

Professional Participation and Instructional Strategies of English Teachers

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Abstract

Professional participation plays a vital role in enhancing teachers' instructional competence and improving the quality of classroom instruction. In the context of secondary education, continuous engagement in professional development equips teachers with up-to-date pedagogical knowledge, innovative teaching approaches, and strategies responsive to diverse learners' needs. This study examined the extent of professional participation of English teachers and its influence on their instructional strategies at Cristeta Bagano Memorial High School (CBMHS), Schools Division of Masbate Province, during School Year 2024–2025. Specifically, it sought to determine teachers' participation in professional development activities, identify commonly employed instructional strategies, analyze the influence of professional participation on classroom practices, and develop a policy framework to strengthen professional growth and instructional effectiveness. The study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences of English teachers regarding their professional participation and its influence on their instructional strategies. Data were gathered through Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) involving seven Junior High School English teachers, employing complete enumeration. The qualitative data obtained from the FGDs were analyzed using thematic analysis, following systematic procedures of coding, categorization, and theme development to identify significant patterns and core meanings. Findings revealed that English teachers actively participated in professional development initiatives, particularly institution-led activities such as In-Service Training (INSET), Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, seminars, workshops, and graduate studies. However, self-directed professional learning was constrained by workload demands and time limitations. The study further found that teachers consistently utilized diverse, learner-centered, and inclusive instructional strategies, including differentiated instruction, collaborative learning, formative assessment, technology integration, scaffolding, and reflective teaching frameworks. Results indicated that professional participation significantly influenced instructional practices by fostering collaboration, encouraging instructional innovation, strengthening reflective practice, and enhancing teachers' responsiveness to learner diversity. Moreover, professional development contributed to the shift from traditional teacher-centered instruction toward more engaging, inclusive, and learner-centered approaches. The study concludes that professional participation significantly improves the instructional effectiveness of English teachers. Continuous engagement in professional development enhances teaching competence, instructional flexibility, and learner-centered practices. Therefore, schools and educational leaders should strengthen support systems, provide opportunities for continuous learning, and promote meaningful participation in professional development.

Keywords: Professional participation, Instructional strategies, English teachers, Qualitative phenomenology, Learner-centered instruction, Learning Action Cell (LAC)

1. Introduction

Education remains a foundation of personal empowerment, social mobility, and national development. At the heart of every educational system are teachers, whose professional competence, pedagogical decisions, and instructional strategies significantly shape students' learning experiences and outcomes. In the Philippine context, the Department of Education (DepEd) underscores the central role of teachers in the effective implementation of the K to 12 Basic Education Program, which aims to develop learners who are critical thinkers, creative problem-solvers, effective communicators, and lifelong learners (Department of Education [DepEd], 2016). To fulfill these demands, teachers must continuously engage in meaningful professional learning experiences that enhance both their content mastery and pedagogical skills. Professional participation, including engagement in seminars, workshops, training sessions, conferences, and Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions, is widely recognized as a vital mechanism for teacher growth and instructional improvement. In the Philippines, this is explicitly supported by DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016, which institutionalizes the LAC as a school-based continuing professional development strategy for teachers, promoting collaborative learning and problem-solving to improve teaching-learning processes. For English teachers, this professional engagement is particularly significant. As English serves not only as a subject but also as a medium of instruction in Junior High School, effective instructional strategies directly influence students' academic performance across learning areas. Consequently, continuous professional development is essential to equip English teachers with innovative approaches, responsive pedagogies, and adaptable teaching strategies suited to diverse learners and evolving educational contexts.

Despite the availability of various professional development programs, concerns remain regarding the relevance, applicability, and practical impact of these initiatives on actual classroom instruction. Studies suggest that while teachers frequently participate in professional learning activities, the translation of training into effective instructional practice is often inconsistent, particularly when training programs are generalized, short-term, or disconnected from contextual classroom realities (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Kennedy, 2016). While the literature extensively documents this implementation gap on a macro level, there remains a critical shortage of empirical data on how this problem manifests in specific, marginalized contexts. Existing research often overlooks how teachers translate standardized, top-down training into localized instructional strategies when operating under acute environmental and institutional limitations. This challenge is especially evident in public secondary schools situated in rural and semi-urban communities, where teachers face complex instructional demands, limited resources, and varied learner needs. At the policy and global levels, this research supports the goals of Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, which emphasizes inclusive and equitable quality education and promotes lifelong learning opportunities for all, particularly through continuous teacher professional development (United Nations, 2015). Moreover, the study aligns with DepEd's commitment to enhancing teacher quality through the Philippine Professional Standards for Teachers (PPST) and the Results-Based Performance Management System (RPMS), which underscore professional learning as a foundation for instructional excellence (DepEd, 2017). This study is localized in Cristeta Bagano Memorial High School (CBMHS), located in Barangay Umabay Exterior, Mobo South District, Municipality of Mobo, Schools Division of Masbate Province. Established in June 2009 as an annex of Mobo National High School, CBMHS was created to address increasing student enrollment and improve access to secondary education for learners from neighboring rural barangays. Through the collaborative efforts of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Mobo, school administrators, parents, and community stakeholders, the school has steadily developed its physical facilities and educational services. Despite notable progress, the school continues to face distinct contextual challenges, including infrastructure limitations, resource constraints, and disaster-related vulnerabilities. Within this specific localized setting, the professional participation and instructional strategies of English teachers are heavily shaped by these environmental realities. English teachers at CBMHS play a vital role in equipping learners with essential literacy and communication skills; however, executing effective instructional strategies in a resource-limited, disaster-vulnerable environment requires immense adaptability and creativity. While teachers actively engage in mandated professional development activities, such as school-based LAC sessions- the immediate lack of instructional materials and physical facilities creates a friction point between standardized training theories and actual classroom delivery. Consequently, a distinct empirical gap exists regarding the lived experiences of English teachers navigating this specific intersection of professional growth and localized adversity. While quantitative metrics track seminar attendance, they fail to capture how these educators conceptually bridge the divide between standardized training and the immediate, practical realities of a resource-limited school. Understanding how teachers experience and interpret their professional learning, and how these experiences influence their classroom practices, is therefore essential. Aligned with this perspective, this study adopts a qualitative research approach to explore the lived experiences of English teachers regarding their professional participation and instructional strategies at Cristeta Bagano Memorial High School. Qualitative inquiry allows for a deeper understanding of teachers' perceptions, reflections, challenges, and insights, capturing the nuanced ways professional development shapes classroom instruction beyond what quantitative measures alone can reveal. By foregrounding teachers' voices, this study seeks to generate context-rich data that reflect authentic instructional realities. By examining professional participation and instructional strategies within the localized context of Cristeta Bagano Memorial High School, this study seeks to contribute empirical evidence that can inform school-based professional development planning, strengthen instructional support mechanisms, and guide policy implementation at the district and division levels. Ultimately, the findings aim to support efforts toward improving teaching quality, enhancing student learning outcomes, and fostering a culture of continuous professional growth among English teachers in the Schools Division of Masbate Province.

