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Exploring Professional Development Needs among English Subject Teachers in Public Sector Colleges of Sukkur: Insights from Pakistan

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Abstract

This case study explored the professional development needs of College English subject teachers who were teaching intermediate level classes in public colleges of Sukkur, Sindh, Pakistan. The aim of this study is to explore English subject teaching practices, professional development needs of college English subject teachers and opportunities for professional development to them because professional development needs programs play a significant role to transfer teaching and improve learning of the language skills through innovative teaching skills. The qualitative case study research design was adopted to explore the experiences, practices of English Subject Teachers regarding their professional needs at college level. The data was collected from 10 English subject teachers using purposive sampling technique through semi-structured interviews and was analysed through thematic analysis. The findings revealed that English subject course consisted of English literature in the form of prose, poetry, drama, and novel. The course was not supportive to teach English as second language and difficult to transfer it into the crowded classes. As a result, English subject teachers taught traditionally and used the translation methods. They did not plan their lessons, took lecture-based classes, used blackboard as teaching resources, and the given exercises as teaching materials. In addition, they did not assess and evaluate teaching and learning skills. Even though, the teachers endeavored to teach comprehension, composition, grammar, and vocabulary through the textbooks published by Sindh Textbook Board Hyderabad. Further, results explored that English subject teachers required professional development needs to teach English subject with communicative language teaching approach, plan their lessons effectively, manage large classes, assess their learners, and evaluate for their successful teaching practices, design learning material, and use technology. This study contributes to the body of knowledge related to the contextual factors that shapes English subject teachers professional needs and suggests professional development initiatives in the context of public colleges of Pakistan.

Keywords: Professional Development Needs, English subject Teachers, Public Colleges of Sindh, Qualitative case study, Pakistan

Introduction

English teachers teach multicultural and multilingual classrooms in their local context and students struggle to acquire adequate language skill (van der Walt, 2022). In many public colleges, teachers are facing challenges of crowded classes, less teaching resources and impractical prescribed textbooks which consist of literary content with language learning exercises (Malik, 2024). Most of the classes are run at teacher centred, translation method, without lesson planning, with memorizing study, less assessment, and annual evaluation depend on summative assessment. As a result, majority of students fail to develop essential command in English language skills because they are taught the language through traditional teaching practices in colleges (Malik, 2024). Though teachers are striving hard to teach functional English to students, however, students still face difficulties in learning functional aspects of English language. This could be due to insufficient teacher trainings and inadequate exposure to teaching through modern methodologies

The literature supports that Professional development (PD) and continuous professional development (CPD) are essential for improving instructional practices of teachers and learning

outcomes of students. According to Pervaiz et al., (2021), English language teachers can enhance student's language skills by considering individual needs of students and using effective pedagogical approaches. Similarly, English teachers need to be more proficient into the teaching language skills through innovative pedagogical approaches which can align with the needs of students (Paragae, 2023). Moreover, English teachers transfer their subject knowledge as their learners like to receive it (Cumming, 2011). Tsui & Tollefson (2017) emphasized that learning environment should be student-centred, interactive and supported by technology students become more fluent and confident in communicating in English. Consequently, students enhance their understanding of other subjects which are being taught them with English medium.

The globalization and digitalization has rapidly transformed the education systems across the world, which demands English language teachers to develop competencies for the 21st century classroom. In this context, English teachers need to be aware of the latest development in language teaching and modern pedagogies to teach effectively (Girma et al., 2019). Therefore, teachers can acquire new teaching skills, learn reflective practices, collaborate with other teachers and innovate new methodologies through professional development opportunities (Borg, 2015). Teachers can refine their beliefs, practices and pedagogical orientations where they can act as facilitators of learning not just transmitters of knowledge (Godínez Martínez, 2018). As Zakaria (2020) notes, teachers can be reflective practitioners who can constantly improve their pedagogical skills and professional identity through professional development programs. This means that the current English language as a subject teaching practice needs to be redesigned and given professional development learning (PDL). Thus, teaching English Language are needed to be placed with priority regarding professional development needs of today because English teachers are recommended into their teaching institutes as guides, motivators, and facilitators. The PD has great significance because English teachers can only make successful classes through their teaching skills (Borg, 2015).

