incorporate feedback in lesson plans and how to teach.

All the interviewees uniformly mentioned reflection as the only theme that came up. Unlike other studies, reflection was shown to be an intrinsic process and not extrinsic. This indicates that the professional development program was conducive to reflection as an internal behavior.

The process of reflection was characterized by a cyclical approach, where planning, implementing, assessing, and changing the lesson were included. Reflection is a central theme that refers to the "adaptive professionalism" in which teachers adjust their decision-making based on class performance. One of the ways to develop the professional self from being content providers to being reflective practitioners is through reflective practice. This is not true for workshops, where teachers use new strategies with hardly any evaluation. In the context of coping, reflective practice can be seen as a strategy for teachers' work in under-resourced community schools in Nepal. The interpretation follows the definition of Danielson (2007) that reflective practice is an element of professional development.

Finally, a reflective practice helped teachers to become more conscious of their strengths and weaknesses as teachers. For the teachers engaged in the process of continuous evaluation of classroom experiences, they became able to pick up the successful teaching strategies and adapt the less successful ones. In turn, reflection was a crucial tool for ongoing professional development and not just for the assessment of finished lessons.

Participants' reflection accounts indicate a collaboration aspect, which offers a clear example that professional learning goes beyond individual self-reflection. Teachers discussed with peers, peer feedback, and mentoring relationships promoted collaboration in response to challenges in instruction and sharing of experiences. Collective reflection can help develop professional learning communities in schools, which in turn can help to sustain improvements in teaching quality.

Moreover, reflective teaching encouraged teachers to be life-long learners and to continuously pose questions and improve themselves. Participants showed a keen inclination to assess student responses and to adapt instruction to address student needs and challenges, rather than just biding their time waiting for the students to return to the classroom. This continuous process of reflection, action and enhancement led to more responsive teaching that better met the needs of the varied learning needs of students. Reflective practice is a good tool for maintaining the quality of teaching in community secondary schools in Nepal where the teachers face changing context of the classroom and limited teaching resources, and continuous efforts are needed to enhance their classroom skills that go beyond formal professional development programs.

Challenges in Implementing Professional Development

The theme focused on the challenges teachers face in putting the knowledge they acquired about PD into practice in their teaching. It sheds light on the possible barriers to the successful application of newly acquired skills.

The barriers that the participants encountered in implementing the learned strategies during professional development were different. Participant 2 pointed out, "Lack of the capacity to teach individually in a large class." Participant 4 commented, "Limited access to classroom resources meant I couldn't use new technologies and

materials in the classroom. Participant 3 mentioned, “Some students were not comfortable with new teaching styles as they had received lectures throughout their schooling”. In addition, Participant 1 and Participant 5 said, “Limited time to try out different strategies owing to other academic activities.”

Although the participants had positive attitudes towards TPD, there were certain barriers to the full application of this concept in practice. Personalized teaching was constrained by large class sizes, modern technologies were not used due to a lack of resources, and the time limit posed restrictions on experimental freedom.

But the students' attitudes to the use of these innovative techniques are negative because of the nature of their learning patterns developed under traditional ones. This means that professional development must focus not just on the teacher's actions but also on the environment that is being created in the classroom.

Based on the above findings, it can be concluded that Professional Development is dependent on context. There can be new techniques available to the teachers, but these will be determined by the contextual issues that exist. This means that TDP cannot guarantee implementation of the changes without support from the institutions.

The results of this analysis support previous studies that found that PD effects are moderated by classroom factors (Al Shabibi et al., 2019). While teachers showed positive attitudes towards professional development, the findings suggest that contextual barriers were important in how the new knowledge was put in practice. Because of large classes, insufficient teaching materials, insufficient technological equipment and heavy teaching burden, teachers' room for innovation in teaching was limited. The results indicate that the extent to which teachers are willing to change is needed in successful professional development as well as institutional conditions that support classroom innovation.

The results also suggest that education reform efforts are needed to address structural issues as well as teacher preparation efforts. Teachers can still encounter challenges to maintaining learner-centered practices even with high-quality PD if classroom resources are lacking, class sizes are too large, and administrative support

is inadequate. Thus, policy initiatives must build teachers' capacity coupled with broader investments in school improvement.