2. Material and methods

2.1 Research Design

This study was conducted at Cristeta Bagano Memorial High School (CBMHS), located in Barangay Umabay Exterior, Mobo South District, Municipality of Mobo, Schools Division of Masbate Province, and employed a qualitative phenomenological research design to explore the lived experiences of English teachers regarding their professional participation and its influence on their instructional strategies. Phenomenology is a qualitative approach that seeks to understand and describe how individuals experience a particular phenomenon, emphasizing the meanings they construct from these experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). This design was deemed most appropriate because it allows for an in-depth exploration of teachers' perceptions, reflections, emotions, and interpretations of professional development and classroom instruction within their real-world context. Through this approach, the study aimed to capture the essence of teachers' experiences and generate rich, context-specific insights into how professional participation shapes instructional strategies and teaching practices. Unlike quantitative designs that focus on measurement and statistical relationships, phenomenological research prioritizes subjective meaning and human experience. It aims to uncover the essence of a phenomenon by examining how participants make sense of it in their daily professional lives (van Manen, 2016). In this study, the phenomenon under investigation is professional participation and its influence on instructional

strategies among English teachers, directly aligned with the research questions. Data were gathered through Focused Group Discussions (FGDs) involving seven (7) Junior High School English teachers, employing complete enumeration. FGDs provided a dynamic platform for participants to share experiences, reflect collectively, and generate deeper insights through interactive dialogue (Krueger & Casey, 2015). This method facilitated the emergence of shared meanings, contrasting perspectives, and collective understanding, which are central to phenomenological inquiry. Importantly, the FGD structure was designed to elicit responses that directly address each research question, ensuring methodological consistency with the Statement of the Problem. The qualitative data obtained from the FGDs were analyzed using thematic analysis, following systematic procedures of coding, categorization, and theme development to identify significant patterns and core meanings embedded in participants' narratives (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Each theme was explicitly aligned with the research questions: forms of participation (RQ1), instructional strategies (RQ2), influence of participation (RQ3), and policy/program recommendations (RQ4). This rigorous analytical process ensured that findings were grounded in participants' authentic experiences, enhancing credibility, dependability, and trustworthiness. Through this phenomenological design, the research aims to generate context-rich, practice-informed insights that contribute to improving professional development programs, strengthening instructional strategies, and informing policy frameworks for English teachers in provincial public-school settings.

2.2 Locale of the Study

This study was conducted at Cristeta Bagano Memorial High School (CBMHS), a public secondary school located in Barangay Umabay Exterior, Mobo South District, Municipality of Mobo, Schools Division of Masbate Province. The school serves learners from surrounding barangays, many of whom come from rural and coastal communities, making it a significant educational institution within the district. The locale provides a relevant and meaningful setting for exploring the professional participation and instructional strategies of English teachers within a real-world, school-based context, consistent with the phenomenological nature of the study. Established in June 2009, Cristeta Bagano Memorial High School was originally an annex of Mobo National High School, created in response to the increasing number of enrollees and the need to make secondary education more accessible to students from geographically distant feeder barangays. The school occupies a two-hectare land area donated through the collaborative efforts of the Local Government Unit (LGU) of Mobo and the Bagano family, after whom the school was named in honor of Atty. Cristeta Castillo-Bagano. Since its establishment, CBMHS has undergone gradual infrastructural and institutional development, supported by PTA initiatives, LGU partnerships, and DepEd funding, particularly after receiving its Maintenance and Other Operating Expenses (MOOE) allocation in 2015. The school's development reflects the broader educational and socio-economic conditions of rural Philippine communities, where schools often operate within limited resources, evolving infrastructure, and strong community involvement. CBMHS aligns its programs and initiatives with the development goals of the LGU, emphasizing community engagement, holistic learner development, disaster preparedness, and student safety. These contextual factors shape teachers' professional experiences and instructional realities, making the school an appropriate and information-rich site for a phenomenological inquiry into teachers' lived experiences. The participants of the study consist of all seven (7) Junior High School English teachers currently assigned at Cristeta Bagano Memorial High School, employing a complete enumeration sampling technique. This approach ensures that the study captures the full range of experiences, perspectives, and instructional practices of English teachers within the school. Given the relatively small number of English teachers, complete enumeration allows for an in-depth and holistic understanding of how professional participation is perceived, experienced, and translated into classroom strategies. It also strengthens the credibility and richness of the qualitative data by ensuring that no relevant voices are excluded. The selection of Cristeta Bagano Memorial High School as the research locale is particularly significant because it represents a typical rural public secondary school setting in the province of Masbate, where teachers face both opportunities and constraints in professional development and instructional practice. By situating the study within this localized context, the research generates context-sensitive insights that can inform school-based professional development planning, instructional support mechanisms, and policy formulation within the Mobo South District and the wider Schools Division of Masbate Province. Moreover, the findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how professional participation shapes English teachers' instructional strategies in settings where educational resources, infrastructure, and access to training remain evolving and dynamic.