Past research studies suggested that English language teachers do continue to enhance and expand their subject knowledge inventory. Because teaching English language has been a challenge to change and create a language learning environment in the classroom where the teachers should redesign and reshape their knowledge, motivation, and intellectuality (Seema et al., 2021). They must use their proficiency to differentiate their current teaching practices as effective users. According to Derakhshan, et al. (2020), the right way in the career of good teaching is based on attending Continuing Professional Development (CPD). In the context of Pakistan, there exists gap between teaching practices and the competencies required for English language teaching. Teachers are still using traditional, lecture-based approaches in colleges they need to adopt communicative and student-centred stratifies (Malik, 2024). Considering professional development needs (PDN), the literature and the current teaching practices of English teachers reveal its importance for breaking language learning barriers. It is statistically indicated that the learners are not being up to the level of the language as they should have been; English teachers are put under the pressure of improving the language skills of the students. Regarding such problems, English teachers struggle to be successful into their subject and show their desire to learn their teaching needs. This means that what real teaching practices, the teachers are applied and what new useful practices, they need to apply. The PD needs of English teachers identify the real teaching practices and the preferred teaching practices (Kumar, 2010). Therefore, the literature supports PDN "what is and what should be" (Witkin & Altshuld, 1995, p.4) and it is rightly said by Girma (2019) that English language teachers should know recent changes in language teaching to enhance the professional competence and efficiency. The needs to PD are more obvious when they come to English language teachers because the language has technologically placed its importance on online where freelancing is being done. According to Jebahi (2022), through many fluctuations and shifts over the years, the field of second language teaching has been undergone. As a result, the literature suggested that while planning a PD program for English teachers, the real teaching practices should be noted to know whether they are useful or to be modified. Sadeghi and Richards (2021) stated that needs-based PD is being considered the first and most significant recommendation when designing any professional development program. It is achievable if the environment of change is significantly provided with implications to the teachers' development. Therefore, this case study aimed to explore the professional development needs of College English subject teachers at intermediate level classes, their current English subject teaching

practices, the perceived professional development needs of them and offered professional development opportunities.

Problem Statement

Previous studies found that the most of English teachers used traditional classroom practices, applied poor assessment and evaluation, taught through indirect methods, used translation methods, and had lectured based classes (Daif-Allah and Aljumah, 2020). Hence, traditional approaches provide less opportunities for students to engage and communicate in the classrooms. Moreover, Teachers face contextual challenges such as lack of instructional resources, access to internet and lack of collaborative professional development opportunities (Pervaiz, et al., 2021). Additionally, the educational authorities do not pay attention on the professional development needs of English Language teachers because there is no any institutional framework for professional development of teachers which can work on teachers pedagogical skills (Hamzina & Sakenov, 2016). According to Hero (2020), the quality of English instructions have declined due to high workloads and reduced motivation of teachers. In order to teach content effectively, teachers need pedagogical and contextual competence to enhance the learning of students (Badri et al., 2017). Similarly, the situation of English language teaching is not different in public colleges of Sukkur City where English subject teachers are assigned to teach English language into large classes with less teaching resources. The teachers teach English subject through prescribed textbooks on comprehension and composition exercises. The prescribed study material consists of poetry, prose, drama, and novels taught through teacher-centered approaches and grammar-translation methods which promotes rote-memorizations and neglect communicative approaches to teaching of English (Imtiaz, 2014). As a result, teachers are perceived as less effective in teaching English Language because of noisy classroom environment and demotivated students which result in poor language proficiency.

In academic and professional settings, the needs for English proficiency is growing day by day. Therefore, it is essential to understand the complexities of teaching English in culturally diverse classrooms (Qin, 2024). However, there is gap between current English teaching approaches and the student's linguistic and cultural needs in the context of colleges of Sukkur, Sindh. Interestingly, all the professional development initiatives in Sindh target school-level teachers (Gillani, 2022; Nawab, 2023) while college teachers are excluded from PD opportunities. Though there are PD institutions for teachers of School Education and Literacy department, yet college teachers no any established PD institutions. Consequently, in the absence of structured and ongoing PD programs for college English teachers, these teachers take part in self-professional development programs through own expenses and online courses. Even though, college teachers are not required to attend any PD programs by Sindh College Education Department. It is interesting to know that college teachers are promoted on their seniority base, but not professional educational achievement or departmental examination (Seema et al., 2020). In the context of Sukkur, there is little research conducted on exploring the gap between English teaching methodologies and professional development needs of college teachers. Consequently, it is essential to address this gap for improving instructional quality and student's language proficiency. Therefore, this study will fill this gap by exploring the professional development needs of College English subject teachers at intermediate level classes, their current English subject teaching practices, the perceived professional development needs of them and offered professional development opportunities.

Research Questions

Based on the objectives, this study sought to answers the following research questions:

- RQ1:** What are the perceived professional development needs of English subject Teachers at Intermediate level in City colleges of Sukkur?
- RQ2:** What professional Development opportunities are English subject teachers of Intermediate level classes avail?

Literature Review

This section reviews the relevant literature on the professional development of English language teachers and their professional needs.

Professional Development for English Teachers

Regarding the importance of PD for English teachers, Raza and Khawaja (2013) stated that PD develops language teaching knowledge, guides syllabus using knowledge, enhances classroom management, and improves assessment and evaluation. Teaching English has been a challenge for

teachers to create an environment in the classroom where the teachers should redesign and reshape their knowledge, motivation, and intellectuality (Seema et al., 2021). It is a matter of fact that a professional English teacher is associated with the success of students' learning. Therefore, various pre-planned documents and academics emphasize the importance of teachers' PD. One of the essential development primaries in the education sector is of the teachers and their professional learning. Thus, it can be suggested that English language teachers need regular PD to keep them skilled teachers. The PD of English teachers is in fact important to the doing well teaching for future positions as the learners of the teachers face new challenges. English teachers should consider PD as a constant learning teaching development especially for the improvement of their students. So, an ideal English teacher produces several opportunities for their learners. For instance, English language teaching methods according to topics, activities, and materials are applied, the learners would do good learning practice on the language skills. Because the professional teachers know that the more, they learn, the better they can evaluate their teaching. Therefore, it is being emphasized that English teachers always continue to enhance their teaching skills with the use of modern teaching changes into teaching of English.

