From Training Model to the Community of Practice Model for Teacher Professional Learning in Tanzania: A Review of the Literature

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	Teacher professional development (TPL), supervised by the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, is vital for improving educational outcomes in Tanzania. This analysis scrutinizes the present state of TPL in Tanzania, emphasizing the responsibilities of diverse stakeholders and investigating various paradigms and models of professional development. Although conventional methods like workshops and seminars continue to be widely used, an increasing number of individuals acknowledge the importance of shifting to more efficient frameworks, specifically community of practice-based approaches. The significance of harmonizing TPL with the practical requirements of classroom instructors and cultivating ongoing cooperation and support among relevant parties is underscored in the review. The community of practice model is a potentially effective strategy that allows educators to participate in continuous, situationally appropriate learning experiences while receiving assistance and input from colleagues and authorities. The transition from training-oriented to practice-oriented learning underscores educators' critical role in determining their professional growth. Moreover, by capitalizing on technological infrastructure and communication networks, one can access prospects for autonomous professional growth, irrespective of geographical constraints. Nonetheless, for the successful implementation of TPL programs, effective collaboration among stakeholders, including the Ministry of Education, school administrations, and community organizations, is essential. To ensure coherence and efficacy, explicit standards and guidelines are required, in addition to ongoing monitoring and evaluation to determine program impact and pinpoint areas that need enhancement. This critique proposes that TPL in Tanzania be re-evaluated and restructured to accommodate the changing requirements of educators and students. Tanzania can enhance educational outcomes and student success by fostering a culture of ongoing professional development and learning among its teaching staff by adopting community-driven, practice-based methodologies and providing sufficient resources and support.

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INTRODUCTION

In Tanzania, the Ministry of Education and Vocational Training is in-charge of formulating education policy and allocating funds to support professional development for educators (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). To assist school teachers in their professional learning, universities and programs must prepare teachers to conduct policy-oriented research, provide training, and make appropriate literature and materials available (Kinyota et al., 2019; Komba & Nkumbi, 2008; Komba & Mwakabenga, 2019).

For its part, the school's administration is expected to encourage the professional growth of teachers daily by providing them with guidance, supervision, monitoring, and evaluation of the various learning and teaching activities(Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019). Through the school committee, the community is tasked with facilitating the teaching staff's professional development by allocating sufficient funds within the budget (Norwani et al., 2017). The educator's responsibility is to be proactive in looking for opportunities for professional development(Junaid & Maka, 2015).

Professional learning is the primary way educators in Tanzania advance their skills and those of their students. Various educational institutions offer these courses, which working professionals attend. Specifically, Tanzania has adopted the Training and Practice-based models of teachers' professional knowledge (Komba & Mwakabenga, 2019)

Traditional professional learning opportunities for teachers are supported through workshops and seminars (Morgan & Neil, 2004). However, the school-based approach, which involves mentoring teachers in their schools, offers far more opportunities to provide individualized support to teachers in the classroom (Southerland et al., 2016)

The presence of legally authorized organizations supervising the execution of teachers' professional learning activities is one opportunity to establish a professional learning community for teachers (Kiige, 2019; Komba & Nkumbi, 2008; Komba & Mwakabenga, 2019). These institutions include the Ministry of Education, science, and Technology, the President's Office of Regional Administration and local government, universities, the Tanzania Institute of Education, and colleges for teacher education(Morgan & Neil, 2004). However, among others, the Ministry of Education, science, and Technology is responsible for formulating policies governing education provision in the nation (Martin et al., 2018; Safi, 2015)

The presence of numerous education stakeholders in various regions of Tanzania who, in some capacity, serve as teacher professional learning providers may also present an opportunity to enhance the professional learning community services (Omar, 2014).

As a result, the presence of many teachers' professional learning providers in Tanzania could be an excellent opportunity to advise schools on how to develop a professional learning community, provided that the various stakeholders are coordinated and guided linearly (Popova et al., 2022).

The country's easy accessibility provides another fantastic opportunity to strengthen Tanzania's teacher-professional learning community to various communication networks and the national optic fiber (Nzarirwehi & Atuhumuze, 2019). Teachers can now connect through multiple communication networks and participate in self-directed professional development opportunities, regardless of location (Kinyota et al., 2019). According to Mbuli & Zhang (2020), the presence of the national optic fiber paves the way for an opportunity for Internet connectivity in schools. With this connectivity, educators can search for and share learning materials that can be utilized to improve their knowledge, skills, and competencies.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Professional Teacher Learning
Teacher professional learning (TPL) assists teachers in gaining insight and expertise in their field (Ratcheva et al., 2006). Coenders & Verhoef (2019) emphasize that professional teacher learning encourages the development of new ways of thinking about content and new instructional approaches, which substantially impacts student achievement over time.