One key finding that arises from the results is the need for ongoing follow-up following professional learning events. Teachers showed their enthusiasm in applying the innovative teaching approaches but the lack of the regular monitoring, mentoring and professional support decreased the sustainability. Professional development may not be effective in the long-term, as for many teachers, their own ingenuity or initiative was required to address the issues posed by the classroom. Therefore, schools and educational authorities must put in place follow-up systems (coaching, peer observation, professional learning communities, etc.) to provide continuous support for teachers in the implementation of newly gained knowledge and skills in their own classrooms.

Institutional Support Systems

This theme is focused on how institutional, colleague, and administrative support could help teachers apply PD learning. This includes the encouragement, guidance, and cooperation that could be provided through the school environment.

All respondents saw the importance of institutional support for PD practice implementation.

Participant 1 states that “encouragement and feedback from school administrators helped in trying out new teaching techniques”. As well, Participant 3 stressed, “Support in mentoring from senior teachers who provided advice and assurance during the process of implementing new techniques”. As Participant 5 mentioned, “Working together with other teachers and talking with teachers about their experiences in the classroom helped teachers grow in confidence and become better teachers.”

The same respondents also noted that a positive school atmosphere with collaboration was a motivator to continually apply knowledge acquired during PD. Reinforcement mechanisms that emerged in the institutional context of professional learning were identified. Teachers had high confidence when they were encouraged by their administration and at the same time talked to each other in dialogue manner.

Mentoring helped to overcome professional isolation and experiment with teaching strategies. It implies that professional learning may take place in a collaborative manner rather than isolation.

In case of community schools of Nepal where there might not be formal mentorship program, teacher peers become indispensable in maintaining innovation in teaching techniques. It implies that institutional culture can be a facilitating context for professional learning that leads to change.

This research finding is aligned with the theory of Professional Capital of Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) that claims that cooperation and support from institutions lead to the growth of teachers' capability to maintain their professional effectiveness (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

The support of the institutions proved to be an essential element in the survival of teachers' professional development after professional development activities. Students indicated that it was the encouragement from their school leaders, their colleagues who had experience in the school, and opportunities to discuss issues with peers that boosted their confidence to implement innovative teaching approaches. It helped to minimize the feeling of professional isolation, and fostered a culture of continuous improvement in schools.

The results also indicate that when schools function in a collaborative way, the long-term impact of professional development efforts is enhanced because teachers have opportunities to share their ideas, talk through problems they encounter in the classroom, and create action plans together. The provision of informal professional learning opportunities, through peer collaboration, is significant for ongoing professional support in community schools where formal opportunities are scarce. In turn, building teacher professional learning communities in schools could improve teacher performances and student learning outcomes over time.

Furthermore, the results indicate that an effective institutional support goes beyond merely encouraging administrative support to the process of constructing a shared vision for continuous professional learning in schools. School leadership that encourages collaboration, provides time for professional dialogue, and acknowledges teachers' work to innovate their practice increases teachers' motivation and

commitment to further enhance their practice. This culture of shared responsibility for students' learning, with staff members learning from each other and collaborating to enhance learning opportunities for students, is promoted by supportive school environments. This serves as evidence that institutional commitment is an essential element in achieving the best possible long term effect of Teacher Professional Development on teaching quality and student achievement.

Chapter Five

Findings, Conclusions, and Implications

This chapter presents the main findings based on the data analysis. It includes the conclusions drawn from these findings and offers practical implications and recommendations in lines with the study's objectives

Summary of Findings

Based on the thematic analysis of the interviews, the following main themes were identified in relation to the effect of Teacher Professional Development (TPD) on the academic performance of students.

- Professional learning for teachers was found to be a process and not an event! They have engaged in various activities, such as seminars, coaching, mentoring, webinars, peer learning and online learning. Feedback was given on an ongoing basis with classroom learning activities and mentoring and coaching were seen as the more useful one of those activities. The teachers also emphasized that the importance of professional development lies with its application in the classroom context.
- The results also indicated that teachers perceived that professional development was most effective when it was linked to their teaching. Participants valued ways in which they could have professional learning opportunities where they could experiment with new strategies to teach, get feedback, and be continually refining their teaching; not just having to memorize and regurgitate theory. This implies that sustainable professional development needs to be a continuous process rather than a series of stand-alone professional development events. Collaboration with colleagues was also seen as an integral part of ongoing learning, as teachers shared experiences and discussed issues in the classroom and collectively solved problems, building their confidence as professionals.
- The teaching technique was also seen to be significantly affected by TPD. Teachers acknowledged that they have transformed into lecturing style to teaching style focused on students using student-centered teaching methods like differential instruction, cooperative learning, formative assessment, and interactive teaching method.