Moreover, language teaching quality is measured when learners are found changed in use of language and took interest in their learning. As a result, professional development opportunities for English teachers are being a fundamental component of learning due to be associated with the improvement of teaching quality (Bank & Mayes, 2012; Tanang & Abu, 2014; Darling-Hammond, Hyler & Gardner, 2017). It offers and develops the aspects of teachers as they face teaching and learning changes and challenges. Whithworth and Chiu (2015) said that PD is frequently associated with knowledge opportunities of teachers' educational background, teaching experience, confidence, and motivation. In fact, they argued that English teachers may significantly shape to take the decision of taking professional development. In their decision, they recognize whether they have sufficient teaching experience, or need to grow professionally for learning new teaching experience.

Professional Development Needs

Professional development needs (PDN) fulfil the teaching and learning areas which a teacher needs to develop for successful teaching practices. It helps towards the specific professional learning parts in which the teachers are lacking. It is defined by Witkin and Altshuld (1995,p.4), it is a need that "a discrepancy or gap between 'what is,' or the current state of affairs in situation to the group and circumstance of concern, and 'what should be,' or a preferred state of affairs". According to Altschuld and Kumar (2010) this gap should be quantifiable. In contrast, they must be analyzed "what is" and "what should be." And the disparity between them will reveal the requirement. Considering this description, a teacher's PD needs can be described as the gap between their current teaching practices and their ideal teaching practices in a range of teaching responsibilities. According to Witkin and Altshuld (1995) when a group of individuals knows their requirements which is commonly signified as "demands." The needs are "unexpressed" or "latent" when people do not know them. Therefore, to construct needs-based training and professional development program, a teacher must first identify his or her needs (Gul, 2010). Needs in PD, according to Farrell (2022), is the process of locating the requirements for quality teaching.

Furthermore, the needs entail prioritizing those demands, which aids in the decision-making process. Needs are critical for institutional improvement, according to Davies et al. (2014) when establishing PD programs, it is believed that it needs aid in the development of teacher confidence. It must, however, ensure that the requirements of teachers are satisfied because poorly structured needs may contain an unenthusiastic result on teacher professional development. Therefore, the teachers should be asked about their requirements through surveys as professional development programs can be planned with their needs in mind. Teachers' current teaching practices are observed and compared to professional skill-based knowledge. By examining their needs at the start of the program, the most important aims and objectives may be identified to give the program better directions (Parhamnia & Farahian, 2023). Decisions should be made on how the teachers are trained in different programs suitably according to teachers' requirements. According to Mohebi (2021), trainers should first evaluate the teachers' needs before selecting those who would engage in PD opportunities. Similarly, PD program is used to analyse the professional needs of the teachers. After identifying their needs, they should be classified according to skills, knowledge, and attitude. While doing such, the participants are chosen, and judgments are made concerning the course's content.

Professional development agendas are necessary to be personalized to the teachers' needs because it improves participants' satisfaction, and "To gain new ideas to use in the classroom, improving students' learning outcomes and developing knowledge and skills" (Aamna et al., 2019). The participants deemed modern training to be valuable and effective in developing their teaching expertise since they can boost their students' learning styles and skills. (Seema et al., 2021). According to Koşar, Dolapçioğlu, & Akbana (2022), participants in professional development programs reported modest advantages in most cases. The contents of PD programs are determined by others, not the teachers for whom it is meant. Such programs are unable to address specific needs and problems. Therefore, if PD programs are to give immediate benefit, they should be given on teaching-based and made for the requirements of the teachers who will be participating. Furthermore, studies constantly point out that teachers' professional learning should be practical through CPD that deals with teaching needs. The teaching needs-based PD programs are those which cover the teaching desires and benefits for the teachers (Sims et al., 2021; Kennedy & McKay, 2011). It is found that when the participating teachers are given PD learning according to their needs and interests, they are not only motivated but also effective teachers for their institutes. Besides, PD programs which are given successfully and worked at teachers' needs are considered leading programs as they develop teaching skills where the teachers wish to be grown.

Professional Development Needs of English Teachers

English teachers are considered a bone of an educational institute from whom the institute expects its good reputations towards the result of its students into other teaching subjects. Therefore, to teach effectively, the Language teachers must be able to deal with a variety of relevant abilities and demanded needs-based professional learning. Although, the review reveals that most of the instructors' PD practices indicate their insufficient knowledge and skill achievement. This problem, according to Darling-Hammond et al., (2024) is caused by the providers to build the PD programs. In such circumstances, the teacher educators can be supposed accountable for failing the purpose (Daniel & Percy, 2014). As a result, the PD programs should be designed and organized according to the needs the teachers or institutes demand as they may be able to face internal and external challenges and changes.

