Effectiveness of Teachers Training Program in Enhancing Teaching Competence of Public Primary School Teachers in Ilemela Municipality, Tanzania

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Abstract:- The study aims to investigate the Effectiveness of Teachers Training Program in Enhancing Teaching Competence of Public Primary School Teachers in Ilemela Municipality, Tanzania. The problem of this study was answered by the one research questions; TCPD training programs in enhancing teaching competence. The study was guided by the Social Cognitive Theory. The current study employed convergent design under mixed research methods approach. The target population consisted of various stakeholders, including 81 public primary schools, 1,047 teachers, 19 Ward Education Officers, 81 head teachers, and 8 District quality assurers making total number of 1155 population. The sample size for the current study consisted of 16 public primary schools, 192 teachers, 16 head teachers, 6 Ward Education Officers (WEO), and 2 District School Quality Assurers (DSQA), totaling 216 respondents. Questionnaires, interview guides, and document analysis guides were used to collect data from respondents. Data collection instruments were validated by MWECAU research experts. A pilot study was conducted in two public primary schools. The reliability of questionnaires for Likert-type items was estimated using Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient whereby r= 0.889 for teachers while that of qualitative established through peer debriefing and triangulation. The study adhered to ethical considerations throughout the research process. Descriptive statistics were analyzed quantitative data using SPSS version 26. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically. The study found that the TCPD is highly effective in improving teaching competence through focused training on classroom management, instructional design, differentiated instruction, student engagement, and technology integration significantly improved their teaching skills. The study concluded that Continuing Professional Development (CPD) effectively Enhanced Teaching Competence of Public Primary School Teachers in Ilemela Municipality to the high extent. The study recommended that a similar training program should be implemented regularly to equip teachers with up-date skills and knowledge.

I. INTRODUCTION

The quality of education is closely tied to the quality of teachers. Whether in elementary school or university, good teachers are crucial for effective learning. High-quality teaching and students' success in learning are directly influenced by competent teachers who engage in continuous learning (Yetti et al., 2021). However, developing the appropriate teaching and learning competencies of teachers during their college or university studies are a complex challenge that cannot be addressed through a single training session. Instead, teachers must learn to continuously improve their competencies throughout their professional careers. Although teachers believe that the main sources of knowledge and skills are teacher educators and education experts that provide them training and education. It is argued by different scholars that although the quality of initial teacher training is excellent, it cannot equip teachers with knowledge, skills, and values that enable them act effectively and professionally throughout their career(Danijela, 2018; Pedaste et al., 2019; Sancar et al., 2021).

In Australia there is undergoing significant changes to enhance academic achievements for students, driven by modifications in national and state policies and societal demands (Siegel et al., 2021). Continuing Professional Development (CPD) has emerged as a cornerstone for the growth and effectiveness of teachers (Dymock and Tyler, 2018). CPD is recognized as a dynamic platform within the Australian education system, empowering educators to continuously refine their pedagogical approaches, adapt to evolving teaching methodologies, and deepen their subject matter expertise. Through structured CPD programs, teachers engage in a range of professional learning activities, such as workshops, seminars, online courses, and collaborative discussions, which enable them to stay current with the latest educational research, incorporate innovative instructional strategies, and enhance their capacity to meet

the diverse needs of their students (Mukan et al., 2019). Workshops, seminars, and collaborative forums empower teachers with the latest research, technologies, and best practices, fostering a culture of continuous improvement (Faulkner, Kenny, and Campbell, 2019). Providing educators with suitable avenues for professional growth, coupled with comprehensive support from school administrators, peers, parents, and the ongoing teacher education system, is crucial for bolstering students' achievements and enhancing overall teaching and school performance (Mukan et al., 2019). CPD in Australia is not just a requirement but a vital instrument for inspiring education quality and ensuring the best learning experience for students (Dymock and Tyler, 2018). Ultimately, CPD plays a pivotal role in shaping informed, adaptable, and highly effective professionals, benefiting the entire education ecosystem.

The issue of how TCPD training programs enhance teaching competence in Uganda is a crucial one. The Teacher Development Management Systems established by Uganda's Ministry of Education and Sports have played a significant role in supporting and enhancing teacher professional development through in-service training (Nzarirwehi and Atuhumuze, 2019). The Targeted training programs have equipped teachers with updated pedagogical techniques and innovative teaching methods. This has given them a deeper understanding of the curriculum. As a result, teachers are now better prepared to deliver effective lessons (Obiero, 2020). The CPD initiatives have been found to increase confidence and proficiency among teachers, leading to improved morale and motivation within the teaching profession. As a result, retention rates among teachers have improved, creating a more stable and consistent learning environment for Ugandan primary school pupils (Obiero, 2020).

In Tanzania, like in many developing nations, the effectiveness of public primary school education largely hinges on the competences of its teachers. These competences encompass a spectrum of skills, knowledge, and attitudes crucial for imparting quality education (Komba and Shukia, 2023).Teachers in Tanzanian primary schools have perceived the term competence in different ways. Sometimes, Teachers perceived the term competence as knowledge while others perceived competence as skills and behavior that enhance the capabilities of teacher to educate, teach, guide, direct, train and evaluate the student (Kalinga and Ndibalema, 2023). Njenga, (2023) argues that teachers who are engaged in cycles of effective professional learning take greater responsibility for the learning of all students. An effective teaching contributes to the students' performance and this depends on qualified-trained teachers, school administration, parents and conducive environment for teaching and learning (Fauziah et al., 2021).

