



Influence of Teacher Professional Development on Job Performance in Public Secondary Schools in Rongai Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya

By

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of teacher professional development (TPD) on job performance in public secondary schools in Rongai Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya. Anchored in Knowles' Adult Learning Theory, the study employed a convergent mixed-methods design, targeting 48 administrators, 285 teachers, 300 students, and one Sub-County Director of Education. Stratified, purposive, and systematic sampling were used to obtain 191 participants. Data collection involved questionnaires for teachers, administrators and students while interviews collected data from Sub-County Director of Education. Research tools were subjected through content and face validity through expert review. Quantitative Instrument reliability was ascertained with help of Cronbach's Alpha which yielded a value of ($\alpha = .796$). Reliability for qualitative data was ascertained in terms of their trustworthiness specifically for credibility and dependability. Quantitative data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 25 to generate descriptive statistics that summarized data. The results were presented in frequency distribution tables. Pearson correlations was used to test the hypothesis. Qualitative data from interviews underwent thematic analysis and the results was presented in form of narratives and frequencies. Results revealed low teacher participation in TPD (28%) but significant positive relationships between TPD and performance indicators: lesson preparation ($r = .45, p = .002$), clarity of explanations ($r = .50, p = .001$), and motivation ($r = .40, p = .005$). Students reported notable gains in classroom engagement (81%), while 69% of teachers perceived limited benefits, citing weak leadership support (81%), funding constraints (72%), and content irrelevance (68%). The study concluded that contextually relevant, sustained, and mentorship-driven TPD enhances teacher effectiveness and recommends localized models emphasizing peer coaching, administrative support, and NGO partnerships.

Keywords: *Teacher professional development, job performance, mentorship, secondary education, Kenya*



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Introduction

Teacher Professional Development (TPD) is globally recognized as a cornerstone of education reforms, improving teacher effectiveness, student achievement, and institutional performance. Across different contexts, TPD assumes varying structures, reflecting policy priorities, resource availability, and institutional needs. In the United States, Darling-Hammond et al. (2020) argue that continuous, content-specific Professional Development (PD) is the strongest driver of improved teaching quality. Continuous, content-specific professional development (PD) plays a key role in enhancing quality teaching in the United States because it equips teachers with updated knowledge and instructional strategies that directly align with the subjects they teach. Unlike one-time workshops, ongoing PD allows teachers to refine their practice over time, collaborate with peers, and connect theory with classroom realities. For example, when math teachers engage in PD focused on problem-solving strategies or technology integration, they become more confident in delivering complex concepts in ways that engage students. Similarly, content-focused PD in science enables teachers to incorporate hands-on inquiry-based learning, which strengthens student understanding and critical thinking.

Recent studies show that when PD is sustained, collaborative, and directly tied to content areas, it improves teacher confidence and instructional effectiveness, ultimately leading to better student outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Kraft, Blazar, & Hogan, 2022). This approach also empowers teachers to adapt to changing curriculum standards, integrate technology, and address diverse learner needs. In essence, continuous, content-specific PD not only strengthens teacher expertise but also fosters a culture of lifelong learning that translates into richer classroom experiences for students.

Finland's educational success has been attributed to mentoring and collaborative learning communities embedded within schools (Sahlberg, 2015). In Finland, mentoring and collaborative learning communities play a central role in sustaining high-quality teaching. For instance, New teachers are often paired with experienced mentors who provide guidance, emotional support, and practical strategies to navigate classroom challenges. This mentorship fosters professional

confidence and helps novice teachers develop strong pedagogical practices. Beyond individual mentoring, Finnish schools also emphasize collaborative learning communities where teachers plan lessons together, share research-based strategies, and reflect on classroom experiences. These professional communities create a culture of trust, innovation, and continuous growth, which directly strengthens the quality of teaching and student learning outcomes. By working collectively rather than in isolation, teachers feel valued and supported, which nurtures their long-term commitment to the profession (Ahtiainen et al., 2021; Finnish National Agency for Education [EDUFI], 2023).

