


# Chapter 10

## Views and Perceptions of Kenyan Teachers on the Structured Teacher Professional Development Programme

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The study sought the views of teachers and union officials on the conceptualization, rationale, structure and benefits of the structured TPD programme being rolled out in Kenya. Descriptive research design was employed with an online questionnaires and interview schedules being used to collect data. The findings showed that most teachers had a good understanding of TPD and found it beneficial to their practice. However, there was little involvement in the design and conceptualization of the TSC-TPD program. It is recommended that TSC adopts a more robust engagement mechanism with teachers and other key education stakeholders for effective implementation of the programme.*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

The realization of quality education is closely tied to the quality of teachers. Researchers generally agree that one of the effective ways to improve the quality of teachers and teaching is through TPD programmes (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). This view is also captured in Sustainable Development Goal 4 that focuses on '*provision of inclusive and equitable lifelong learning for all*'-with target 4.c being specific on professional development of teachers. This is based on the critical role that teachers play in education. In Sub-Saharan Africa, TPD is critical due to the inherent weaknesses in the pre-service teacher training programmes. Some of these shortcomings include low quality of trainers, uncoordinated curriculum and inadequate infrastructure. According to Gathumbi et al (2013) and Bett (2016) there is need to support school based teacher professional development. Researchers, educators and policy makers are convinced that pre-service training is not yielding the expected results and therefore resources should be directed to effective professional development. The European Union (2010) notes that education and professional development of every teacher needs to be seen as a lifelong task, be structured and resourced accordingly.

Teacher Professional Development programs in Kenya have been offered for many years by different agencies in an uncoordinated and unstructured manner. These include government agencies, universities and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs). Studies have shown that the programs are often short-term and terminal. A study by Njihia (2019) in Kenya showed that only 7.7% of teachers in Kenya engaged in collaborative TPD programs. Similarly, a majority of teachers in Kenya were engaged in infrequent short duration courses that had little impact on learner outcomes. Most of these programs are often offered through the cascade model in which an initial cohort is trained and used as trainers of trainers (ToTs). Gathumbi et al (2013) noted that the use of the two tier and three tier cascade models in Kenya in delivering continuing TPD led to dilution of content and thus eroding the effectiveness of the training. Bett, (2016) also pointed out the apparent exclusion of the teacher from the preparation process as a shortcoming of the cascade model used in Kenya.

There has also been a lack of a concrete policy framework for provision of TPD in Kenya. In fact, a study by Bunyi *et al* (2013) noted that there seemed to be a theoretical recognition of the importance of continuing professional development (CPD) in the country but little had been done to institutionalize and improve the quality of CPD programmes. The study further noted that despite having an elaborate Teacher Continuing Professional Development infrastructure, Kenya lacked a coherent policy on CPD and a national CPD programme. According to the Kenya Education Sector Plan (2018-2023) there is inadequate teacher professional development and

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