In Tanzania, the government responded on the challenges teachers face by introducing education training policy of the revised edition of 2023 which priotized an in-service training policy called the National Framework for Teachers Continuous Professional Development (NF–

TCPD) to enhance teachers' professional development (URT, 2020). However, a recent report from the World Bank indicates that most Tanzanian primary school teachers, around 80%, still lack sufficient skills in instructional practices during teaching and learning (The World Bank, 2023). This influenced the introduction of (NF–TCPD) to guide in-service training teachers in developing and sharpening their skills and knowledge.

The historical background of TCPD in Tanzania reveals its roots in the early 1960s, highlighting the country's long-standing commitment to the professional development of teachers (URT, 2020). Over the years, TCPD in Tanzania has undergone transformations and adaptations in response to changing educational needs and priorities. These changes have led to the emergence of various forms and names for TCPD initiatives in the country. Presently, the Government of Tanzania has introduced a new and significant teacher professional development initiative known as MEWAKA, an acronym for Mafunzo Endelevu kwa Walimu Kazini, which translates to Teachers' Continuous Professional Development (TCPD) (Koomar, et al., 2023). This initiative represents a proactive approach by the government to enhance the skills and competencies of teachers through sustained professional development opportunities. By implementing MEWAKA, the government aims to ensure that Tanzanian teachers receive continuous support and training to improve their instructional practices and meet the evolving needs of the education system.However it is not clear whether such training programs enhance teaching competence among public primary school teachers in Ilemela municipal.

The report released by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in 2020 revealed that in Tanzania, TCPD efforts have long been directed towards enhancing teachers' abilities to positively impact learning outcomes. Nevertheless, there has consistently been a deficiency in establishing an effective, coordinated operational framework for these initiatives. The majority of prior TCPD endeavors suffered from insufficient implementation (URT, 2020). Further, MEWAKA's strategy focuses on primary schools and involves initiating a continuous professional development pilot program in all 26 regions of Tanzania, gradually expanding its scope each year until it covers every primary school by the conclusion of 2026 (The World Bank, 2023). Twaha, (2022) asserts that the government persists in enhancing the Teachers Resources Centers (TRCs), which serve as hubs for ongoing teacher training while also procuring essential IT equipment to facilitate seamless training continuity. It was also noted that 144 councils out of 184 from mainland Tanzania have become beneficiaries of MEWAKA and the teachers from these councils have received the training (Ayo, 2022). Since, MEWAKA is new form of CPD stretching itself from 1960s. However, the study by (Ndomondo et al. 2021) found that the primary teachers in Ilemela's public schools faced significant barriers, including limited training program availability, and insufficient support to apply new skills in the classroom. These issues have led to concerns about the overall quality of education, with student learning outcomes falling short of

District benchmarks. To address these challenges, the current study investigated the effectiveness of teacher training programs in enhancing teaching competence in Ilemela's public primary schools. The findings aim to provide insights into improving the quality of education and supporting teachers in developing the necessary skills and resources to deliver effective instruction and improve student learning outcomes.

➢ *Statement of the Problem*

The lack of competence in the teaching profession among teachers hinders their ability to engage and effectively instruct pupils, ultimately impeding learning progress within the education sector in Tanzania. Competent and well-trained teachers play a pivotal role in creating engaging and effective learning environments for students(Matiba, 2023). However, there have been complaints about the presence of teachers who lack the necessary competence in the teaching profession (Chikoyo, 2018 and Msamba, 2023). The Tanzanian government has implemented a national framework for teachers' continuous professional development (URT, 2020). Paschal (2023) observes that most of teachers in Tanzania lack confidence when teaching students, underscoring the need for targeted interventions in professional development initiatives. Without ongoing professional development opportunities, teachers may not acquire new knowledge, techniques, or pedagogical approaches, leading to outdated practices that do not meet the evolving needs of students. The existing body including studies by Chikoyo (2018), Mollel (2019), Amponsah et al. (2023), and Msamba (2023), predominantly explores the relationship between teacher professional development and its influence on teacher performance and effectiveness within the Tanzanian education system. However, none of the reviewed studies specifically investigated the effectiveness of professional development programs on enhancing teaching competence. Therefore, the current study investigated the effectiveness of teachers training program in enhancing teaching competence in public primary schools in Ilemela municipality.

➢ *Research Question*

How does Teachers training program enhance teaching competence in public primary schools in Ilemela municipality?