In Singapore, PD is career-long and structured through professional learning cycles that integrate classroom innovation and leadership development (Lee et al., 2022). In Singapore, quality teaching is strongly linked to the integration of classroom innovation and leadership development within schools. Teachers are encouraged to use innovative pedagogies such as blended learning, inquiry-based projects, and technology-driven approaches that make learning more engaging and relevant to students' lives. These innovations not only improve academic outcomes but also nurture creativity, problem-solving, and collaboration, which are key skills for the 21st century (Ng, 2022).

At the same time, Singapore places a strong emphasis on leadership development among educators. Through structured programs like the Academy of Singapore Teachers and the National Institute of Education's leadership tracks, teachers are supported to grow as reflective practitioners and leaders of learning communities. This empowers them to mentor peers, lead curriculum reforms, and shape school cultures that prioritize continuous improvement (Tan & Low, 2023). Together, innovation in the classroom and leadership development ensure that teachers are not only delivering lessons but also shaping dynamic learning environments where both educators and students thrive. This human-centered approach fosters resilience, adaptability, and excellence in Singapore's education system. Similarly, the UK's National Professional Qualification framework ensures certification programs lead to measurable gains in teaching standards (See et al., 2020). These global experiences emphasize structured, sustained, and collaborative PD as key to teacher growth, suggesting that short, one-off workshops are insufficient.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, teacher professional development has been promoted to improve teacher competencies amid systemic challenges. For instance, in South Africa, the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED) and Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) have driven improvements in classroom practice, although equity issues remain (Apambilla et al., 2021). Studies in Uganda (Kyeyune, 2020) and Tanzania (Mduma & Mkulu, 2021) show PD improves instructional practice but is hindered by financial constraints and poor follow-up. In Botswana, INSET workshops enhanced subject knowledge, but teachers reported limited classroom transfer due to lack of sustained support (Tshireletso & Mphale, 2022). In Rwanda, continuous professional development (CPD) in science subjects has shown positive correlations with student achievement (Uwamahoro & Ndiokubwayo, 2023). These findings

highlight a paradox: while TPD boosts skills and knowledge, implementation barriers especially lack of funding, weak leadership, and inadequate mentoring limit long-term impact.

Kenya has institutionalized teacher professional development through the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), the Centre for Mathematics, Science and Technology Education in Africa (CEMASTEA), and competency-based curriculum reforms. TSC (2021) mandates continuous PD cycles, while mentorship and coaching policies introduced in 2020 emphasize peer observation and collaborative learning. Despite these frameworks, many Kenyan teachers report limited relevance, inadequate funding, and poor leadership support (Otieno, 2023; Kosgei, 2023).

County-level studies show PD improves curriculum delivery and classroom management (Amemasor et al., 2025). Yet, gaps remain in aligning PD with teacher needs and ensuring sustainability. In Rongai Sub-County specifically, teachers report heavy workloads, limited funding, and weak mentorship opportunities. Administrators also lack sufficient training to monitor and evaluate PD initiatives effectively (Muthuri, 2022).

While global and regional literature affirms PD's role in enhancing performance, few studies have systematically explored the relationship between Professional development participation and teacher job performance in Kenyan sub-counties. Existing research is either generalized nationally or focuses on perceptions without linking PD to measurable performance outcomes. Moreover, there is limited focus on the interplay between PD, school leadership support, and systemic barriers such as funding and teacher workload.

This study therefore investigated the extent to which teacher professional development predicts teacher job performance in public secondary schools in Rongai Sub-County, Nakuru County. It examines how PD initiatives such as training workshops, mentorship programs, and professional learning communities affect lesson preparation, instructional clarity, classroom management and teacher motivation.

Design and Methodology

The study adopted a convergent mixed-methods design (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), combining quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a holistic understanding of how TPD predicts teacher job performance. It was conducted in Rongai Sub-County, Nakuru County, Kenya, and targeted 285 teachers, 48 administrators, 300 students, and one Sub-County Director of Education, giving a total population of 634 participants. From this, a sample of 191 respondents was drawn through purposive and stratified random sampling, comprising 1 Sub-County Director of Education, 15 administrators, 85 teachers, and 90 students, as summarized in Table 1. Data were collected using questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions (FGDs). The instruments were content and face validated through expert review and triangulation. The reliability of

quantitative data with Likert scale items was determined using Cronbach's Alpha technique and obtained value of .796 which was accepted. Reliability for qualitative data was ascertained in terms of their trustworthiness, that is, credibility, member checking as well as audit trail. Research ethics were observed throughout the entire research process. For instance, permissions were obtained prior to fieldwork, after which questionnaires were administered and interviews/FGDs conducted. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS version 26 through descriptive statistics and Pearson correlations, while qualitative data were subjected to thematic analysis guided by Braun and Clarke's (2019) framework.