2.3 Respondents of the Study

The participants of the study consisted of seven (7) Junior High School English teachers from Cristeta Bagano Memorial High School (CBMHS) located in Barangay Umabay Exterior, Mobo South District, Municipality of Mobo, Schools Division of Masbate Province. All identified Junior High School English teachers in the school who met the inclusion criteria were included in the study through complete enumeration. The sample size is consistent with established recommendations for phenomenological research, which typically involve a small number of participants to facilitate intensive exploration and in-depth analysis of lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Polkinghorne, 1989). As a provincial public secondary school situated in a rural–semi-urban setting, CBMHS presents a unique educational context characterized by resource limitations, infrastructure constraints, and environmental vulnerabilities that influence teachers' professional participation and instructional practices. Consequently, the participants provided rich, contextually grounded

narratives that contributed to a deeper understanding of how professional participation shapes instructional strategies within their teaching environment.

2.4 Sample and Sampling Procedure

The study utilized a complete enumeration since it was deemed appropriate since the target population was relatively small and accessible. By including all qualified participants, the study ensured that no relevant perspective was excluded, thereby maximizing the depth and breadth of the data collected and strengthening the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings (Patton, 2015). This sampling approach is consistent with the goals of phenomenological inquiry, which prioritize obtaining rich descriptions of lived experiences rather than achieving statistical generalization.

2.5 Research Instrument

The primary research tool utilized in this study was a semi-structured Focus Group Discussion (FGD) Interview Guide, developed by the researcher to explore the lived experiences of Junior High School English teachers regarding their professional participation and its influence on instructional strategies. In line with the phenomenological research design, the instrument was composed of open-ended and flexible questions that allowed participants to articulate their experiences, perceptions, and meanings in their own words, thereby capturing the essence of the phenomenon under investigation (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Moustakas, 1994). The interview guide was carefully structured and aligned with the Statement of the Problem and the research questions of the study. It served as a facilitative framework rather than a rigid questionnaire, enabling dynamic interaction, collective reflection, and in-depth discussion among participants during the FGDs (Krueger & Casey, 2015). The FGD Interview Guide consisted of the following major sections: Part A: Opening / Warm-Up Questions. This section aimed to establish rapport and contextual grounding by eliciting participants' teaching background, years of experience, and general experiences as English teachers in a public secondary school setting. These questions helped situate participants within the phenomenon and encouraged open engagement in the discussion. Part B: Professional Participation. Aligned with Research Question 1, this section explored teachers' experiences with professional development activities such as seminars, trainings, INSET, workshops, and Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions. Questions focused on the types, frequency, relevance, and perceived impact of these activities, as well as factors that motivated or discouraged participation. Part C: Instructional Strategies in English Teaching. Addressing Research Question 2, this section examined the instructional strategies commonly employed by English teachers in teaching reading, writing, speaking, grammar, and literature. Participants were encouraged to describe their typical classroom practices, lesson design, learner engagement strategies, and adjustments made to address diverse learners. Part D: Influence of Professional Participation on Instructional Strategies. Corresponding to Research Question 3, this section investigated how teachers' professional participation shaped or influenced their instructional practices. Participants were asked to share specific strategies or innovations adopted as a result of professional development and to reflect on facilitators and barriers in applying new learning to classroom practice. Part E: Contextual Factors and Challenges. This section supported deeper phenomenological understanding by probing contextual elements such as school support, resources, workload, class size, and peer collaboration. These questions provided insight into environmental and institutional factors that mediate the transfer of professional learning into instructional practice. Part F: Policy and Program Improvement. Aligned with Research Question 4, this section elicited participants' recommendations for improving professional development programs and policy frameworks. Teachers were invited to suggest support mechanisms and policy directions that could enhance professional participation and strengthen instructional strategies. Part G: Closing Question. The final, essence-seeking question invited participants to reflect on the overall meaning of professional participation in shaping their identity and practice as English teachers, a core element of phenomenological inquiry (van Manen, 2016). To ensure content validity, the interview guide was reviewed by experts in educational research and English instruction to assess clarity, relevance, and alignment with the study's objectives. Minor revisions were incorporated to refine wording and ensure that questions were open-ended, neutral, and capable of eliciting rich narratives. The use of probing questions further enhanced depth and clarity during the discussions. Rather than relying on statistical reliability measures, the trustworthiness of the research tool was strengthened through methodological rigor, including careful alignment with phenomenological principles, consistent facilitation of FGDs, audio recording, verbatim transcription, and systematic thematic analysis (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell & Poth, 2018). Overall, the FGD Interview Guide proved to be an appropriate and effective instrument for capturing authentic, context-rich accounts of English teachers' professional participation and instructional strategies.