➢ *Significance of the Study*

The findings of the study provide knowledge and awareness to various stakeholders in the education sector. Policymakers are informed from the findings of this study to make informed decisions regarding the design and implementation of TCPD training programs. The study sheds light on how TCPD training programs enhance teaching competence by offering information into effective strategies and approaches that are incorporated into professional development initiatives. Heads of schools benefit from the study's findings by gaining a deeper understanding of the extent to which TCPD monitoring and evaluation practices contribute to enhancing teaching competence. This knowledge guides them in effectively implementing and improving monitoring and evaluation

mechanisms within their schools. Teachers themselves gain awareness of the impact of TCPD training, monitoring, and evaluation practices on their own professional development and teaching competence. The study's findings contribute to the body of knowledge and theory related to TCPD, highlighting the factors that facilitate or hinder the enhancement of teaching competence.

II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Social Cognitive Theory, proposed by Albert Bandura in 1977 guided the study. The theory explores how individuals learn through observations, modeling, and social interactions. The theory states that learning is heavily influenced by the social context and the behaviors and beliefs of others. Bandura emphasizes the concept of self-efficacy, which refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in specific tasks or situations. According to Social Cognitive Theory, individuals' cognitive processes, including attention, memory, and motivation, plays a crucial role in their learning experiences. The theory assumes that people learn by observing and imitating others and their behavior is influenced by reciprocal interactions between themselves and their environment. Additionally, individuals' beliefs about their capabilities significantly impact their motivation and behavior. The theory recognizes that individuals can actively shape their learning experiences and outcomes, taking an active role in their own learning journey. When considering the effectiveness of continuous professional development (CPD) in enhancing teaching competence among public primary school teachers in Ilemela Municipality, Tanzania, Social Cognitive theory becomes paramount.

The theory emphasizes on the role of observational learning and social interactions in the learning process. By recognizing that individuals learn not only through their own experiences but also by observing others, the theory highlights the importance of modeling and providing opportunities for teachers to observe and learn from effective teaching practices. Strength of Social Cognitive Theory is its focus on self-efficacy beliefs. The theory recognizes that individuals' beliefs about their own capabilities significantly influence their motivation and behavior. Additionally, Social Cognitive Theory highlights the importance of the social context in learning. It acknowledges that individuals are influenced by their environment and the reciprocal interactions between themselves and others.

Weaknesses of the theory lie in its limited focus on individual cognitive processes and relatively less attention to socio-cultural factors. While the theory acknowledges the role of the social context, it may not fully capture the complex interplay between cultural influences, societal structures, and educational systems that shape teaching competence. The theory focuses on individual learning and may not fully account for the collaborative nature of teaching and professional development.

The Social Cognitive Theory can be applied to the effectiveness of continuous professional development (CPD) in enhancing teaching competence among public primary school teachers in Ilemela Municipality, Tanzania. According to this theory, teachers' learning and development are influenced by observational learning, self-efficacy beliefs, and the social context. In the context of CPD, teachers can observe and model effective instructional practices, which can positively impact their teaching competence. Additionally, fostering self-efficacy beliefs through CPD can enhance teachers' confidence in implementing new strategies and improving their instructional skills. Moreover, creating a supportive social environment within CPD programs, such as through collaborative learning and peer support, can facilitate knowledge sharing and skill development among teachers. By applying the Social Cognitive Theory, the study can explore how these factors interact and contribute to the effectiveness of CPD in enhancing teaching competence in Ilemela Municipality, informing the design and implementation of more impactful professional development initiatives for public primary school teachers.

III. REVIEWS OF EMPIRICAL STUDIES

A review of empirical studies on parental involvement in students' learning in public secondary schools is a critical analysis of existing research from different countries on how TCPD training programs enhance teaching competence in public primary school teacher.

The study conducted by Sumantri et al. (2018) focused on the roles of teacher-training programs and student teachers' self-regulation in developing teaching competence in science, specifically in Canada. While the study employed a descriptive design and provided valuable insights into the effectiveness of the reflective teaching program compared to the microteaching program, there is a research gap in terms of the study's limited scope. The previous study solely considered the perspectives of science student teachers, neglecting the potential variations in teaching competence among teachers specializing in other subjects, such as arts or commerce. Thus, there is a need for further research that encompasses teachers from various subject specializations to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of how TCPD training programs enhance teaching competence among all primary school teachers.

The study conducted by König et al. (2020) focused on the adaptation to online teaching during COVID-19 school closures among early career teachers in Germany. It examined the extent of social contact maintenance with students and the mastery of core teaching challenges, as well as analyzed potential factors such as school computer technology, teacher competence (including technological pedagogical knowledge), and teacher education opportunities related to digital teaching and learning. The findings highlighted the significance of information and communication technologies (ICT) tools, digital teacher competence, and teacher education opportunities in successfully adapting to online teaching during the

pandemic. However, the previous study relied on secondary data for drawing conclusions about training programs to enhance teacher competence. The current study gathered primary data from both primary and secondary sources to provide firsthand information about the TCPD training program's impact on enhancing teaching competence among public primary school teachers. This approach enabled a more comprehensive understanding of the study under investigation.