Presentation, Discussion and Interpretation of the Findings

Demographic characteristics of the study participants

The researcher included demographic characteristics of the study participants because it provided context that helps readers understand *who* the research findings represent. Demographic details such as age, gender, education level, forms, teaching experience, or school type allowed the researcher to interpret whether results are generalizable or specific to a certain group. They also help identify how differences among participants might influence outcomes, ensuring that findings are not interpreted in a vacuum. In educational research, reporting demographics is now considered a best practice because it makes studies more relatable, allowing policymakers, educators, and practitioners to connect findings to their own contexts (American Psychological Association [APA], 2020). Table 1 illustrates the findings.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Category	Variable	Frequency	%
Students	Male	49	57%
	Female	36	43%
	Age 15–16	38	45%
	Age 17–18	27	32%
	Age >18	20	24%
	Form 1	19	22%
	Form 2	17	20%
	Form 3	29	34%

Category	Variable	Frequency	%
Teachers	Form 4	20	24%
	Male	40	54%
	Female	34	46%
	Experience <3 years	20	27%
	Experience 3–5 years	20	27%
	Experience 6–10 years	22	30%
	Experience >10 years	12	16%
	Bachelor's degree	69	93%
	Master's degree	5	7%

The demographic analysis of respondents revealed balanced representation. Among students, 57% were male and 43% female. Most were aged 15–16 years (45%), followed by 17–18 years (32%), and above 18 years (24%). Class distribution was relatively even, with 22% in Form One, 20% in Form Two, 34% in Form Three, and 24% in Form Four.

Teachers also reflected a balanced gender distribution (54% male, 46% female). In terms of teaching experience, 27% had less than three years, another 27% had three to five years, 30% had between six and ten years, and 16% had over ten years. A vast majority (93%) held bachelor's degrees, while 7% had master's degrees. This indicates that respondents were academically qualified and represented both novice and experienced categories.

Influence of Professional Development on Teachers' Job Performance

The study sought to establish the influence of teacher professional development on teacher job performance in public secondary schools in Rongai Sub-County, Nakuru County, -Kenya. Information was obtained from the teachers and students respondents. Tables 2 and 3 illustrates the results as follows.

Table 2

Students Observations of PD Impact on Teachers' Job Performance

Item	Response	Freq	%
Teachers more motivated after PD	Always	49	58%
	Sometimes	26	31%



Item	Response	Freq	%
PD influence on learning (multiple)	Never	10	12%
	Improved lesson delivery	20	24%
	Better classroom management	20	24%
	Greater engagement	28	33%
	More personalized attention	17	20%
Teachers address challenges effectively	Always	49	58%
	Sometimes	17	20%
	Never	19	22%

Source: Field Data, 2025

Students' Perceptions of the Teachers Professional Development

Data in Table 2 show that students generally viewed PD as beneficial to their teachers. A majority (58%) reported that teachers appeared more motivated after PD, while 31% observed occasional PD, and only 12% saw no change. Regarding specific impacts, 33% highlighted greater engagement, 24% noted improved lesson delivery, another 24% pointed to better classroom management, and 20% observed more personalized attention from teachers. Moreover, 58% of students affirmed that teachers addressed classroom challenges more effectively after PD, although 22% disagreed, indicating variability across schools.