The latest studies signify the true facts that PD programs bring the successful changes and keep away the hindrances of teaching and learning English language. The literature supports that if PD needs areas are developed, English teachers are successful. Useful PD desires can be supported through collaboration and training by having class activities from the perspectives of the students, teaching through different methods with easy teaching styles (Moriani et al., 2021; Jiang et al., 2018). He added that the trainers should focus on teaching techniques, know the current teaching practices of their participants, and liken them with quality teaching skills into ELT. Whereas some studies placed their importance on diverse types of PD programs, despite finding the special teachers need, the teachers applied in their daily teaching practices (Kabilan & Veratharaju, 2013; Chien, 2014). In fact, Most of the studies put their importance on need-based programs because they enhance teachers' teaching practices; therefore, it is important to explore the teachers' needs before organizing the PD programs for them. To meet with such a purpose, successful and significant PD programs are to be aligned with the teachers' needs, and the programs are assured to be provided actively through need-based learning (Parhamnia & Farahian, 2023; Little & Paul, 2021) Because failure to meet need-based learning will certainly produce useless results in PD programs and throw failure to maintaining teachers' enthusiasm (Kennedy & McKay, 2011). Besides, the PD programs are more expected to be helpful in enhancing teachers' understanding and teaching skills if the programs are set from the need-based learning and then these programs will produce a larger set of possibilities for their professional learning and development (Farrell, 2022). It is necessary to align training with teachers' PD requirements in teaching knowledge and skills. When there is an association between what teachers are trained and the more progressive training that they need to give as feedback, the required content appears (Xuan Jiang et al., 2021).

The reviewed literature, on professional development needs, also highlights that English language teachers do continue to enhance and expand their subject knowledge inventory. They must use their proficiency to differentiate their current teaching practices as effective users. According to Derakhshan, et al. (2020) the right way in the career of good teaching is based on attending to Continuing Professional Development (CPD) needs. It shows that the need in professional

development (PD) is to know what real teaching practices are applied and what new useful practices should be applied. The needs in PD give its meaning that “what is and what should be” (Witkin & Altshuld, 1995, p.4). Adding more to the meaning of needs in PD that PD needs of English teachers identify the real teaching practices and the preferred teaching practices (Kumar, 2010). Therefore, while planning a PD program for English teachers, the real teaching practices should be noted to know whether they are useful or to be modified. Little and Paul (2021) stated that needs-based PD is being considered the first and most important recommendation when designing any professional development program. It is the fact that English language is universally used language in politics, culture, economic exchanges. Even at the practical level, the language has technologically placed its importance online where freelancing is being done. Therefore, it is rightly said by Girma (2019) that English language teachers should know recent changes in language teaching to enhance the professional competence and efficiency. Besides, new teaching trends in English Language have significantly changed to see how teachers are professionally developed and affectively apply their practices. Thus, it is achievable if the environment of change is significantly provided with implications to the teachers’ development. According to Farrell (2022), the changes are happening rapidly because teachers are updating their content and pedagogical knowledge across the world through professional development programs.

According to the reviewed studies, English teachers should be optimistic to engage into their teaching activities that support them to reflect their need-based exploration by doing discussion with them, setting a situational plan, and providing reflective practices in standard PD programs, which assure active learning through collective engagement. Such opportunities for active participation can come in many forms, for instance including observation, being watched by competent teachers, designing, and discussing class plans and syllabuses, and so on. Because in the classroom, curriculum, materials, and teaching methods are used to assess student work (Garet et al., 2001). Additionally, the teachers can link the teaching subject concepts and its principles if they are given such possibilities. During professional development programs, a focus on active involvement, collaboration, and teamwork is likely to improve teachers' professional qualities (Dellicarpini, 2009). In this way, the PD would support refreshing the teaching curriculum, educational policies, learning practices and effects on the learning relationship between the teachers and the students. Therefore, several studies emphasize significantly towards professional development as helpfulness in the field of English Language Teaching (Aijaz, 2024; Al-Harbi & Ahmad, 2022; Sadeghi & Richards, 2021; Khan & Afridi, 2017). Teaching English is obviously an important due to make itself its significance around the world, and an English language teacher must be restructured with the changes in teaching English as a language. Moreover, an English language teacher needs to know English teaching methods, lesson planning, development of teaching and learning materials, use of IT, assessment criterion, and manage classroom activities effectively with a good deal of content knowledge, curriculum knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge.

English language teaching is taught effectively when English teachers possess good knowledge into lesson planning, class management, ELT methods and approaches, developing teaching materials, use of IT, and assessment and evaluation. Moreover, the PD programs are organized according to the reviewed studies at the world level by giving professional trainings into lesson planning, class management, ELT methods and approaches, developing teaching materials, use of IT, and assessment and evaluation. Thus, the teachers become able to improve the skills of English language.