Caena and Redecker (2019) conducted a study about the aligning teacher competence frameworks to 21st century challenges: The case for the European Digital Competence Framework for Educators. At the micro level, it can support and guide teachers' practice and continuous professional development. At the meso level of local education governance, it can support the development of school institutions as learning organizations, providing common ground for dialogue, collaboration and reflection in professional communities of practice. At the macro level of quality assurance, it can provide reference standards for initial teacher education, and for education professionals' quality along the career continuum. The European Framework for the Digital Competence of Educators was designed to align with institutional and contextual requirements in different countries, whilst remaining open to adaptation and updating. The study found that the study found the DigCompEdu framework to be a comprehensive and relevant model for aligning teacher competencies with 21st century digital teaching and learning needs. The previous study relied solely on library research and utilized pre-existing data for their analysis. However, the current study incorporating primary data, which provided a more realistic and up-to-date understanding of the situation in the field.

Mito et al. (2021) conducted a study about teacher training and implementation of teacher performance appraisal and development policy in public secondary schools in Kenya. The study employed the use of Convergent parallel research design. The population target included 48 principals, 48 deputy principals, 727 teachers in public secondary schools,1 District Quality Assurance & Standards Officer (DQASO) and 1 TSC Sub-County director. A sample size of 43 Principals, 43 Deputy-Principals, 218 teachers, 1 DQASO and 1 TSC Sub-County Director were selected. Validity of the instruments was ensured through scrutiny of the items in the instruments by the two supervisors from the School of Education. Bartlett's test for Sphericity are significant (p<0.001, p=0.000) and Kaiser-Meyer-hold Olkin indexes are all $> .6$ for all the subscales of the questionnaire. Reliability was tested through Cronbach's alpha and an alpha value of 0.700 was reported. The findings of Linear Regression analysis revealed that teacher training accounted for 22.1%, as signified by Adjusted R^2=.221, of the variation of implementation of teacher performance appraisal and development policy among the secondary schools. The study conducted by Mito et al. (2021) focused on investigating the relationship between teacher training and the implementation of teacher performance appraisal and

development policies in public secondary schools in Kenya. While their study provided valuable quantitative insights, there is a research gap in terms of the quantitative information available about the teachers who underwent continuous professional development programs. To address this gap, the current study gathered quantitative data specifically related to the trainees of the continuous professional development program for teachers.

Kalinga and Ndibalema (2023) conducted a study about the teachers' technological competencies in enhancing teaching and learning in secondary schools in Tanzania. Questionnaires were used to collect the data from 139 teachers from selected schools using simple random and purposive sampling procedures. Descriptive and inferential statistics were carried out using SPSS software version 23. The study found that majority of teachers was at the first level of technological competency (KA). It was also found that there was significant difference between teachers' level of education and technological competencies they hold. The study conducted by Kalinga and Ndibalema (2023) focused on teachers' technological competencies in enhancing teaching and learning in secondary schools in Tanzania. The findings of the study primarily emphasized the level of technological competency among the teachers. However, there is a research gap in the study findings regarding the consideration of other important factors, such as subjects' specialization, which could have an impact on the overall conclusions drawn from the study. To address this research gap, the current study included the subjects' specialization of teachers as an additional factor in analyzing and interpreting the study findings.

IV. DEMONSTRATION OF KNOWLEDGE GAP

The study conducted by Sumantri et al. (2018) provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of reflective teaching compared to microteaching programs, it exclusively considered the perspectives of science student teachers. Similarly, König et al. (2020) examined early career teachers' adaptation to online teaching in Germany during COVID-19, focusing on digital competence and ICT tools but relying on secondary data. There is a research gap in using primary data to understand TCPD training programs' impact on teaching competence. Caena and Redecker (2019) emphasized aligning teacher competence frameworks with 21st-century challenges, but their study relied solely on pre-existing data. In contrast, Mito et al. (2021) provided quantitative insights into teacher training are impact on performance appraisal in Kenya but lacked quantitative data on continuous professional development program trainees. Kalinga and Ndibalema (2023) focused on technological competencies in Tanzania but did not consider subjects' specialization, an important factor for comprehensive analysis. However, none of the reviewed studies have adequately explained the impact of continuous professional development (CPD) on enhancing teaching competence, a critical gap in the existing literature that warrants further investigation. To address this gap, the current study seeks to provide a comprehensive examination of the effectiveness of continuous professional development in improving the teaching competence of public primary school teachers in Ilemela municipality, Tanzania.

V. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGIES

The current study employed a convergent design under a mixed research methods approach. The study involved a population of 1,155 respondents from 81 public primary schools. This target population consisted of various stakeholders, including 81 public primary schools, 1,047 teachers, 19 Ward Education Officers, 81 head teachers, and 8 District quality assurance officers , totaling 1,155 individuals (Ilemela Municipal Office, 2023). For this study, the sample size of 216 respondents which includes 192 teachers, 16 head teachers, 6 Ward Education Officers, 2 District Quality Assurance Officers, and 16 Public Primary Schools—is acceptable and representative? The participation of many stakeholders, such as educators, school administrators, and government representatives in the field of education, offers a thorough analysis of the program's efficacy. The 16 public primary schools are a sizable fraction of the Ilemela Municipality total number of public primary schools, making it possible to conduct a thorough examination of the program's effects on the local educational system. The sample size guarantees sufficient data gathering and analysis to make insightful judgments on the program's efficacy in raising the instructional proficiency of public primary school teachers in the targeted region. A combination of data collection methods was utilized, including questionnaires, interview guides, interview schedules, and document analysis guides.