These findings suggest that professional development had visible and positive effects on teachers' classroom practice, particularly in motivating teachers and engaging learners. Professional Development (PD) equips teachers with strategies and tools to effectively manage the everyday challenges of the classroom, from handling diverse student needs to addressing behavioral issues. Through PD, teachers gain updated knowledge on classroom management techniques, inclusive teaching practices, and the use of technology to engage learners. This not only boosts their confidence but also helps them respond to challenges in a proactive, rather than reactive, way. For example, training in social-emotional learning enables teachers to foster supportive learning environments that reduce disruptions and improve student behavior. Ultimately, professional development empowers teachers to turn potential difficulties into opportunities for growth and learning. Recent research highlights that sustained PD improves teachers' ability to adapt to

complex classroom dynamics, leading to better learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2022). This implies that by continuously sharpening their skills, teachers are better prepared to create positive, well-managed classrooms where students feel respected and motivated.

Teachers' Perceptions of Professional Development

Teachers were also requested to give their views about the influence of professional development on their job performance. They were required to state professional development improved their teaching effectiveness. The findings are presented in Table 3

Table 3

Teachers' Perspective on Influence of PD on teacher Job Performance

Item	Response	Freq	%
PD improved teaching effectiveness	Agree	17	23%
	Neutral	6	8%
	Disagree	51	69%

Source: Field Data, 2025

Results in Table 3 show that the teachers, were less optimistic about the effectiveness of their Professional development. Only 23% agreed that Professional development improved their teaching effectiveness, 8% were neutral, and 69% disagreed. This suggests that many teachers perceived PD as failing to address their immediate professional challenges. The gap between teacher and student perspectives indicates that while learners observe tangible benefits, teachers may judge PD against broader outcomes such as workload management or curriculum mastery, which may not shift immediately after training. Despite the majority (69%) of the teachers' disagreement on PD, there are some who viewed it beneficial. For instance, Professional development improves teachers' teaching effectiveness by equipping them with up-to-date knowledge, modern instructional strategies, and practical skills that directly enhance classroom practice. Through ongoing training, teachers learn how to adapt lessons to diverse learners, integrate technology, and use assessment data to improve student outcomes. It also builds teachers' confidence, reflective capacity, and professional collaboration, which fosters innovative and student-centered teaching approaches. In turn, these improvements create more engaging, supportive, and effective learning environments that boost student achievement (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Kraft et al., 2018).

Correlation Analysis on Relationships Between PD and Job Performance

To establish the relationship between PD and job performance, the study tested the following hypothesis:

H₀₁: There is no statistically significant relationship between teacher professional development and teacher job performance in public secondary schools in Rongai Sub-County.

Table 4

Pearson Correlation between PD and Job Performance

Variable Pair	Pearson r	p-value	Interpretation
PD Participation & Lesson Preparation	0.45	0.002	Moderate positive correlation; greater PD participation relates to better lesson prep.
PD Relevance & Clarity of Explanation	0.50	0.001	Moderate to strong; relevant PD enhances clarity.
Teacher Motivation & PD Support	0.40	0.005	Moderate; support influences motivation.

Correlation analysis confirmed statistically significant relationships between PD and job performance. Professional Development participation was positively correlated with lesson preparation ($r = .45$, $p = .002$), demonstrating that more engaged teachers prepared better lessons. PD relevance strongly correlated with clarity of explanations ($r = .50$, $p = .001$), underscoring the importance of aligning PD content with classroom realities. Administrative support for PD was positively correlated with teacher motivation ($r = .40$, $p = .005$). These results collectively reject the null hypothesis and affirm that PD predicts teacher performance in Rongai Sub-County.

Discussion

This study set out to examine the extent to which teacher professional development influences job performance in public secondary schools in Rongai Sub-County. The questionnaires were administered to teachers, administrators, and students, while the Sub-County Director of Education provided responses through an interview. This ensured that the perspectives analyzed represented not only the teachers as direct beneficiaries of professional development but also the administrators who oversee its implementation and the students who experience its outcomes in the classroom.

The findings revealed that professional development significantly predicted aspects of teacher job performance, particularly lesson preparation, clarity of explanations, and motivation. For instance, participation in professional development was positively correlated with lesson preparation ($r = .45, p = .002$), indicating that teachers who engaged more actively in PD were better prepared to deliver structured lessons. Similarly, PD relevance strongly correlated with clarity of explanations ($r = .50, p = .001$), underscoring the importance of aligning training content with subject-specific and classroom realities. Administrative support was also found to have a strong relationship with teacher motivation ($r = .40, p = .005$), highlighting the role of school leadership in sustaining the benefits of PD.

