

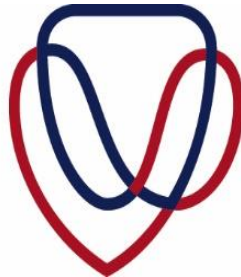
Collaborative Leadership Practices of District-based Education Inspectors in Supporting Teacher Professional Development in Lesotho.

By

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Supervisor: Dr Sekitla Daniel Makhasane

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that the research reported in the thesis entitled " *Collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development in Lesotho* " is my original work. The thesis has not been previously submitted to any academic institution for examination. This thesis is free from unauthorised information unless explicitly acknowledged as being sourced from other people. I, therefore, wish to confirm that all sources cited in this thesis have been acknowledged.

‘Makutloano Francina ‘Nei

Date: 17 October 2024

Signed: 

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mom, ‘Makoena Elizabeth Sefatsane, and my late dad, Pitso Peter Sefatsane (may your soul RIP Lochi), and to my two loving sons, Liteboho and Bohlokoa ‘Nei. These are the people who have always wanted all that is best for me. To them, my success is the milestone they have always wished and prayed for.

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ABSTRACT

The increasing global competition and focus on teacher quality and job satisfaction have led to teacher professional development (TPD) being regarded as crucial. Collaborative leadership practices are essential and are aimed at enhancing learner performance. In Lesotho, the Ministry of Education and Training officials do not seem to be creating diverse collaborative activities and various professional development platforms that keep teachers abreast with technological advancements, nor are their professional activities well-coordinated. However, the literature indicates that teacher professional development is more effective when it is sustained and collaborative. This study focused on the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development in Lesotho. The study used the interpretive research paradigm. The research was informed by the two theories of David Chrislip and Carl Larson's Collaborative Leadership Theory of 1994 and Ralph Fessler's Eight-Eight Teacher Career Cycle Model 1995. Data was generated from four district-based education inspectors, four principals, four HODs, and six teachers from each of the four schools which were selected for this study. The study was carried out using a qualitative research approach and a multiple case study research design. The data generation methods used are semi-structured face-to-face interviews, focus groups, document analysis and the collage. This study used non-probability sampling technique in selecting the participants. Data was analysed using a thematic data analysis strategy, with the transcription, coding and interpretation of data in order to get the findings. The findings in this study revealed that the teacher professional development activities that were provided to the teachers were mainly workshops which were school-initiated while others were district-office-initiated. The study found that the district-based inspectors' collaborative leadership practices were partially effective since there were some practices which were not happening as anticipated according to the principles of collaborative leadership. Such challenges still needed to be addressed in as far as the inspectors and their collaborative leadership roles were concerned. The study further highlighted the lack of resources, work overload, fear of

inspectors' intimidating approach, lack of feedback, lack of support for private schools, lack of exposure to a variety of teacher professional development activities, no tapping of available knowledge, lack of exposure to advanced technology as some of the factors affecting the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based inspectors. Therefore, the study recommended the establishment of structures that would provide TPD district-based education inspector support made of different stakeholders.

Keywords: *Collaborative Leadership, Education Leadership and Management, Teacher Professional Development.*

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

COVID-19	Corona Virus Disease of 2019
CPD	Continuous Professional Development
DBE	Department of Basic Education
ECOL	Examinations Council of Lesotho
HOD	Head of Department
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
ISPFTED	Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development in South Africa
IT	Information Technology

LESP	Lesotho Education Sector Plan
MOET	Ministry of Education and Training
NCDC	National Curriculum Development Centre
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OTL	Online Teacher Learning
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TALIS	Teaching and Learning International Survey
TDMP	Teacher Development Master Plan
TPD	Teacher Professional Development
TTIs	Teacher Training Institutions
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
USA	United States of America

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Title registration

Appendix B: Ethical clearance

Appendix C: Permission letter to the District Education Manager (MOET)

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CHAPTER ONE

Orientation to the study

1.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the background to the collaborative leadership practices of district-based inspectors in supporting teacher professional development (TPD). The summaries of the following concepts are discussed and presented in this chapter for the reader to have an idea of the methodology that is used for this study which is found in chapter 4 : research problem, research questions, aims and objectives of the study, research design and methodology, research paradigm, research approach, research design, data generation , selection of participants, data analysis, the value of research, ethical considerations, trustworthiness, synopsis of chapters and their layout.