Theoretical Framework

This study adapted the theoretical framework of Shuman (1986) to know a teacher’s knowledge. A teacher’s knowledge revolves around the subject he or she teaches, the syllabus they handle, and the way they associate between their subject and the syllabus. For such, he framed the knowledge of a teacher into three wide aspects. According to these three aspects, he means to associate the teacher with his or her knowledge through Content Knowledge, Pedagogical Knowledge, and Curricular Knowledge. He refers to them as for Content Knowledge that a teacher must possess good knowledge of his or her teaching subject. They should have the ability to give the concepts of the subject and explain the importance of these concepts with real life examples by relating it with other topics in theory and practice. On the second aspect, that is Pedagogical Knowledge, he refers it to the way to present the truths of the teaching subject to the learners rather through “powerful analogies,

illustrations, examples, explanations, and demonstrations that make the subject understandable to others.” And the third, Curricular Knowledge, he mentions to the learning objectives of the teaching subject’s resources to achieve the learning goals. In this regard, the researcher would analyze the results whether his participants’ professional needs are enough by having good command on the content knowledge or pedagogical knowledge and curriculum knowledge. Figure 1.1 shows the three categories through which a teacher is known as a professional teacher.

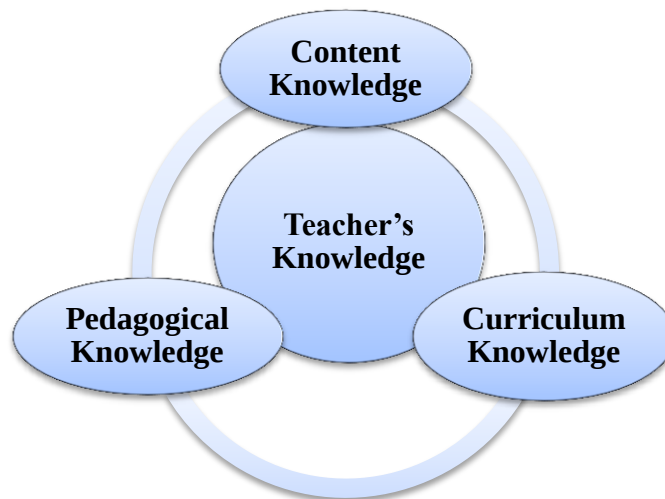


Fig. 1: Theoretical Framework (Adapted from Shulman, 1986)

Research Methodology

In this study, the qualitative exploratory research approach was chosen and the case study research design was adopted to explore the professional development needs of English subject teachers who used their teaching practices at the intermediate level classes in their public colleges of Sukkur, Sindh Pakistan with the alignment between English subject teachers’ PD needs and PD on offer for them (Creswell, 2016). The population of this case Study were English Language Teachers of Public College s of Sindh, Pakistan. The sample of study were public college English subject teachers, serving their respective institutes from 08 to 10 years. The participants were selected from five colleges of Sukkur city (two girls, two boys, one for both), having their English subject teaching practices at their intermediate classes with the syllabus of English textbooks prescribed by Sindh Textbook Board and affiliated with Board of Intermediate and Secondary Board Sukkur. The data was collected through purposive sampling technique in this study (Stratton, 2021). In this study data was analysed by thematically using the data analysis model of Braun and Clarke (2006) for the data to analyse its actual results. Braun and Clarke (2006) recommended a six-phase model to analyse the qualitative data thematically. According to Braun and Clarke (2006) there are six phases to know the actual meaning of the collected data. First, the researcher familiarizes the data. Secondly, the raw data is generated into the codes. Third, the generated data is searched for the themes. Fourth, the thematic data is reviewed. After having the themes reviewed from the data, the themes are defined and named. Lastly, the defined themes are written for the final report. The trustworthiness of the qualitative findings were ensured by using criteria of credibility, transferability, dependability and conformability .Moreover, ethical considerations were ensured through informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality and voluntarily.

Findings of the Study

This section offers the findings of the study in 3 recurring themes. So, the findings are presented and interpreted in below themes.

Traditional Teaching methods and contextual Constraints

There are five sub-themes under the first theme including (I) Lesson Planning, (II) Classroom Management, (III) Assessment and Evaluation (IV) Using Technology (V) English Language Teaching Approaches and Methods

Lesson Planning

The data analysis revealed that participants were interested in being developed professionally in lesson planning. However, they acknowledged that they did not plan their teaching as per lesson plan

because of institutional and contextual barriers such as complicated syllabus, multiple textbooks and shortage of time.

It is revealed that, teachers consider lesson planning as “Time-taking task”(EST 6) because the majority of literary topics are repetitive which makes students boredom and less engaged. Another participant highlighted that the lack of administrative supervision from the Principal is also one of the reason that they were not implementing lesson planning

“We are not observed by our head of department. Yes, when I was teaching in one of the private schools, there I used to plan a lesson. But here, I do not need to do so. I must say I do not know how to plan properly teaching intermediate level” (EST 3)

The findings discover that teachers do not value lesson planning in public-sector colleges because the college administration discourages reflective practices. Nonetheless, the participants were of the view that they should be trained on lesson planning because it is essential for them.