Teachers engage in professional learning to stimulate their thinking and knowledge and to ensure that a critical lens informs their practice and that it is up-to-date(Canaran & Mirici, 2020; Hardman et al., 2015). Teachers must have ample opportunities to develop and improve their professional knowledge and practice to advance the quality of learning and teaching and school improvement (Polly et al., 2017; Ayvaz-Tuncel & Çobanoğlu, 2018).

Characteristics of Professional Teacher Learning
Darling-Hammond, (2006) argues that the continuing education that teachers receive should be pertinent. Teachers should have input on their knowledge and about the types of professional development that will be most helpful to their grade level or field of study, as well as which topics or trends are most aligned with the educators' development as teachers(De Jong et al., 2019; Almpanis, 2015; Kinyota et al., 2019; Shenton, 2004; Singha & Sikdar, 2018). Once teachers have a clear idea of what they want to get out of the educational experience, it will be much simpler for them to adapt the curriculum to meet their requirements and goals(Darling-Hammond, 2006; Li & Dervin, 2018; Miller et al., 2016; Southerland et al., 2016).

Learning new teaching strategies, concepts, or methodologies is no longer sufficient for educators today because of increased accountability for teachers. In addition, they are required to take away practical skills that will ultimately result in improved student learning (Canaran & Mirici, 2020; Kinyota et al., 2019; Sari et al., 2018).
Teachers' professional learning should be the teachers' responsibility (De Jong et al., 2019).

Professional learning (PL), in which educators regularly meet to reflect on and improve their teaching practices, is associated with increased student achievement. To maximize their potential, PL should incorporate mentoring programs, lesson study, and video-based reflections of actual teaching practices (Bjuland & Mosvold, 2015; Coenders & Verhoef, 2019).

The Training Model of Teachers' Professional Learning
It is typically presented to the educator by an "expert," who sets the agenda and places the audience member in a receptive role (Popova et al., 2022). Off-site training is more common than in-house, but both are often criticized for being irrelevant to participants' real-world classroom situations(Villegas-Reimers, 2003). One of the main problems, as identified by Southerland et al. (2016), is that such training events often fail to connect with the essential moral purposes at the heart of teachers' professionalism.

According to Safi (2015), in the teacher training model, learning is characterized as expanding an individual repertoire of well-defined and skillful classroom practice. The focus of activities within this model is placed on the individual and acquiring new knowledge(Hardman, 2017). Despite differences in duration, format, and content, all these professional development initiatives aimed at teacher gains from engagement with experts or knowledgeable others who set up activities to train teachers in specific skills or techniques(Omar, 2014; Osamwonyi, 2016; Coffie et al., 2019; Southerland et al., 2016).

Teacher learning opportunities under the training model fit within the acquisition metaphor for learning; according to this metaphor, a person who learns something new is acquiring a new concept or procedure, which forms the unit of knowledge that accumulates gradually and combines to form richer cognitive structures. Vangrieken et al. (2017) revealed that many educational traditions, such as behaviorism and constructivism, use the acquisition metaphor to conceptualize learning. Therefore, professional learning initiatives within the training model operate under the acquisition metaphor, which depends on different learning theories.

The Community of Practice Model for Professional Learning
This model of teacher learning is very different from previous training models. While engaged in results, teachers may continue participating in teacher learning activities as part of their daily duty schedule (Coffie et al., 2019). According to Uysal (2012), Teachers are members of different communities of practice; learning takes place within these communities through the following three essential processes: the development of new forms of mutual engagement, the comprehension and fine-tuning of their enterprise, and the growth of their repertoire, styles, and discourses.

A community of practice mode that is characterized by a shared professional vision can naturally lead to situations in which partners are comfortable opening up to each other, have a shared understanding of the goals of coaching, have a shared focus on specific effective practice choices about effective practices and coaching strategies, commit to the partnership, and continue to communicate and support each other (Switbert, 2013; Martin et al., 2018; Sachs, 2016; Safi, 2015).

A community of practice mode to professional learning fits a further metaphor training, the participation metaphor (Vangrieken et al., 2017). At the same time, the concept implies a clear endpoint to the learning process; the new leaves no room for halting signals (Sari et al., 2018).

METHODOLOGY
A narrative literature review is a review article that provides a comprehensive analysis and synthesis of existing literature on a particular topic, it typically incorporates insights from various studies and sources to support its arguments and recommendations. This type of review often employs a narrative format to present information coherently and persuasively (Shenton, 2004).

The narrative literature review used in the work follows a structured approach to present and analyze the existing knowledge on the subject of teacher professional learning in Tanzania. It provides a comprehensive analysis of teacher professional learning in Tanzania, incorporating insights from various studies and sources to support its arguments and recommendations. It employs a narrative format to present information coherently and persuasively, guiding readers through the complex landscape of teacher professional development.