2.6 Data Gathering Procedure

The qualitative data gathered through the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were analyzed using thematic analysis within a phenomenological framework, with the primary goal of uncovering the shared meanings and essences of the participants' lived experiences regarding professional participation and instructional strategies. This directly supports the study's aim of examining how English teachers engage in professional development and how such participation influences their classroom practices. Phenomenological data analysis emphasizes understanding how participants make sense of their experiences, rather than measuring variables or establishing statistical relationships (Moustakas, 1994; van Manen, 2016). Audio-recorded FGD sessions were transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and completeness of the participants'

narratives. The researcher repeatedly read and reviewed the transcripts to achieve immersion in the data and to develop a holistic understanding of the participants' experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This process allowed the identification of significant statements, phrases, and expressions that directly described teachers' experiences of professional participation and its perceived influence on their instructional practices. The analysis followed the six-phase thematic analysis procedure proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006), adapted to phenomenological inquiry. Each phase was explicitly aligned with the research questions: RQ1: Codes and themes on forms and experiences of professional participation. RQ2: Codes and themes on instructional strategies commonly used in classrooms. RQ3: Codes and themes on the influence of professional participation on instructional strategies. RQ4: Codes and themes on policy and program improvement recommendations. Throughout the analysis, the researcher practiced epoché or bracketing, consciously setting aside personal assumptions and prior experiences to remain faithful to the participants' perspectives (Moustakas, 1994). Reflexive journaling was employed to document analytical decisions and minimize researcher bias, thereby enhancing the trustworthiness of the findings (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The resulting themes were organized according to the study's central focus: (1) forms and experiences of professional participation, (2) instructional strategies commonly employed, (3) influence of professional learning on instructional practices, and (4) policy and program recommendations for enhancing professional participation. Direct quotations from participants were used to substantiate each theme, ensuring that interpretations remained grounded in the teachers' authentic voices. Rather than aiming for generalization, the analysis sought depth, meaning, and transferability, allowing readers to determine the applicability of the findings to similar educational contexts. By employing a rigorous phenomenological thematic analysis, the study generated rich, experience-based insights that illuminate how English teachers understand, experience, and apply professional participation in shaping their instructional strategies, while also informing policy frameworks for professional development in provincial public-school settings.

2.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The data gathered through the Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were analyzed using reflexive thematic analysis, following the six-phase framework developed by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2022). Thematic analysis is a flexible and rigorous qualitative analytic method used to identify, organize, interpret, and report patterns of meaning across qualitative datasets. It is particularly appropriate for phenomenological studies because it facilitates an in-depth examination of participants' lived experiences, perceptions, and interpretations of a phenomenon while allowing themes to emerge inductively from the data. Following the completion of the FGDs, all audio-recorded discussions were transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and completeness of participants' responses. The researcher carefully reviewed and repeatedly read the transcripts to become familiar with the data and gain a holistic understanding of the participants' narratives. During this stage, initial observations, reflections, and analytic notes were documented to facilitate immersion in the data and support reflexive engagement throughout the analysis process. The analysis proceeded through the six phases of thematic analysis. First, the researcher familiarized himself with the data through repeated reading and reflection. Second, initial codes were generated by identifying significant statements, recurring ideas, and meaningful expressions related to the participants' experiences of professional participation and instructional strategies. Third, related codes were organized into preliminary categories and potential themes. Fourth, the emerging themes were reviewed and refined to ensure coherence, internal consistency, and alignment with the participants' accounts. Fifth, themes were defined and named to accurately capture the essence and meaning of the participants' experiences. Finally, the themes were synthesized and presented in a narrative form supported by direct quotations from participants to preserve authenticity and provide evidentiary support for the interpretations.

2.8 Ethical Considerations

In addition, the study complied with the provisions of Republic Act No. 10173, otherwise known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, by ensuring that all personal information collected from participants was processed lawfully, fairly, and solely for legitimate research purposes. Appropriate measures were implemented to safeguard the confidentiality, integrity, and security of participants' data throughout the research process. The study likewise adhered to the ethical standards prescribed under CHED Memorandum Order (CMO) No. 15, Series of 2019, which establishes the Policies, Standards, and Guidelines (PSGs) for Graduate Programs in the Philippines and emphasizes the conduct of responsible and ethical research. In accordance with these guidelines, participants' rights, welfare, and privacy were prioritized at all stages of the study. Data gathered were used exclusively for academic purposes and were handled with strict confidentiality. Compliance with these legal and institutional frameworks further strengthened the ethical rigor, credibility, and integrity of the research.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Extent of Participation of English Teachers in Professional Development Activities.

The findings reveal that English teachers in the Masbate Province Division demonstrate a generally active participation in professional development (PD) activities, though their engagement is shaped by institutional structures and contextual constraints such as workload and limited self-initiated involvement. Three interpretative themes emerged from the data: (1) Institutionally Driven but Consistently Sustained Professional Participation, (2) Practice-Oriented Engagement Focused on Instructional Enhancement, and (3) Professional Participation as a Means of Continuous Competence Development, these themes describe a moderate to high level of participation anchored primarily in school- and division-led initiatives.