Face and content validity were used to ensure the research instruments were valid. The pilot testing of the research instruments was conducted in two public primary schools that were not included in the actual data collection. The reliability of the questionnaire, which consisted of only Likert scale questions, was analyzed using the Cronbach Alpha. The researcher edited, coded, classified, and organized both quantitative and qualitative data to facilitate interpretations. For the analysis of quantitative data, descriptive statistics were employed. This involved categorizing the data into frequencies, percentages, and means, utilizing statistical software such as the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 26. The researcher followed Creswell and Plano's (2018) six-stage methodology for analyzing qualitative data. The researcher adhered to all ethical standards.

VI. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

This paper investigated the effectiveness of continuous professional development in enhancing teaching competence of public primary school teachers in Ilemela municipality, Tanzania. The responses from the teachers are presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Teachers Responses on the TCPD Training Program Effectiveness Toward Enhancing Teaching Competence in Public Primary School Teachers (n=192*)*

	Statements	VSE		SE		ME		HE		VHE		Mean
		f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	
i	The effective classroom management strategies enhance teaching competence in teachers.	0	0.0	24	12.5	6	3.1	30	15.6	132	68.8	**4.4**
ii	Instructional design and delivery enhancements effectively improve teaching competence.	0	0.0	21	10.9	8	4.2	80	41.7	83	43.2	**4.1**
iii	Implementing differentiated instruction effectively enhances teaching competence for diverse learners.	0	0.0	0	0.0	6	3.1	96	50.0	90	46.9	**4.4**
iv	Promoting student engagement and active learning effectively boosts teaching competence.	0	0.0	35	18.2	36	18.8	50	26.0	71	37.0	**3.8**
v	Effective assessment and feedback techniques contribute to enhanced teaching competence.	0	0.0	25	13.0	50	26.0	26	13.5	91	47.4	**3.9**
vi	Integrating technology in the classroom effectively enhances teaching competence.	0	0.0	46	24.0	26	13.5	32	16.7	88	45.8	**3.8**
vii	Culturally responsive teaching practices effectively elevate teaching competence.	11	5.7	25	13.0	40	20.8	55	28.6	61	31.8	**3.6**
viii	Building positive teacher-student relationships effectively enhances teaching competence.	0	0.0	19	9.9	16	8.3	59	30.7	98	51.0	**4.2**
ix	Supporting students with special educational needs effectively contributes to teaching competence enhancement.	0	0.0	17	8.9	30	15.6	44	22.9	101	52.6	**4.1**
x	Professional growth and reflective teaching practices effectively enhance teaching competence.	0	0.0	38	19.8	24	12.5	68	35.4	62	32.3	**3.8**
	Grand Mean Score											**4.0**

Source: Field Data, (2024)

- **Key:** VLE=Very Low Extent (1), LE=Low Extent (2), ME=Moderate Extent (3), 4=High Extent (HE), VHE=Very High Extent (5)

The data in Table 1 show that the implementation of differentiated instruction was overwhelmingly viewed as effective, with 96.9% of the teachers indicating a high or very high extent of effectiveness in enhancing their teaching competence for diverse learners. The mean score was 4.4. This data implies the importance of equipping teachers with the skills to cater to the diverse learning needs of their pupils, which can lead to improved student outcomes.The high percentage of teachers who found differentiated instruction highly effective underscores its critical role in modern education. Differentiated instruction involves tailoring teaching methods, content, and assessments to meet the varied needs, readiness levels, interests, and learning profiles of pupils. This approach is crucial in diverse classrooms, where pupils may have different cultural backgrounds, learning abilities, and interests.The researcher during face to face interview with ward education officer had this to say:

I take a multi-pronged approach to ensure effective implementation of differentiated practices. I pay close attention to how teachers are tailoring their instructional strategies, content, and assessments to cater to learners with varying abilities, interests, and backgrounds. I look for evidence of teachers adjusting the pace, complexity, and modes of delivery to accommodate different learning profiles (Personal Communication with WEO 2: 21st March, 2024).

> *DSQA had Commented that:*

…believe that every student deserves a learning environment that caters to their individual needs and learning styles. The feedback we receive from schools consistently highlights differentiated instruction as a powerful tool for achieving this goal. Imagine a classroom with pupils from diverse backgrounds, with varying academic abilities and interests. A traditional, one-size-fits-all approach might leave some pupils feeling lost and disengaged, while others might not be challenged to their full potential. Differentiated instruction offers a framework for tailoring learning experiences to ensure every student feels included, supported, and empowered to thrive Personal Communication with DSQA 1: 16th April, 2024).