1.2 Background to the study

The increasing global competition and focus on teacher quality and job satisfaction have led to teacher professional development (TPD) being regarded as crucial. Day et al (2021) reveal that even the COVID-19 crisis has revealed preexisting problems and inequalities that will need our collective effort to address, regardless of the pandemic's trajectory. Therefore, collaborative practices are essential and are aimed at enhancing learner performance. De Oliveira (2019) indicates that professional development is a collaboration process that involves more successful significant interactions. The Lesotho government has shown support for teacher professional development. For instance, the Teaching Service Regulations 2002, Sections 35, 36 & 37 state that teachers are entitled to study leave and scholarships (Lesotho Government Printing).

Many countries, including Lesotho, have a school inspectorate whose purpose is to provide support to teachers and learners. For the purpose of this study, the use of the concept district- based education inspectors will be used interchangeably with circuit managers and education officers since different countries differ in their use of the concept.

In Lesotho, inspectors operate at two levels; the regional and the district levels. The Ministry of Education and Training is decentralised at the level of the district through the Department of the

Inspectorate whose major duty is to support schools through administrative assistance and professional guidance. There are also regional inspectors to whom district-based inspectors report, whose role is to oversee the work of the district-based inspectors, for instance, regional inspector north, south and central (Unesco, 2006/7).

In Lesotho, the Central Inspectorate's aim is to monitor, supervise, support and evaluate schools and ensure that the curriculum is offered effectively (Ministry of Education, 2000). District-based education inspectors organise in-service workshops and visit schools to demonstrate curriculum policies (Ministry of Education, 1992). This is supposed to be done in collaboration with school principals, heads of department and teachers as well as other stakeholders. Rodriques (2022) asserts that the Cayman Islands schools' inspectorate was established in the nineteenth century to monitor and report to the Ministry of Education on education standards in schools and to contribute to their improvement. In the same way, in South Africa, circuit managers in the Department of Basic Education play a significant role in the district leadership by being a component that bridges the gap between schools and the government (Bantwini & Moorosi, 2018).

The role of district-based education inspectors as leaders is to manage and coordinate the collaboration by seeing to it that responsibilities are distributed amongst the stakeholders in order to provide support for all collaborative efforts (Armstrong et al., 2021). There is a gap between the way in which the inspectorate intends to make improvements in schools, and the manner in which the stakeholders make interpretations of the frameworks and experience inspections (Munoz & Ehren, 2021).

Scholars show that several influential reviews have concurred that teacher professional development becomes more successful when it is handled in a sustainable, collaborative way and involves external expertise in cooperative projects that are managed by the government (Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021; Sanca et al., 2021; Forte & Flores, 2014). However, collaboration appears to be lacking among stakeholders in school developmental activities. This illustrates that teacher professional development should be a collaborative effort among stakeholders. DeWitt (2020) adds that professional learning relationships are a monthly hybrid approach that includes both coaching and the facilitating workshops on instructional leadership and collective efficacy.

Thus, Miller et al. (2022) posit that teachers' lack of collaboration ensures that they are unable to access new advanced ways of doing things, thus reducing their effectiveness. Harris, Jones, & Huffman (2017) add that teachers can work collectively and collaboratively in matters that are meant to transform them into professionally supported individuals who are eager to change their career. Nordgren et al. (2021) conclude that collaborative work is insufficient to support teacher professional development. While there are studies about TPD, previous ones were based on the perspectives of teachers on professional development for integrated curriculum and its implementation in the classroom in Lesotho (Tafai, 2021), teacher professional development and school leadership in Lesotho (Setungoane, 2010), the development of professional identity among Lesotho university lecturers (Mathe, 2019), and a study on the induction and mentoring for beginning teachers' professional development in Lesotho (Makafane, 2022). None of these studies explored the collaborative leadership practices of education inspectors in Lesotho. Apart from that, I have not found a study that explores the collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors at district level. Therefore, this study intended to fill this gap in knowledge. The collaborative leadership focus of this study was intended to offer suggestions for improved teacher professional development through the support of education inspectors. Furthermore, it was intended to contribute to new knowledge by investigating how collaborative leadership practices of district-based educational inspectors can support teacher professional development.