Institutionally Driven but Consistently Sustained Professional Participation

The first theme, highlights teachers' consistent involvement in structured programs such as INSET, LAC sessions, seminars, and workshops. Participant 1 explained, "I usually participate whenever they are offered, especially during INSET and scheduled LAC sessions. The most meaningful activities are hands-on workshops where I can practice strategies and immediately apply them in the classroom." This reflects regular attendance in institutional PD activities, with emphasis on practical, application-oriented learning. Similarly, Participant 2 shared, "I have joined seminars, NCEC, LAC sessions, and workshops... most of these were school-based and division-led activities. Opportunities to enhance my teaching abilities motivate me to participate. However, time limitations and workload sometimes hinder my involvement." Participant 6 further confirmed, "These activities vary depending on the type of activity... sometimes school-based, division-based, but seldom self-initiated." These responses collectively show that participation is consistent but largely dependent on institutional scheduling. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) emphasize that effective PD is most impactful when sustained, collaborative, and embedded in schools, while Desimone (2009) notes that teachers often engage more in mandated PD than in self-directed initiatives. The implication from this is that while institutional support ensures consistent participation, schools must also encourage self-directed professional learning to foster teacher autonomy and ownership of growth.

Practice-Oriented Engagement Focused on Instructional Enhancement

The second theme, reveals that teachers' participation extends beyond attendance and leads to observable changes in classroom practice. Participant 3 noted, "One training on learner-centered teaching helped me shift from lecture-based instruction to interactive activities." This demonstrates that PD activities directly influence instructional strategies, enabling teachers to adopt more engaging approaches. Participant 7 emphasized, "The most meaningful ones are those that focus on differentiated instruction and collaborative teaching," while Participant 4 added that "LAC sessions primarily focus on problems encountered during small group discussions." These responses highlight that teachers value PD activities that address instructional challenges and provide practical solutions. Guskey (2002) argues that PD becomes meaningful when it results in tangible changes in teaching practice, while Desimone (2009) underscores the importance of content-focused and active learning opportunities in shaping instructional improvement. The implication is that schools should prioritize practice-oriented and content-specific PD programs that directly address instructional gaps, ensuring that professional development translates into improved teaching effectiveness and student engagement.

Professional Participation as a Means of Continuous Competence Development

The third theme underscores the role of intrinsic motivation in sustaining teachers' participation. Participant 5 expressed, "Thinking that if I participate more in professional development, I will gain more knowledge, and that would help me to become a more effective teacher." This statement reflects a growth-oriented mindset, where participation is driven by personal commitment to competence and effectiveness. Other participants echoed similar sentiments, emphasizing that PD activities provide opportunities to enhance teaching abilities and confidence. Opfer and Pedder (2011) highlight that teachers' beliefs about professional growth significantly influence their engagement, while Avalos (2011) notes that teachers who perceive PD as self-improvement are more consistent in participation. The implication is that schools must nurture a culture of continuous professional growth by providing recognition, mentoring, and reflective opportunities, ensuring that PD is embraced not merely as compliance but as a pathway to professional excellence. In synthesis, the extent of participation of English teachers in professional development activities can be interpreted as active, consistent, and institutionally anchored, with meaningful impacts on instructional strategies and reinforced by intrinsic motivation. While participation is occasionally limited by workload and rarely self-initiated, the findings affirm that structured, collaborative, and content-focused PD is central to teacher growth. The implication for practice is clear: schools must institutionalize supportive systems while empowering teachers to take ownership of their professional learning, thereby enhancing instructional effectiveness and advancing inclusive, quality education.

3.2. Instructional Strategies Commonly Used by English Teachers in their Classroom

The findings reveal that English teachers employ a variety of instructional strategies in their classrooms, which were categorized into four major themes: (1) Differentiated and Inclusive Instructional Practices, (2) Learner-Centered and Collaborative Teaching Approaches, (3) Structured and Scaffolded Instructional Approaches, and (4) Expanded Differentiated and Inclusive Practices. These strategies demonstrate that English teachers intentionally design instruction to respond to diverse learners, promote engagement, and ensure meaningful learning.

Differentiated and Inclusive Instructional Practices

English teachers emphasized differentiated and inclusive practices as central to their classroom strategies, ensuring that instruction is responsive to diverse learner needs. Participant 1 explained, "I assess students' prior knowledge, identify learning gaps, and design activities suited for their level. I provide varied tasks for reading, writing, speaking, and grammar, and give additional support to struggling learners." This highlights the deliberate tailoring of instruction to individual learners, making differentiation a key approach. Supporting this, Participant 6 shared, "I handle diverse learners with

different language abilities and learning needs. Limited resources and large class sizes can be difficult. But seeing students improve their communication skills makes the experience rewarding,” while Participant 7 added, “My current teaching approach includes the 4 As, reflective practice, collaborative methods, and differentiated instruction based on multiple intelligences.” These responses reinforce the commitment to inclusivity and adaptability in teaching. The Learning Policy Institute (2005) stresses that content-focused and reflective professional development enhances teacher practice, while Giraldo’s study found that PD programs improve responsiveness to learner needs. Vadivel et al. (2021) further emphasize that continuous PD strengthens reflective teaching and inclusivity. The implication is that schools must support teachers in implementing inclusive, differentiated approaches by embedding training on adaptive methods, multiple intelligences, and scaffolding, ensuring equitable learning opportunities even in resource-limited contexts.

Learner-Centered and Collaborative Teaching Approaches

Another prominent theme is the adoption of learner-centered and collaborative strategies, reflecting a shift from teacher-dominated instruction to approaches that prioritize student engagement and cooperation. Participant 2 stated, “I often use learner-centered collaborative and technology-assisted strategies in teaching English. These approaches help increase students’ participation,” while Participant 3 reinforced this by saying, “One of the most common instructional strategies that I use is learner-centered instruction, cooperative learning, and differentiated activities, contextualized examples and formative assessments.” Participant 5 added, “A typical English class is teacher-based, but since learners are different now, we must have learner-centered strategies for them to learn and engage more.” These responses highlight the integration of collaboration, contextualization, and formative assessment into classroom practice. The Learning Policy Institute (2005) identifies collaboration and active learning as essential components of effective teaching, while Postholm and Boylan (2018) argue that collaborative PD improves instructional practice through shared reflection. Ohayon’s findings further indicate that professional learning communities enhance teaching quality, and Bowma’s research demonstrates that PD strengthens technology integration. The implication is that schools should embed learner-centered and collaborative approaches into PD programs, encouraging peer dialogue, reflective practice, and technology use to ensure instruction remains interactive, engaging, and responsive to modern learner needs.