- Yet another significant discovery was that teacher learning led to a shift in teachers' beliefs about teaching. The participants no longer just saw teaching as a process of imparting knowledge of the subject matter and began to see teachers as facilitators who involve students in learning activities and encourage them to think critically and work together to learn. The use of learner-centred approaches showed that the teachers were more responsive to the needs of students in their learning process. The results show that the teachers' pedagogical knowledge and confidence in their ability to introduce innovative teaching practices to their community secondary schools were improved through the professional development.
- Further, another important finding of the study was that the implementation of professional development was associated with engagement and motivation of students. The teachers observed that students had started to get involved in classroom activities and conversations since the use of interactive teaching strategies in TPD, and they started asking questions.
- The results also indicated that there was a strong correlation between better student engagement with positive classroom relationships, which in turn was linked to the use of learner-centered instruction. Teachers noted that students were more inclined to participate, ask questions and communicate openly in the classroom when activities required students to work collaboratively and interact with one another. This suggests that professional development had an indirect impact on improving students' motivation through enhancing the quality of classroom teaching, while fostering positive teaching and learning climates in which students could express themselves.
- Improved teaching methods were linked with enhanced students' learning results and success rates. The students' understanding, language, communication, critical thinking, and overall performance in class showed some improvement, the participants said. Besides, students' skills of active class participation, English communication, and good results in exams were improved. The participants, however, noted that there were different rates of success among the students in relation to their learning needs.
- Throughout the entire process, participants noted that there was an improvement in academic achievement that went beyond test scores. They

noticed that students made some improvement in their communication skills, confidence, participation in class, critical thinking, and English language skills. From these results, it can be deduced that the teachers gained a wider perspective of student achievement, focusing on how to ensure that students development not only academic but also practical skills and conceptual understanding, which is in line with the definition of meaningful learning. The participants also recognized that improvements were slow and varied based on each student's ability to learn and their educational experience.

- As one of the outcomes of the study, teachers became more conscious of their reflective practices, which included evaluating their lesson plans for any deficiencies or strengths in their plans, and making adjustments to their lesson plans as a result.
- The theme of reflection became significant in describing the professional teaching practice. The theme of reflection was one of the important characteristics of professional teaching practice. Teachers reported regularly checking on the effectiveness of their lessons, assessing student responses and changing teaching methods in the future as a result. The results therefore indicated that the teacher-centred professional development had a positive impact on teachers becoming reflective practitioners in evaluating and improving their teaching practices. This form of reflection helps them to keep developing professionally and is a means for achieving long-term enhancement of teaching.
- The attitude towards TPD is good but there were some problems encountered by teachers in implementing the new methods of teaching. These encompass poor equipment, a lack of teaching resources, limited time and students' resistance to new ideas. Both external factors played a significant role in the full implementation of the progressive approaches in classroom practices in community schools.
- Teachers expressed positive attitudes toward professional development but to a lesser extent, implementation was affected by factors outside their control. Poor teaching equipment, crowded classrooms, short teaching time and low technological facilities hindered the full application of newly learned strategies. These results suggest that strengthening teachers' ability will not be

effective unless the institutional environment of schools enables the adoption of innovative teaching.

- Another finding in the study suggests that institutional support systems were significant contributors to maintaining professional development practices. The school support, experienced teachers and collaboration among teachers encouraged the participants to use the strategies they learned effectively. Participants emphasized a need for a conducive and cohesive culture within the school to achieve effective professional learning and more effective classrooms.
- The research also revealed that institutional support enhanced teachers' commitment towards the continuity of professional learning after the formal professional learning activities. This was fostered by administrative support, mentoring from colleagues with extensive experience, and opportunities for teachers to plan collaboratively, all of which allowed teachers to feel confident trying new teaching techniques. Thus, it was determined that key factors to ensure the sustainability of teacher professional development efforts were the role of school leadership and the development of a professional culture.

Conclusions

In the study, perceived impact of teacher professional development on students learning achievement in community secondary schools of Tarakeshwor Municipality, Kathmandu revealed that teacher professional development is relevant to enhance their teaching methodology, participation and learning achievement in students in the community secondary schools of Tarakeshwor Municipality, Kathmandu. The teachers' view on professional development is seen as a continuous and practical process of learning that helps them enhance their teaching, classroom management, reflection and self-confidence as teachers.