The interviews with the ward education officer (WEO) and the District School Quality Assurance (DSQA) officer underscore the importance of differentiated instruction in fostering an inclusive and effective learning environment. The WEO highlights the necessity of tailoring instructional strategies, content, and assessments to meet the diverse needs of pupils, ensuring that variations in abilities, interests, and backgrounds are accommodated. This approach involves adjusting the pace, complexity, and delivery methods to suit different learning profiles. Similarly, the DSQA emphasizes that differentiated instruction is crucial for creating a classroom where every student, regardless of their background or ability, feels included and supported. They assert that traditional teaching methods often fail to engage all pupils, whereas differentiated instruction enables personalized learning experiences that help each student thrive. These findings concur with those of the Kenyan study by Caena and

Redecker (2019) has established differentiated instruction as a powerful strategy for addressing the diverse needs of learners. Tomlinson emphasizes that by differentiating instruction, teachers can create more inclusive and equitable learning environments where all pupils have the opportunity to succeed. This is particularly important in classrooms with a wide range of abilities and backgrounds, as it ensures that instruction is accessible and challenging for every student.

Data in Table 1 show that majority (62.5%) of teachers responded that Integrating technology in the classroom effectively enhances teaching competence to a high extent and very high extent, while minority (16.7%) of teacher rated to a small extent and very small extent that integrating technology in the classroom effectively enhances teaching competence. The mean score was 3.8 for teachers. These suggest that most teachers view the integration of technology in the classroom as significantly beneficial for enhancing their teaching competence. This indicates a widespread belief in the positive impact of technology on teaching effectiveness and instructional quality. Despite a few teachers having reservations, the overall sentiment is favorable towards using technology as a tool to improve educational practices and outcomes. During face to face interview with Ward Education Officer "5", had this to say;

I believe teachers are seeing firsthand how the strategic use of technology can elevate their instructional practices in meaningful ways. Things like interactive digital lessons, real-time student assessment tools, and online collaboration platforms are empowering teachers to deliver more engaging, personalized, and data-driven instruction (Personal Communication with WEO 5: 12th April, 2024).

➢ *DSQA had Commented that:*
Technology holds immense potential to transform education. A classroom where technology is simply an afterthought – a projector gathering dust in the corner. However, when technology is integrated effectively, it becomes a powerful tool for engaging pupils and enriching the learning experience (Personal Communication with DSQA 1: 16th April, 2024).

The interviews with the Ward Education Officer (WEO) and the District School Quality Assurance (DSQA) officer underscore a shared belief in the transformative potential of technology in education. The WEO emphasizes how strategic use of technology, such as interactive digital lessons and real-time assessment tools, enhances teachers' ability to deliver engaging and personalized instruction. This approach supports more effective teaching practices by leveraging technology to tailor learning experiences to individual student needs and preferences. Similarly, the DSQA officer highlights that technology, when integrated thoughtfully, can enhance student engagement and enrich the overall learning environment. Both perspectives underscore a shift towards viewing technology not merely as a supplementary tool, but as a fundamental component that enhances educational quality and student outcomes. These findings reflect what was proposed by the study of Kalinga and Ndibalema (2023) found that effective technology integration requires not only access to tools, but also teachers' knowledge, skills, and beliefs about the value of technology in teaching and learning.

The finding above align with the theory of social cognitive theory (1977) emphasizes the importance of observational learning, self-regulation, and personal agency in shaping human behavior. In the context of technology integration in teaching and learning, this theory suggests that teachers' knowledge, skills, and beliefs about the value of technology play a crucial role in determining the effectiveness of its implementation. Just as the social cognitive theory posits that individuals learn through observing others and regulating their own behavior, teachers' perceptions, attitudes, and confidence in using technology can significantly influence their willingness and ability to effectively incorporate it into their teaching practices. Access to technology tools alone is not enough; for meaningful and impactful technology integration, teachers must also possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and positive beliefs about the potential benefits of technology for student learning and engagement.

Data in Table 1 show that 35.4% of teachers indicated that professional growth and reflective teaching practices enhances teaching competence to a very high extent, and 32.3% said it does so to a high extent. 19.8% felt it had a small extent of effectiveness. The mean score 3.9. The data imply that teachers demonstrate a widespread recognition among educators of the transformative potential of engaging in professional development and continuous self-reflection. The overwhelming endorsement from teachers suggests they recognize professional growth and reflection as essential components of their craft. This implies a strong receptiveness and motivation among educators to continually enhance their competence through these means. When teachers view such practices as highly impactful, they are more likely to meaningfully engage with them and integrate them into their day-to-day work. In addition to that, during the face-to-face interview, the WEO "3" said that;

Reflective teaching practices allow teachers to be more aware of their strengths and weaknesses. By regularly evaluating their own performance, teachers can make informed decisions about how to adjust their methods to better meet the needs of their pupils. This ongoing self-improvement leads to greater teaching competence and effectiveness in the classroom (Personal Communication with WEO 3: 26th March, 2024).

With professional growth and reflective teaching practices enhances teaching competence WEO "6" had this to share;

Teachers are participated in professional development workshops, attend educational conferences, enroll in advanced degree programs, or take online courses. They also join professional organizations, collaborate with peers in learning communities, and stay updated with the latest

research through journals and publications (Personal Communication with WEO 6:22nd April, 2024).