Structured and Scaffolded Instructional Approaches

Teachers also reported using structured and scaffolded strategies to guide learners progressively toward independence. Participant 4 explained, “I use the ‘I do, we do, you do’ approach, especially in teaching speaking skills.” This gradual release of responsibility ensures comprehension and skill mastery, particularly in language learning. Other participants noted similar structured approaches, including reflective practice and systematic frameworks such as the 4As, which provide clear instructional sequencing. The Learning Policy Institute (2005) emphasizes that effective practice models, coaching, and structured feedback are essential for instructional improvement, while Edmondson highlights that PD must translate into practical classroom application. Babinski’s research further demonstrates that structured PD enhances evidence-based instructional strategies. The implication is that schools should promote structured teaching models within PD programs, equipping teachers with systematic approaches that scaffold learning effectively. This ensures that learners progress steadily from guided practice to independent performance, particularly in complex skills such as speaking and writing.

Differentiated and Inclusive Instructional Practices

Finally, teachers underscored the importance of reflective and inclusive practices, adapting instruction to diverse learners while continuously evaluating their teaching approaches. Participant 6 explained, “I handle diverse learners with different language abilities and learning needs. Limited resources and large class sizes can be difficult. But seeing students improve their communication skills makes the experience rewarding.” Participant 7 added, “My current teaching approach includes the 4 As, reflective practice, collaborative methods, and differentiated instruction based on multiple intelligences.” These responses highlight the integration of reflection and inclusivity into teaching, ensuring adaptability to learner diversity. Vadivel et al. (2021) emphasize that continuous PD strengthens reflective teaching and collaboration, while Engida’s study found that instructional adaptability significantly influences English achievement. Babinski also demonstrated that structured PD improves evidence-based strategies, validating the participants’ emphasis on reflective and inclusive practices. The implication is that schools must embed reflective practice and inclusivity into PD programs, supporting teachers in managing diverse classrooms and engaging in continuous reflection to improve instructional responsiveness and equity. Generally, the results indicate that English teachers commonly use Differentiated instruction, Learner-centered and collaborative strategies, Structured scaffolding techniques, and Reflective and inclusive approaches. These instructional strategies are consistent with international and local literature emphasizing that professional participation enhances classroom effectiveness. Across the reviewed studies, continuous professional development, collaboration, reflective practice, and structured training are repeatedly linked to improved instructional quality. Overall, the instructional strategies employed by English teachers, differentiated and inclusive practices, learner-centered and collaborative approaches, structured scaffolding techniques, and reflective methods, are consistent with international and local literature emphasizing that professional participation enhances classroom effectiveness. The alignment between participants’ responses and research confirms that professional development plays a significant role in shaping learner-centered,

inclusive, and structured English instruction. The implication is clear: schools must institutionalize PD programs that integrate differentiation, collaboration, scaffolding, and reflection to ensure that instructional practices remain responsive, equitable, and effective in diverse learning contexts.

3.3 Professional participation affects the instructional strategies of English teachers.

The responses of the participants indicate that professional participation has a substantial impact on the instructional strategies employed by English teachers. This effect can be categorized into four primary themes: (1) Professional Collaboration and Implementation Challenges, (2) Transformation Toward Learner-Centered Instruction, (3) Enhanced Instructional Responsiveness to Learner Diversity, and (4) Enhanced Instructional Responsiveness to Learner Diversity.

Professional Collaboration and Implementation Challenges

The first theme highlights the role of collaboration in motivating teachers to experiment with new strategies, while also revealing the challenges that hinder full implementation. Participant 1 explained, “Peer support encourages me to experiment and improve my teaching practices. Large class sizes, limited time, lack of materials, and heavy workload make implementation difficult.” This underscores the dual reality that while collaboration fosters innovation, contextual barriers often impede its translation into practice. Other participants echoed similar sentiments, noting that professional participation provides opportunities for shared learning but is constrained by systemic issues such as overcrowded classrooms and insufficient resources. Imran, Almusharraf, Abdellatif, and Ghaffar (2024) confirm that professional development equips teachers with new strategies, yet practical challenges like limited training and heavy workloads restrict their application. Postholm and Boylan (2018) further emphasize that collaboration is most effective when paired with reflective practices, though structural barriers may limit systemic change. The implication is that schools must not only encourage collaboration but also address implementation challenges by reducing class sizes, allocating resources, and adjusting workloads to ensure that professional participation translates into meaningful instructional improvement.

Transformation Toward Learner-Centered Instruction

The second theme reveals a significant shift from traditional teacher-centered methods to learner-centered approaches as a result of professional participation. Participant 2 stated, “My participation in professional development has introduced me to more student-centered and interactive teaching strategies. It has helped me become more reflective and intentional in planning my English lessons.” Similarly, Participant 3 shared, “One training on learner-centered teaching helped me shift from lecture-based instruction to interactive activities, such as group work and performance tasks,” while Participant 4 added, “Some practices I adopted after seminars: simplify words instead of translating them for learners to understand better.” These responses highlight how professional development fosters interactive, reflective, and communicative strategies that prioritize student engagement. The Learning Policy Institute (2005) identifies active learning, collaboration, and models of effective practice as critical components of PD that enhance teaching quality. Giraldo (2013) found that PD programs improved English teachers’ classroom performance by promoting communicative and task-based strategies, while Edmondson (2025) emphasized that PD fosters reflective practice, enabling teachers to adapt instruction to learner needs. The implication is that schools must design PD programs that promote learner-centered pedagogy, equipping teachers with interactive strategies that transform classroom dynamics and enhance student participation.