“Lesson planning is important because it makes a teacher ready to take the class. So, I think it would be better to train us how to plan a lesson from a huge syllabus.” (EST 9)

Hence, the results indicate that English Subject teachers view lesson planning as an import task rather than a procedural activity. Moreover, teachers has recognized its significance and needed support in professional development. Therefore, these findings correlates with the study conducted by Fullan et al. (2006), emphasized that systematic planning improve teacher efficacy and learning outcomes.

Classroom Management

The analysis revealed English subject Teachers of public colleges face challenges of managing over crowded classroom. Participants expressed frustration in maintaining the discipline in classes. The deal with it through scolding students and shouting to control the class.

“I feel problem when there are many students in the class. They pay little attention to learning. However, I try my level best. Yes, even sometimes, I talk loudly and control the class.” (EST 6)

Furthermore, another participant shared that,

“Really, it is not easy to manage the large class because students do not get interest in learning the prescribed books.” (EST 8)

The findings indicate that English Subject Teachers use reactive management strategies to comply disciplines in the classroom due to lack of knowledge on proactive or student-centered approaches. Teachers are unable to engage students in the classroom due to uninteresting course material and lack of support from the institution. These findings aligns with the Konnin’s model (1970) of classroom management which states that proactive strategies such as teachers preparedness and engagement can reduce misbehavior as compared to punitive strategies. So, teachers need professional development training on classroom management, differentiated instructions and motivational strategies.

Assessment and Evaluation

Teachers showed dissatisfaction over their current assessment practices. Teachers were of the view that they do not have sufficient knowledge on evaluation practices and assessment specifically to measure the language proficiency of students. Participants reflected that,

“I feel like I want to be improved in evaluation particularly for students at different proficiency levels.” (EST 8).

“After teaching, when I assess verbally my students or when take the tests, it feels that I teach little and how can I assess or evaluate my students or how I am teaching English.” (EST 5).

Moreover, another participants showed concern regarding reliance on preparing students for only board exams but not using formative assessment.

“It is tradition in our public sector colleges to teach traditionally and prepare students according to our Sukkur Board system paper pattern.” (EST 1).

Data interpretation revealed that majority of the English Subject teachers in colleges are using summative assessment because it is the dominant culture in colleges that is traditionally used for passing board exams leaving limited space for formative and diagnostic assessment. Balck and William (2009) supported these findings, who asserted that learning happens when teachers successfully integrate assessment for learning (AfL) in daily lessons. Thus, it was discovered that teachers need PD in formative assessment and reflective practices.

Using Technology

Teachers have recognized the potential of technology in improving English language learners proficiency, and teacher's ability to enhance student's interest and devise interactive technologically rich activities for the Students. However, they lack proficiency by not using technology. As teachers shared,

"The students use the technology better than we the teachers. But the language environment we cannot provide them. We have only old textbooks with black printing papers with heavy exercises except main skills of English language....., our classes should be equipped with multimedia and we the teachers are trained and aware with latest websites for learning English language" (EST 3)

"I really do not know how to use technology. Yes, I have a mobile that I can use but professionally I face problems. So, I need to know about using the technology." (EST 2)

Additionally, teachers urged the government to arrange trainings for college teachers on the use of technology.

"It is just said by our good government that the teachers will be trained and provided the technological materials but, we have not been trained yet. Still, we are waiting and asking for our professional training. We must be given training in how to use the technology." (EST 7).

The findings showed that teachers were frustrated because of the insufficient training and lack of institutional support to integrate technology into English Language classes. These findings matches with the previous studies which found that teachers use of technology can improve students' motivation in learning. Moreover, teachers consider technology as a means to promote interactive learning among students. However, technology should not replace teachers. Hence, there exists a gap in teacher's technological professional development and modern pedagogical approaches which are necessary for 21st century classrooms.

English Language Teaching Methods and Approaches

Teachers reported that there is dire need of professional development for them so that they can update their English Language Teaching (ELT) approaches. May teachers confessed that they were teaching the same way, the way they were taught in colleges. These teachers were focusing on teaching through grammar translation method (GMT) rather than innovative approaches or communicative approaches.

"For the professional development, I need to learn about diverse English teaching methods which help me how to teach English as a subject. So that my students should not get bored." (EST 8)

Our college should make meetings and hire someone to perceive our teaching methods and then give us training on regular." (EST 1).

These reflection of teachers clearly shows the disassociation in ELT frameworks and practices of teachers in colleges. A participant meticulously shared,

"It is my dream that there should be seminars particularly on practical and applicable methods for teaching language skills- listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. And the given syllabus is redesigned in which I teach just language not literature." (EST 10).

The findings revealed that Professional development in ELT should be ongoing, practice-oriented and contextualized. Similarly, these findings aligns with the study of Borg (2015) who said the same thing. Furthermore, teacher's wiliness to learn through professional development indicates that they welcome the receptive environment which can enhance their pedagogical approaches focusing on task-based, skill-integrated and communicative approaches.