The interviews with WEO "3" and WEO "6" highlight the importance of reflective teaching practices and ongoing professional growth in enhancing teaching competence. WEO "3" emphasizes that reflective teaching allows educators to continually assess their strengths and areas for improvement, leading to informed adjustments in teaching methods that better serve pupils' needs. This commitment to self-assessment fosters greater effectiveness in the classroom. On the other hand, WEO "6" underscores the role of continuous professional development through workshops, conferences, advanced degree programs, and online courses. Engaging in professional communities and staying abreast of current research further supports teachers in refining their skills and staying updated with evolving educational practices. Together, these insights underscore a proactive approach to professional growth and reflective teaching, essential for maintaining high standards of teaching competence and enhancing student learning outcomes.

The data in Table 1 shows the teachers' responses on the effectiveness of various aspects of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) training programs in enhancing their teaching competence in public primary schools. Effective classroom management strategies were perceived to be highly effective, with over 84% of the teachers indicating that it enhanced their teaching competence to a high or very high extent. The mean score 4.4. This data implies the importance of equipping teachers with strong classroom management skills, which contribute to a more productive and engaging learning environment for pupils. The high rating given to classroom management strategies suggests that the CPD programs are appropriately prioritizing the development of this crucial teaching competency. Equipping teachers to effectively manage their classrooms is likely a key lever for improving overall teaching effectiveness and, in turn, student outcomes. The finding of the study are in line with Transformative Learning Theory learning occurs when individuals critically reflect on their existing assumptions, recognize the limitations and biases of their perspectives, and subsequently construct new meaning and understanding in the organized environment.

The findings are in line with the study by Sumantri et al. (2018) which found that classroom management training significantly impacts teachers' confidence and competence in handling classroom dynamics. Teachers who receive such training are better equipped to establish clear expectations, foster positive student-teacher relationships, and implement consistent disciplinary measures, all of which contribute to a more effective learning environment. The finding correlate with the theory of Albert Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory (1977) places a strong emphasis on how social and cognitive elements influence how people behave. According to this idea, people pick up new behaviors through observational learning, which involves seeing the acts and results of other people's activities. According to the Social Cognitive

Theory, teachers can gain competence and confidence in managing classroom dynamics by receiving training that allows them to observe and practice successful classroom management methods. Instructors who take classroom management training are exposed to examples of successful classroom management techniques, including setting clear goals, encouraging good relationships between students and instructors, and applying consistent disciplinary actions.

Data in Table 1 show that promoting student engagement and active learning was perceived to be effective to a high or very high extent by 63% of the teachers. The mean score 3.8 for teachers. This data implies that teachers value of CPD programs that emphasize strategies for engaging pupils and fostering active learning, as these can contribute to enhanced teaching competence. Active learning involves techniques that actively engage pupils in the learning process, requiring them to participate in meaningful learning activities and think critically about what they are doing. Active learning strategies, such as collaborative projects, problem-solving tasks, and interactive discussions, can significantly enhance student engagement and retention of material. During face-to-face interview with DSQA had this to say:

Pupils are simply passive recipients of information – they might take notes, but true understanding and engagement can be difficult to achieve. However, when teachers utilize active learning strategies, they create a classroom environment that sparks curiosity and motivates pupils to participate in their own learning journey (Personal Communication with DSQA 2: 16th April, 2024).

The interview emphasis on moving away from passive learning towards more interactive and participatory approaches reflects a commitment among educators to create dynamic classroom environments that foster curiosity and encourage pupils to take ownership of their learning. Overall, the interviews and data underscore a shift towards pedagogical practices that prioritize active engagement as a means to enhance teaching effectiveness and student outcomes. The findings reflect what was proposed by the study of Mito et al. (2021) revealed that active learning techniques not only improve student performance but also reduce failure rates, particularly in STEM disciplines. This suggests that when teachers are equipped with the skills to promote active learning, they can create more dynamic and effective learning environments.

Based on the review of the CPD program report, the researcher found that teachers were actively engaged and enthusiastic participants in the professional development activities, demonstrating a high level of interest and commitment as they actively contributed to discussions, shared their experiences, and applied the new strategies and techniques learned during the sessions. The report highlighted those teachers were successfully integrating the pedagogical approaches, instructional methods, and classroom management skills acquired through the CPD into their daily teaching practices, and that they provided very positive feedback on the relevance, quality, and overall

design of the CPD programs, expressing that the content was well-aligned with their professional needs and classroom realities. Additionally, the report detailed that teacher exhibited significant growth in their teaching competencies across various domains, such as lesson planning, student engagement, assessment practices, and the use of educational technologies, while also collaborating more effectively with their peers and sharing best practices, as the CPD programs had fostered a stronger sense of community and collective problem-solving among the teaching staff. The responses of the heads of schools were presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Interview schedule: Heads of Schools Responses Regarding the Importance of Continuous Professional Development in Enhancing Teaching Competence (n=16)

S/N	Statements	n	%
i	CPD empowers teachers to continuously refine their practice through reflective self-evaluation.	12	25.0
ii	CPD workshops equip teachers with innovative pedagogical knowledge and techniques.	8	16.7
iii	CPD fosters collaborative learning communities that drive collective professional growth.	11	22.9
iv	CPD fosters collaborative learning communities that drive collective professional growth.	9	18.8
v	CPD enables teachers to develop advanced subject expertise and mastery of pedagogy.	8	16.7