Professional development also leads to a significant increase in the shift in teaching from teacher-centred to learner-centred and interactive. With the use of differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, formative assessments, and inclusive teaching strategies, teachers have noticed positive changes in students' participation, motivation, comprehension, communication, and overall academic success. The impact on achievement is gradual, but there is a general improvement in the use of

knowledge in practice for learners. So, the professional development improves the learning and achievement of students.

In addition, teachers need to be involved in reflective teaching practices for professional development. Teachers receiving guidance and collaboration from institutions and other teachers were confident in implementing the innovations in teaching. However, the professional development was difficult to implement due to contextual constraints, including large class sizes, limited learning resources and limited time.

To sum up, this research study has not only revealed that Teacher Professional Development is about the enhancement of skills but also it is about empowerment, which can improve the effectiveness of teaching and help students to achieve their learning goals in the context of Nepali secondary schools.

The results of this study show that Teacher Professional Development as a process does not only serve to develop technical skills of teachers, but it is also a significant process for strengthening professional identity, professional confidence and professional reflection of teachers. With ongoing involvement in workshops, mentoring, coaching, collaborative work among teachers, and classroom-based learning activities, teachers became more skilled in their design of learner-centered lessons and how to meet the learning needs of their diverse students. The improvements were seen in higher engagement, participation, motivation of students and their improvement in learning outcomes over time.

The study also demonstrates that the impact of professional development is not limited to individual teachers, but can have a broader impact on the classroom learning environment. Teachers implemented more interactive teaching methods, collaborative learning, differentiated instruction, and formative assessment, which promoted the active learning of the students in the classroom. The results indicated that there was a link between the improvement in students' learning and changes in teaching behaviors, not just professional development. Therefore, community secondary school teachers' professional development should be seen as an investment towards enhancing the educational quality in the community secondary schools of Nepal.

The study also reveals that professional development is not successful in yielding the desired results unless there is adequate institutional support. The teachers' ability to use innovative teaching methods continued to be limited by contextual issues like crowd classes, insufficient teaching materials, low technological resources and heavy workload. Thus, professional development should not be considered a stand-alone solution to educational improvement, but rather a supplement to increased school resources, more effective collaborative professional learning communities and ongoing mentoring and administrative support.

This study is a valuable addition to the existing body of literature, as it has shown how the practice of Teacher Professional Development is beneficial for improving teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and academic success in the context of Nepali community secondary schools. The results highlight the importance of implementing capacity building for educators, as well as institutional support to sustain educational improvement through continuous learning, reflection, collaboration and innovation. Enhancing these areas will allow teachers to continue to provide quality teaching and learning and better equip students for future academic and lifelong success.

Implications

Based on the findings, the following implications can be made for teachers, policy makers and designers.

Policy-related Implications

The findings and discussion revealed that mentoring and coaching as well as PD through classroom activities, proved far more effective than workshop-oriented PD, due to the practice of these activities in their respective classrooms. However, problems related to class size, resources and insufficient support from institutions in implementing teacher professional development were identified. In this context, appropriate policies of policymakers and responsible authorities should facilitate teachers' practices so that they can enhance their learning performance through suitable professional development programs.

Practice-related Implications

From the above discussion and findings, it could be concluded that the professional development has helped the teachers in their instructional practice, reflective teaching and student-centered approach using collaborative learning, differentiated instruction, and formative assessment. All these practices have resulted in increased learner engagement, participation, motivation, and success. Schools and teachers are encouraged to provide opportunities to engage in collaborative professional learning, reflection, peer collaboration, and interaction rather than separate forms of professional learning, teaching, and learning in classroom settings to improve teaching and learning.

Research-related Implications

The findings of the current study were based on the experiences and perceptions of English teachers in some community secondary schools in Tarakeshwor Municipality. It was evident in the discussions that an in-depth understanding of the role of teacher professional development in enhancing student learning and academic outcomes in different contexts was needed. Therefore, researchers in the future may be able to conduct similar research on other topics, areas, and education levels using larger sample sizes and different types of research methods. Moreover, the views of students, school leaders and policy makers are also taken into account to gain depth understanding of the effectiveness of Teacher Professional Development in Nepal.