RESULTS
According to Mavura (1987), community practice-based methods of teacher learning are a response to educational changes and a re-evaluation of what is considered learning. Beisiegel et al. (2018) suggest that organizations promoting teacher learning should focus on optimizing how individuals retain knowledge most effectively. Hence, innovative learning approaches give rise to novel means of structuring teacher professional development prospects. By shifting the metaphor from acquisition to participation, an organization may alter how it designs programs to promote the professional growth of teachers.

Given that teaching is a lifelong endeavor and requires consistent engagement in professional development initiatives, it is crucial to adopt a practice-based paradigm to guarantee that educators get continuous education while actively working (Mavura, 1987).

The conventional approach to professional teacher learning sometimes fails to provide opportunities for participants to relate the subject to their circumstances to develop a more profound comprehension. The lack of chances for teacher participants to actively practice and acquire skills or methods necessitates a move to a practice-based paradigm (Komba & Mwakabenga, 2019; Switbert, 2013). The practice-based approach enables teachers to learn via experimentation, trial and error, and practical application, facilitating the internalization of new skills in their classrooms(Popova et al., 2022).

The conventional learning style only requires continuous assistance from an instructional specialist (Coffie et al., 2019; Ullah et al., 2013; Uysal, 2012). Support for a workshop ceases as the workshop concludes(Robinson & Mogliacci, 2019). Consequently, teachers need more instructional experts to receive immediate support and feedback when implementing new strategies or skills. This practice-based model allows teachers to have sufficient time to design collaborative learning experiences and reflect on their successes and challenges with the guidance of an expert (Omar, 2014).

In the conventional paradigm, learning occurs regularly and encompasses diverse subjects. Additionally, there are instances when a teacher is absent from their assigned location. Educators may address various topics during workshops or sessions, including literacy, classroom management, blended learning, and evaluation(Sachs, 2016). Sessions are often isolated from one another and the teacher's classroom, resulting in overwhelming material lacking coherence. As a result, this knowledge is frequently not incorporated into the teacher's teaching repertoire (Ayvaz-Tuncel & Çobanoğlu, 2018). The community of practice-based paradigms facilitates a thorough understanding of each teacher's specific environment, emphasizing the practical application of knowledge in teaching rather than superficially addressing basic themes at irregular intervals (Coffie et al., 2019).

The conventional learning mode does not allow instructors to contemplate and evaluate their teaching methods (Sari et al., 2018). The practice mode enables instructors to provide an opportunity for contemplation and guarantee a methodical discussion about modifying the teaching methods for their classes takes place (Hardman et al., 2015).

Sofo & Abonyi (2018) highlight that conventional training approaches, however prevalent, sometimes face criticism for their lack of connection to teachers' actual classroom settings and their absence of continuous assistance. There is a need to shift towards models focused on practical application, enabling instructors to continuously learn and adapt to their circumstances.

The community of practice concept provides a more enduring and pragmatic approach to teacher professional development(Heystek & Terhoven, 2015; Huchting & Bickett, 2020; Flores, 2020). This paradigm facilitates the development and improvement of teaching methods among educators by promoting cooperation, providing continuing support, and encouraging reflection among communities of instructors (Flores, 2020).

It is essential to empower teachers to assume responsibility for their professional development. Teachers should be allowed to provide their advice on the forms of professional development that would be most advantageous to them. Additionally, they should actively structure their learning experiences (Huchting & Bickett, 2020). School leaders are crucial in promoting a culture of ongoing learning and professional development among teachers. Facilitating direction, oversight, and allocation of resources to bolster teachers' professional growth is crucial for establishing a favorable atmosphere for successful instruction and learning (Herbert & Rainford, 2014).

Teachers in Tanzania may use the widespread availability of communication networks and technology infrastructure to participate in self-directed professional development, regardless of location. Utilizing these tools may improve the efficiency and scope of professional development programs (Sofo & Abonyi, 2018)

Efficient collaboration among stakeholders, such as the Ministry of Education, school administrations, and community groups, is crucial for effectively implementing teacher professional development programs. It is essential to set explicit standards and guidelines to guarantee that various projects agree and are consistent (Heystek & Terhoven, 2015). Continuous monitoring and assessment of teacher professional development programs is necessary to gauge their effectiveness and pinpoint improvement areas. This includes collecting instructor input, monitoring student results, and adjusting approaches based on empirical data and established methodologies (Flores, 2020).

CONCLUSION

The teacher-learning model flourished to help teachers attain the 21st-century teaching demands. The training mode only allowed teachers to participate in training after a specific time interval. Still, the practice mode will enable teachers to get a chance to participate in the teaching-learning activities after every period to provide objective feedback on teacher learning and support improvements in teaching and school development. The review underscores the importance of rethinking and restructuring teacher-professional learning in Tanzania better to meet the evolving needs of educators and students. By embracing community-driven, practice-based approaches and providing adequate support and resources, Tanzania can foster a culture of continuous learning and professional growth among its teaching workforce, ultimately leading to improved educational outcomes.

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