These findings are consistent with the research question by confirming that professional development is a predictor of improved teacher performance. They also provide practical insights into how performance can be improved: when PD is relevant, continuous, and supported by school leadership, teachers become more effective in curriculum delivery, classroom management, and student engagement. This finding reflects Guskey's (2020) argument that teachers evaluate the effectiveness of PD in terms of its immediate impact on their ability to teach, while students perceive tangible classroom improvements even when teachers remain skeptical.

Comparisons with other contexts reinforce these results. In the Netherlands, Van der Lans et al. (2021) found that structured PD enhanced lesson planning, which mirrors the positive correlation in Rongai. Roberts and Green (2016) similarly reported improved instructional clarity among rural Australian teachers after PD. In Kenya, Kosgei (2023) observed that while mandatory online PD improved teacher knowledge, it had limited classroom impact due to lack of subject focus, a concern echoed by Rongai teachers who felt much PD was irrelevant despite students noticing classroom improvements. The strong link between PD relevance and instructional clarity in this study therefore underscores the need to tailor PD to actual classroom challenges.

Teacher motivation was closely tied to administrative support, aligning with Desimone's (2021) review and Oduor and Rarieya's (2023) Kenyan findings that mentorship integrated into PD boosts teacher confidence and outcomes. However, teachers in Rongai also expressed concerns that workshop benefits were short-lived, reflecting Darling-Hammond et al.'s (2020) conclusion that one-off sessions rarely produce sustained changes in teacher practice.



Regionally, similar barriers have been observed. In Uganda, Kyeyune (2020) found that while PD improved instructional practices, its sustainability was undermined by financial limitations. In Tanzania, Mduma and Mkulu (2021) observed uneven implementation across schools, leading to mixed outcomes. In Botswana, Tshireletso and Mphale (2022) noted that although INSET workshops enhanced subject knowledge, limited follow-up reduced classroom transfer of skills. Rwanda's experience, however, shows that sustained PD in science subjects can translate into measurable gains in student achievement (Uwamahoro & Ndiokubwayo, 2023). These studies highlight that while PD has significant potential, the context of delivery — including leadership support, funding, and mentoring — determines its long-term effectiveness.

Taken together, the findings of this study confirm that professional development moderately but significantly predicts teacher job performance in Rongai Sub-County. They suggest that improving teacher effectiveness requires not only more opportunities for PD but also leadership structures that ensure training is relevant, continuous, and embedded in daily school practice.

Conclusion

The study concludes that teacher professional development moderately but significantly predicts job performance in public secondary schools in Rongai Sub-County. While students consistently identified benefits such as improved motivation, engagement, and clarity, most teachers undervalued PD, highlighting a gap between perceived and actual classroom impacts. The statistical evidence confirms that PD participation, relevance, and administrative support are key predictors of performance, particularly in lesson preparation, instructional clarity, and teacher motivation. However, systemic barriers such as inadequate funding, lack of mentorship, and poor alignment of Professional development with teacher needs undermine its full potential.

Recommendations

The findings have important implications for policy, practice, and research. At the policy level, the Ministry of Education and the Teachers Service Commission should design localized and context-specific PD models that address the unique realities of sub-county schools. Sustained funding, supported through partnerships with county governments and NGOs, is essential to ensure continuity. Additionally, PD outcomes should be integrated into teacher appraisal systems to reinforce accountability and professional growth.

At the practice level, schools should institutionalize mentorship and coaching programs, pairing novice teachers with experienced colleagues for continuous support. Principals should also encourage professional learning communities (PLCs), where teachers collaborate, reflect, and share best practices. To sustain learning from workshops, schools need mechanisms such as peer



coaching, classroom observations, and action research projects that translate training into daily practice.

Finally, future research should adopt longitudinal approaches to capture long-term PD effects on both teachers and learners. Comparative studies across counties would provide insights into regional variations, while studies on digital PD platforms could identify scalable and cost-effective models suitable for resource-constrained settings.

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