Self-Professional Development by English Subject Teachers

Teacher's revealed that they were not supported by the institution in professional development rather they strived hard by themselves to self-professional development. With self-initiative, they were searching for teaching materials on the internet; reading ELT books; watching ELT videos on YouTube; and joining online language teacher platforms such as Coursera. Their responses indicated they found the relevant materials for their classes and learned more about teaching methods and approaches in teaching language. The following responses show how three of the contributors reflected on such:

“We observe certain problems with the new teaching supplies on the web sites. It is true that we maintain our job by helping each other and when we hear something new, we tell each other and try that.” (EST 6).

“I do everything on my own. I prepare the materials myself with the help of using the internet.” (EST 9).

These findings indicate that teachers were doing *autonomous professional Learning* (Villegas-Reimers, 2003), where teachers were acquiring professional development through self-directed instructions rather than formal structured PD. On the other hand, though participants were getting self-professional development, yet they mentioned that there is lack of opportunities for localized professional trainings.

“I want to participate in workshops but in Sukkur city, there is not any platform from where we college English teacher may get benefit to develop ourselves.” (EST 4)

Despite lack of institutional support, teachers were availing self-professional development. However, it was observed that teachers were showing resilience and adoptability through peer collaboration and learning in the face of limited institutional support and access to digital infrastructure and resources.

Opportunities for Professional Development of English Subject Teachers at their Colleges

The analysis of data revealed that mostly teachers shared their class problems, especially dead teaching material and no interest from their students. The participants stated that they learned to handle large classes from their seniors, and they helped each other by sharing developed and solved textbooks exercises. The following responses indicated that,

“When newly I was appointed as a lecturer in English, it was difficult for me to take the assigned classes. It was my seniors who supported me and this way as the time passed, I developed my confidence, and I took my classes without any hesitation.” (EST 2)

“We are not only colleagues but also friends, so we support each other.” (EST 5)

The findings indicate that professional development in public colleges occur through informal sharing and collaboration among peers in the absence of formal PD. In essence, teachers informally developed Professional learning communities (PLCs) where they take support, mentorship and guidance from their seniors. Thus, these findings corroborate with the study of Hoord’s (2009), who emphasized that PLCs must be set up within institution so that teachers can help each other.

Discussion

This case study aimed to explore the professional development needs of College English subject teachers at intermediate level classes, their current English subject teaching practices, the supposed professional development needs of them and offered professional development opportunities. The study’s finds revealed that English Subject Teachers in public colleges need professional development trainings in the areas of lesson planning, classroom management, assessment and evaluation, use of technology and modern pedagogical approaches to teach in ELT classes’ effectively. Hence, these findings were in reliable with the earlier studies which also reported that teaching in the context of English Language requires Professional development, innovative pedagogical approaches and adjusting teaching to students’ cultural and linguistic diversity (Pervaiz et al.,2021; Cumming, 2011; Borg, 2015).

Moreover, findings indicate that English Subject teachers were facing difficulties in lesson planning, repetitive nature of textbooks, heavy syllabi and lack of guidance. These findings aligns with Pervaiz, et al., 2021, who found that there is systematic issue in college education department where instructions largely depends on traditional style of teaching leaving little room for creativity. Lesson planning is an important reflective task which helps teachers to anticipate challenges and tailor instructions according to the need of students (Tsui and Tollefson, 2017). However, lack of systematic lesson planning increases teacher burnout and reduces student engagement. Hence, teachers PD initiatives should focus on developing teacher’s lesson planning skills (Imtiaz, 2014). Furthermore, managing overcrowded classroom was also one of the challenge reported by teachers. Teachers are unable to engage students in the classroom due to uninteresting course material and lack of support from the institution. Consequently, teachers use strict punitive strategies to control the class rather than engaging class with proactive strategies. These findings resonate with Lopes and Oliveira (2019), emphasizing that classroom management should not only focus on disciplinary measures but also create supportive, engaging and student-centered learning environment. So, teachers need professional

development training on classroom management, differentiated instructions and motivational strategies.

Additionally, the study found that English subject teachers had limited understanding of assessment and evaluation practices. Most of college teachers were relying on traditional summative assessment to prepare students for board exams, however, the formative assessment practices were missing. Balck and William (2009) supported these findings, who asserted that learning happens when teachers successfully integrate assessment for learning (AfL) in daily lessons. Thus, it was discovered that teachers need PD in formative assessment and reflective practices. Further, the findings showed that teachers were lacking in the use of technology in the classrooms. They were frustrated because of the insufficient training and lack of institutional support to integrate technology into English Language classes. These findings matches with the previous studies which originated that teacher's use of technology can improving students' motivation in learning (Derakhshan et al., 2020; Octaberlina, 2023).). Hence, there exists a gap in teacher's technological professional development and modern pedagogical approaches which are necessary for 21st century classrooms. Therefore, there is dire need of training for teachers on digital pedagogy, online platforms and technology-driven assessment practices.

The study found that most of the teachers were using traditional, teacher-centric pedagogical approaches such as Grammar translation method to teach English language rather than modern, student-centric approaches such as task-based, skill-integrated and communicative approaches. It was shown that teachers expressed strong desire to learn innovative pedagogical approaches. The findings are supported by the studies conducted by Sadeghi and Richards (2021), Borg (2015) and Girma et al. (2019), who emphasized that English teachers professional development should be ongoing, practice-oriented and contextualized. Teachers need to adopt modern pedagogical approaches to meet the communicative needs of the learners.