Enhanced Instructional Responsiveness to Learner Diversity

The third theme emphasizes that professional participation strengthens teachers’ ability to respond to diverse learner needs. Participant 5 stated, “Professional development motivates me to gain more knowledge to deliver lessons effectively to diverse learners,” while Participant 7 explained, “Professional participation has helped me adopt more interactive and student-focused approaches, improve assessment methods, and use varied instructional materials.” These responses demonstrate that PD equips teachers with strategies to tailor instruction to varied student profiles, ensuring inclusivity and responsiveness. The National Council of Teachers of English (2005) stresses that effective instruction requires sensitivity to learner diversity and reflective inquiry. Munday (2023) and the CPD Certification Service (2025) highlight that continuous professional learning builds competence and confidence in tailoring instruction to diverse learners. Ji, Qin, and Li (2022) further argue that professional learning strengthens teachers’ ability to adjust pedagogy according to learner needs. The implication is that schools must embed diversity-responsive training into PD programs, enabling teachers to design inclusive lessons, adopt varied assessment methods, and integrate differentiated materials that address the academic and socio-emotional needs of all learners.

3.4 Policy Framework to Enhance the Professional Participation of English Teachers and Improve their Instructional Strategies Policy Rationale

The proposed Policy Framework to Enhance the Professional Participation of English Teachers and Improve Their Instructional Strategies was developed based on the findings of the study, which revealed that English teachers recognize the importance of professional development but encounter challenges related to limited access to training opportunities, heavy workload demands, and insufficient institutional support. Despite these constraints, participants consistently emphasized that participation in professional development activities such as seminars, workshops, demonstration teaching,

and Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions contributed significantly to the enhancement of their instructional practices. The framework therefore seeks to institutionalize a systematic, sustainable, and school-based approach to professional participation that directly supports instructional improvement among English teachers. The framework is anchored on Guskey's Model of Teacher Change (2002), which posits that meaningful changes in teachers' beliefs and attitudes occur after they observe positive outcomes resulting from improved classroom practices. This theoretical perspective underscores the importance of providing teachers with opportunities to engage in professional learning experiences that can be applied in actual classroom settings. Through continuous participation in professional development activities, teachers are expected to acquire new knowledge and skills, implement innovative teaching practices, and subsequently observe improvements in learner engagement and achievement. These positive outcomes reinforce teachers' commitment to continuous professional growth and encourage sustained participation in future learning opportunities. The framework is likewise informed by Shulman's Pedagogical Content Knowledge Theory (1987), which emphasizes that effective teaching requires more than mastery of subject matter. Teachers must possess the ability to transform content knowledge into instructional approaches that facilitate meaningful learning. The professional development activities proposed in the framework are designed to strengthen English teachers' pedagogical content knowledge by exposing them to evidence-based instructional strategies, differentiated teaching approaches, assessment techniques, and technology-enhanced learning practices. By aligning professional development opportunities with identified instructional needs, the framework ensures that learning experiences remain relevant, practical, and responsive to classroom realities. Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory (1978) further supports the collaborative dimension of the framework. According to this theory, learning occurs through social interaction, dialogue, and shared experiences. This principle is reflected in the framework's emphasis on strengthening Learning Action Cells, peer mentoring, lesson study, demonstration teaching, and collaborative reflection. These activities provide teachers with opportunities to learn from colleagues, exchange best practices, solve instructional challenges collectively, and construct new knowledge through professional discourse. Such collaborative environments foster a culture of continuous learning and professional support within the school community. The framework also draws from Organizational Support Theory, which highlights the importance of institutional commitment in promoting employee engagement and performance. The findings of the study revealed that teachers' participation in professional development is significantly influenced by the level of support provided by school leaders. Consequently, the framework incorporates school-level support mechanisms such as the allocation of resources, adjustment of teaching loads during training periods, provision of incentives and recognition systems, and establishment of monitoring and evaluation procedures. These support structures are intended to reduce barriers to participation while creating conditions that motivate teachers to engage actively in professional learning opportunities. The first component of the framework focuses on increasing teachers' participation in professional development programs through the formulation of a School Professional Development Plan. This component recognizes that professional growth must be strategically planned and equitably accessible to all teachers. By establishing clear schedules, participation targets, and incentive systems, the school can cultivate a culture that values lifelong learning and continuous improvement. Increased participation is expected to expand teachers' professional knowledge and encourage greater engagement in school improvement initiatives. The second component centers on institutionalizing and strengthening Learning Action Cells as a mechanism for collaborative professional growth. LAC sessions serve as sustainable and cost-effective professional development platforms where teachers can discuss instructional concerns, share successful practices, and reflect on teaching experiences. Through regular implementation and documentation of best practices, LACs become vehicles for collective learning, professional reflection, and instructional innovation. This component supports the development of a collaborative professional culture that extends beyond individual teacher learning. The third component addresses the alignment of professional development activities with teachers' actual instructional needs. The study revealed that teachers benefit most from training opportunities that directly respond to challenges encountered in the classroom. Through systematic training needs assessments, school leaders can identify priority areas such as differentiated instruction, technology integration, classroom assessment, and communicative language teaching. Tailoring professional development activities to these identified needs increases the relevance, effectiveness, and applicability of training programs. The fourth component emphasizes mentoring and coaching as mechanisms for professional support and instructional enhancement. The assignment of Master Teachers as instructional coaches provides teachers with opportunities for individualized guidance, constructive feedback, and reflective practice. Classroom observations followed by coaching conferences allow teachers to identify strengths, address areas for improvement, and develop actionable strategies for enhancing instruction. This component reinforces professional learning by connecting theory and training with actual classroom implementation. The fifth component promotes the integration of innovative and learner-centered instructional strategies. The findings indicated that professional participation encourages teachers to adopt more engaging, differentiated, and technology-supported teaching practices. Through workshops, demonstration teaching, and peer modeling, teachers are provided with practical opportunities to experiment with new instructional approaches and adapt them to diverse learner needs. This component supports the development of responsive teaching practices that promote active learning, student engagement, and improved educational outcomes. The sixth component focuses on providing institutional support mechanisms that address barriers to professional participation. Teacher workload, financial constraints, and limited access to resources were identified as significant challenges affecting participation. The framework therefore recommends strategic allocation of school resources, provision of training materials, recognition of exemplary participation, and administrative adjustments that enable teachers to attend professional