Source: Field Data (2024)

According to the data presented in the Table 2, the heads of schools highlighted the importance of various aspects of continuous professional development (CPD) in enhancing teaching competence. Most 25% of the heads of schools indicated that CPD empowers teachers to continuously refine their practice through reflective self-evaluation, 16.7% of the heads of schools indicated that CPD workshops equip teachers with innovative pedagogical knowledge and techniques, 22.9% of the heads of schools indicated that CPD fosters collaborative learning communities that drive collective professional growth, 18.8% of the heads of schools indicated that CPD fosters collaborative learning communities that drive collective professional growth and 16.7% of the heads of schools indicated that CPD enables teachers to develop advanced subject expertise and mastery of pedagogy. The data indicates that heads of schools have a multifaceted understanding of the importance of CPD, encompassing individual reflection, pedagogical development, collaborative learning, and the integration of research-informed practices - all of which are viewed as crucial for enhancing teaching competence in public primary schools. In addition to that, during the face-to-face interview, the WEO "4" claimed that;

CPD enhances teaching competence by providing teachers with new strategies and tools that can be used to improve student learning. It helps teachers to refine their instructional techniques, stay current with educational trends, and address the diverse needs of their pupils more effectively. Additionally, CPD encourages reflective practice, which allows teachers to continually assess and improve their teaching methods (Personal Communication with WEO 4: 04th April, 2024).

The information from the Ward Education Officers highlights the complex ways in which CPD can enhance teaching competence, from providing new tools and strategies to promoting reflective practice and staying current with educational trends. Through investing in the professional development of teachers, schools and districts can unlock their full potential and drive improvements in student learning and achievement. The findings agree with the study by (König et al. 2020) found the key features of effective professional development, such as content focus, active learning, coherence, duration, and collective participation. The features are crucial for developing teaching practices that lead to improved student outcomes. The finding correlate with the Albert Bandura's social cognitive theory (1977) emphasizes self-regulation, observational learning, and reciprocal relationships. It aligns with professional development principles like subject concentration, active learning, coherence, length, and group engagement. These elements promote observational learning, self-reflection, and teaching practices, ultimately improving student outcomes. Bandura's theory provides teachers with sustained learning opportunities to master content knowledge and pedagogical skills, fostering a conducive environment for professional development.

The study found that TCPD Training Program is Effective in Enhancing Teaching Competence in Public Primary School Teacher by a mean score of 4.0. Teachers found that CPD programs focusing on classroom management, instructional design, differentiated instruction, student engagement, and technology integration significantly improved their teaching skills. The study found that culturally responsive teaching and reflective practices were recognized as crucial for connecting with pupils and fostering continuous professional growth. The study generally found that heads of schools recognize the multifaceted importance of CPD in enhancing teaching competence. They highlighted that CPD empowers teachers through reflective self-evaluation, equips them with innovative pedagogical techniques, fosters collaborative learning communities, and enables the development of advanced subject expertise.

The findings suggest that CPD not only helps teachers refine their instructional methods and stay current with educational trends but also promotes collective professional growth and the integration of research-informed practices. According to Ward Education Officers, these aspects of CPD are crucial for improving teaching effectiveness and addressing the diverse needs of pupils, ultimately leading to better student learning outcomes.

The finding from table 1 of the TCPD (Teacher Continuous Professional Development) Training Program is successful in raising teaching competency among public primary school teachers is directly tied to the Social Cognitive Theory (1977). The core components of the TCPD program, which center on classroom management, instructional design, differentiated teaching, student engagement, and technological integration, are in line with the theory's emphasis on observational learning and the growth of self-efficacy. According to the study, instructors gained better teaching techniques, realized the value of reflective and culturally sensitive instruction, and saw their professional development through these CPD programs. This is in line with the Social Cognitive Theory's claim that people may learn new behaviors and skills by imitating and practicing successful models, which boosts their self-assurance and competence in their respective domains, in this case, teaching.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the study findings the following conclusions were made, the study reveals that Teacher Continuous Professional Development (TCPD) Training Programs significantly enhance the teaching competence of public primary school teachers. These programs improve skills in classroom management, instructional design, differentiated instruction, student engagement, and technology integration. CPD empowers teachers through reflective self-evaluation, equips them with innovative techniques, fosters collaborative learning communities, and develops advanced subject expertise. It promotes collective professional growth and research-informed practices, ultimately improving teaching effectiveness and addressing diverse student needs, leading to better learning outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that teachers should engage in continuous professional development (CPD) tailored to their individual needs and classroom contexts. This includes updating knowledge, skills, and pedagogical practices in areas like classroom management, instructional design, differentiated instruction, student engagement, and technology integration. School heads should prioritize CPD resources, work with teachers to identify learning needs, and collaborate with Ward Education Officers to implement effective programs, improving education quality and student learning outcomes. Ward Education Officers are recommended to work closely with school administrators to support and coordinate the implementation of effective CPD programs for public primary school teachers, ensuring the programs align with the specific needs of teachers and schools to improve the overall quality of education and student learning outcomes.

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