Furthermore, despite lack of institutional support, teachers were availing self-professional development. However, it was found that teachers were showing resilience and adoptability through peer collaboration and learning in the face of limited institutional support and access to digital infrastructure and resources. Additionally, the findings indicate that professional development in public colleges occur through informal sharing and collaboration among peers in the absence of formal PD. In essence, teachers informally developed Professional learning communities (PLCs) where they take support, mentorship and guidance from their seniors. Thus, these findings corroborate with the study of Nurhayati (2018) and Al-Harbi & Ahmad (2022), who emphasized that PLCs must be set up within institution so that teachers can help each other. Therefore, the institutions should develop a formal structure for teacher's professional development so that they can share their experiences, reflections, and co-design strategies.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the study utilized qualitative case study aimed at exploring the professional development needs of College English subject teachers at intermediate level classes, their current teaching practices, the perceived professional development needs and offered professional development opportunities. During the analysis, different findings have merged from the data connected to professional development needs of English Language teachers working in multilingual and multicultural classrooms in the public colleges of Sukkur City, Sindh, Pakistan. The findings revealed that English teachers of public colleges were facing multiple pedagogical and institutional challenges. These challenges include overcrowded classrooms, outdated curriculum, scarcity of teaching resources and little opportunities for professional development which can meaningfully affect the English language instruction's quality. Moreover, most of the teachers rely on traditional, authoritative, teacher-centred and translation-based approaches in teaching English which can hinder engagement of students, communicative competence and language proficiency. The teachers need to adopt modern communicative teaching methods for teaching English language to students which can develop interest among students to excel in acquiring language skills. Hence, the professional development of English teachers should be core component of improving teaching and learning in English. In this connection, English teachers need ongoing, relevant, contextual and need-based professional development programs so that they can enhance their pedagogical knowledge, assessment practices, and digital literacy and classroom management strategies. Therefore, teacher's systematic professional development programs will empower them to use student-centered

approaches in English Language classrooms where student can develop critical thinking, fluency and confidence in English.

Furthermore, the study revealed that professional development (PD) should be ongoing reflective and collaborative process rather than merely a one-time training program. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the institutions to prioritize teachers learning to enhance learning outcome of students. Teachers can be provided PD opportunities which will not only link the gap between theoretical knowledge and classroom practices but also cultivate a culture of lifelong learning between teachers. In last, this study suggests that there is need of change from traditional approaches to modern, technology-integrated and interactive English teaching practices. Thus, public colleges can prepare students better by aligning teacher's professional development with student's contextual, linguistic and cultural needs of language.

Implications

The current study has several implications for policy makers, teachers, curriculum developers and future researchers. The findings of study provides sufficient evidence to college education department to institutionalized English Teachers professional development. Moreover, the results of this case study showed that teachers need to be trained on modern pedagogical approaches which can address contextualized realities of the classroom. The curriculum designers should revise the curriculum of English at college level which can promote language development skills, communicative competences and critical thinking skills among ESL learners. The study has found gaps in many aspects of the English subject teaching in public colleges which provides avenues for future research directions. They can conduct qualitative, quantitative and mixed-method research studies on lesson planning, classroom management, technology integration, assessment and evaluation and pedagogical approaches in English language classrooms.

Limitation and Delimitations of the Study

The findings of the study were based on the data collected from 10 English teachers from five colleges of Sukkur region which restrict study to generalize findings on national level. The data was only collected through self-reported structured interviews which may include selective reflections or personal bias. The findings of study were based on the perspectives of teachers. However, administrative perspective were not include in current study to identify the professional development needs of teachers. The private college teachers and school level teachers were excluded from this study, only English teachers of public colleges took part in the study. The current study tried to identify professional development needs of college Teachers but did not evaluated existing PD programs.

Recommendations and Future Research Directions

Based on the findings and discussions, the current study proposes following recommendations and provides future research directions for other researchers. This study recommends that policy makers should develop a CPD framework for college teachers which can meet the desired and real needs of teachers focusing on differentiated instructions. The English subject teachers should be trained on technology driven innovative teaching practices which can enhance student's communicative skills. The existing curriculum of English Language should be revised and redesigned on student-centered teaching approaches which can enhance student's confidence and language skills. It is suggested that College Education Department should devise a mechanism for teacher evaluation, mentoring and follow-up session to ensure delivery of quality education. Moreover, it is suggested that public college teachers should be encouraged to enrol self-directed learning course which are offered online through Coursera and ELT forum to continue their professional learning.

As this study was qualitative in nature with limited sample, the researchers in future can conduct need analysis of English teachers to identify the professional development desires of teachers. This will ensure that teacher's needs are addressed properly. There is need of a competency based framework for college English subject teachers which can embed and address English teachers' real needs which they expect while having their teaching and learning practices. There is dire need of establishing subject-wise Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) for college teachers in Sindh, Pakistan

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