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Appendix

Semi-Structured Interview Guide for English Teachers

Part 1: Background Information

1. Teaching experience (years): _____
2. Teaching Level (Select all that apply):

☐ Grade 9 ☐ Grade 10 ☐ Grade 11 ☐ Grade 12
3. What type(s) of TPD have you experienced?
 - Workshop/Seminar
 - In-service Training
 - Peer Learning/Collaborative Teaching
 - Instructional Coaching
 - Online/Distance PD
 - Self-Directed Learning (e.g., books, MOOCs)
 - Others (please specify): _____

Part B: Interview Questions

1. Can you describe your experiences with teacher professional development programs you have participated in?
2. How have this professional development experiences influenced your teaching of English?
3. Can you share a specific example where professional development changed the way you teach a lesson?
4. In your experience, how has professional development affected students' interest or motivation to learn English?
5. What changes, if any, have you noticed in students' learning or academic achievement after applying ideas from professional development?
6. How do you reflect on your teaching practices after participating in professional development programs?
7. What challenges do you face when trying to implement new ideas or strategies gained from professional development?
8. How does support from your school (administration or colleagues) influence your ability to apply professional development learning?

9. In your opinion, what type of professional development is most effective for improving student learning and achievement? Why?
10. Overall, how do you perceive the role of teacher professional development in shaping your professional growth and your students' success?

Interview Responses

Participant 1

Background Information

- Teaching experience: 8 years
- Teaching levels: Grades 9, 10, and 11
- Types of professional development: Attended workshops, peer-collaborative sessions, instructional coaching, and online professional courses

Interview Responses

1. I have attended workshops and instructional coaching, learning new teaching strategies and classroom management skills. These experiences heightened the desire to work collaboratively with other teachers and to reflect on my teaching practice, thereby making professional learning a lifelong endeavor.
2. The programs helped me to become a better lesson planner and helped me engage students in my classroom. Incorporated more student-centered activities and adopted different assessment techniques, resulting in more effective and enjoyable English teaching.
3. For example, in a workshop on interactive teaching, I started incorporating group discussions and role-plays in my lessons. This change made students more involved and engaged with the concepts of the English language.
4. I felt that students were more motivated when lessons were interactive. They were curious and interactive, as they were able to do more than simply listen.
5. Gradually, academic performance improved, and students were better to understand and get higher marks in assignments and exams after I started using the new methods I learned from professional development.
6. I reflect on my teaching regularly and consider what strategies were successful and which would need to be modified. Professional development motivates me to reflect and refine my practice.

7. One difficulty is scheduling time for collaborative activities or new strategies for a busy curriculum. Additionally, active learning strategies do not appeal to all students.
8. It is important to have colleagues and the school administration's support. It becomes easier to do new things when peers share experiences with each other, and principals encourage innovation.
9. Workshops in conjunction with peer collaborative sessions work best. They provide hands-on explanations, challenges to thinking and sharing classroom experiences.
10. Teacher professional development is a crucial component of my development. It is informative, enhances teaching and has a direct impact on student learning and achievement.

Participant 2

Background Information

- Teaching experience: 12 years
- Teaching levels: Grades 10, 11, and 12
- Participated in workshops, coaching sessions, online courses, and self-directed learning programs

Interview Responses

1. I did workshops, online courses, and coaching throughout the years. These programmes gave me insight into novel approaches to teaching, the use of technology in the classroom, as well as assessment practices that I had not encountered before.
2. Professional development has helped me plan lessons more effectively and focus more on students' needs. I am now using digital tools and interactive techniques that support learning.
3. I completed a formative assessment course and began to give regular feedback and mini quizzes. This enabled students to recognise their areas of weakness and enhanced their learning generally.
4. I saw pupils' interest in English grow, and they actively engaged in it with more questions. They are more confident and motivated in their learning process.

5. Learners' achievement in assessments and lessons has been enhanced. Pupils who were previously underperforming now demonstrate greater understanding and engagement because of improved teaching.
6. I maintain a journal of reflection in which I record what works. Professional development helps me to think about my teaching critically and make the needed changes regularly.
7. Challenge – finding different approaches in large classes. It is sometimes difficult to implement individualized teaching in crowded classrooms.
8. The support of colleagues in my school who share experiences, and administrative encouragement to innovative teaching, makes it easier for me to apply the learning from professional development.
9. Coaching and workshops with follow-up sessions are most effective – they include theory, practice, and feedback to enhance student outcomes.
10. Professional development influences my teaching and students' success. It builds my confidence and provides me with the skills to interact and motivate students.