development activities without compromising instructional responsibilities. Such support demonstrates the school's commitment to teacher growth and strengthens teachers' motivation to engage in continuous learning. The final component establishes a monitoring and evaluation system to ensure accountability, sustainability, and continuous improvement. Effective professional development requires systematic assessment of implementation processes and outcomes. Through the development of monitoring tools and annual evaluation procedures, school leaders can determine whether professional participation translates into improved instructional performance. The evaluation results can also inform future planning decisions, ensuring that professional development initiatives remain relevant, responsive, and aligned with educational goals. Overall, the proposed framework presents a comprehensive and interconnected approach to teacher professional development. It recognizes that sustained professional participation requires not only individual commitment but also collaborative learning opportunities, responsive training programs, supportive leadership, and continuous monitoring. By addressing these dimensions simultaneously, the framework aims to strengthen English teachers' professional competence, enhance instructional effectiveness, and ultimately improve student learning outcomes. Furthermore, the framework supports the realization of Sustainable Development Goal 4 by promoting quality, inclusive, and equitable education through the continuous development of teachers as key agents of educational improvement.

4. Conclusion & Recommendations

This study concludes that professional participation is a powerful and vital driver for enhancing the instructional effectiveness of English teachers. The overall outcome indicates that while teachers' engagement in professional development (such as INSET and LAC sessions) is primarily institution-driven due to heavy workloads and time constraints, it fundamentally reshapes classroom practices by shifting instruction from traditional, teacher-centered methods to highly adaptive, learner-centered, and inclusive approaches. Active participation equips teachers with the skills necessary to employ diverse pedagogical frameworks, including differentiated instruction, scaffolding, collaborative learning, and the 4As framework. Ultimately, continuous professional development fosters collaborative communities and reflective practices, proving to be an essential mechanism for improving teaching competence, instructional flexibility, and responsiveness to student diversity within the Mobo South District, Division of Masbate Province.

Based on these outcomes, it is recommended that school administrators and educational leaders within the Division of Masbate Province fully implement and systematically monitor the proposed School-Based Action Plan to sustain active teacher engagement. Professional development planners should transition from generalized seminars to practical, hands-on, and strategy-focused workshops that directly reinforce contextualized lesson planning, technology integration, and the 4As framework. Furthermore, future training initiatives must be aligned with actual classroom realities by mitigating localized barriers, managing teacher workloads, and providing necessary parallel instructional materials. To secure long-term teaching quality, school heads should establish a robust monitoring and evaluation mechanism to track the classroom application of LAC and seminar insights. Finally, educational researchers are encouraged to replicate this study using parallel qualitative or mixed-methods designs in other districts or learning areas to broaden and validate these empirical findings.

While this study offers valuable insights into professional development and instructional transformation, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the research relied on a small sample size of seven (7) Junior High School English teachers within a single district, using a complete enumeration sampling technique, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to larger populations or different subject areas. Second, data collection was constrained by its reliance on qualitative Focused Group Discussions (FGDs), which capture the self-reported lived experiences and perceptions of the participants but lack direct, objective classroom observations to verify the daily implementation of these strategies. Lastly, the study was geographically and contextually bound to the specific structural, localized challenges and resource limitations of Mobo South District during the designated school year, meaning the institutional barriers identified may differ from those in urban or better-resourced educational settings.

Compliance with ethical standards

To ensure full compliance with established ethical standards in qualitative research, this study strictly adhered to the core tenets of voluntary participation, informed consent, confidentiality, and data protection. Prior to conducting the Focused Group Discussions (FGDs), the researcher secured institutional approval from the Division of Masbate Province and the administration of Cristeta Bagano Memorial High School (CBMHS). Written informed consent was obtained from all seven participating Junior High School English teachers, who were thoroughly briefed on the purpose, scope, and non-evaluative nature of the study. To safeguard their professional identities and prevent any personal or professional repercussions, complete anonymity was maintained through the systematic use of pseudonyms (e.g., Participant 1, Participant 2) in all transcripts, data displays, and final reports. Furthermore, the participants were informed of their absolute right to skip any question or withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty. All audio recordings, verbatim transcripts, and thematic matrices were securely encrypted and stored in password-protected digital repositories accessible

only to the researcher, ensuring absolute data privacy in strict alignment with Republic Act No. 10173, also known as the Data Privacy Act of 2012, and the ethical guidelines of the Graduate School of Osmeña Colleges.

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