1.3 Research problem

Empirical research considers collaborative leadership practices to be an important predictor of outcome variables in education; hence it being crucial in teacher professional development (Meyer et al., 2022). The Lesotho Education Act 2010 18 (4) (b), (e) explains that among the functions of educational inspectors is to provide support and advice, as well as monitor the effectiveness of teacher training. Akcil et al. (2021) state that creating diverse collaborative activities in various professional development platforms that keep abreast with technological advancements is the best support. In reality, there is lack of exposure to teacher professional development which would give teachers the necessary skills to improve their teaching capabilities (Lekhetho, 2021). This thus, indicates that the district-based education inspectors do not seem to be creating such opportunities, nor are their activities well-coordinated to equip teachers with such skills.

There is a limited creation of forums where teachers can mingle professionally to share ideas and skills. There appears to be lack of collaborative support that would help teachers to implement new instructional practices or methods, thereby not giving teachers feedback on the implementation of strategies to enhance professional development (Zarrow, 2020). As a result, the challenges that teachers experience leave them disheartened, thus impeding the teaching and learning process. Parnter (2022) proposes that new research on the principles of collaborative leadership practices that yield more suitable mentoring for teacher development should be undertaken. Thus, it is on this basis that this study was embarked upon to explore the collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors.

1.4 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework that informed this study is derived from two theories namely, Chrislip and Larson's Collaborative Leadership Theory 1994 and Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Career Cycle Model 1995.

Collaborative Leadership Theory: David D. Chrislip and Carl E. Larson, 1994

A shared vision and values, shared responsibility, mutual respect, empathy, and effective communication are the characteristics of collaborative leadership (Lawrence, 2017; Ang'an, & Amp; Kilika, 2022). The district-based education inspectors are the leaders who are expected to bring stakeholders together in order to support teachers by exposing them to professional development through collaborative practices.

Successful collaboration

The key to successful collaboration is to have strong stakeholder groups which are well organised so that that they can speak or act for those they represent. It is characterised by broad-based involvement, commitment or involvement at a high level; visible leaders and strong leadership (Lima, 2021). Therefore, it is on the basis of that that the collaborative practices of district-based

education inspectors with the stakeholders in supporting teacher professional development with the use of these indicators were explored.

Ralph Fessler's eight-stage teacher career cycle model, 1995

This theory shows teachers' different professional needs at various stages of their careers. According to Fessler, teachers move through some developmental stages reflecting their responses to personal, organisational and environmental factors in their profession.

Eight stages

Sancar et al. (2021) state that teacher professional development involves a structure that is multi-dimensional and therefore changes throughout the teachers' profession. Fessler's first stage is pre-service, which prepares teachers for the beginning of a period where they are prepared for a specific role. Second is the induction, which is the first few years of service. The third stage involves competency building where teachers have been socialised into the system and become highly motivated to take part in professional development programmes. The fourth is enthusiasm and growth wherein teachers have reached a high level of competence and go on progressively as professionals. The fifth is career frustration in which teachers demonstrate negative affective attitudes, lack job satisfaction and may question their choice of career. The sixth stage is career stability where teachers are neither highly motivated nor demotivated. The seventh is career wind-down which is the preparation for retirement or career change (Zysberg & Maskit, 2017). The eighth stage is called career exit whereby teachers leave their profession for various reasons (Fessler & Christensen, 1992). It is on the basis of this theory that the study examined teachers' professional needs in as far as their work environment is concerned and how district-based education inspectors provide support through collaboration with other stakeholders.

1.5 Research Questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

Primary research question

How do collaborative leadership practices of district-based educational inspectors support teacher professional development in Lesotho?

Secondary research questions

1. What is the nature of teacher professional development in the selected schools?
2. How do collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors benefit the TPD activities in the selected schools?
3. What collaborative leadership challenges do district-based education inspectors encounter in supporting teacher professional development?
4. What recommendations can be made about district-based education inspectors' collaborative leadership practices in supporting teacher professional development?

1.6 Research aim

The key aim of the study is to explore the collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development in Lesotho. The key aim is supported by the following secondary aims:

1. To describe the nature of teacher professional development activities available in selected schools.
2. To explore how collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors benefit the TPD activities in the selected schools.
3. To explain the challenges that the district-based education inspectors encounter in supporting teacher professional development.

4. To explore the recommendations about the district-based education inspectors' collaborative leadership practices in supporting teacher professional development.

1.7 Research design and methodology

This section covers the research processes presented in the sub-sections below.

1.7.1 Research paradigm

This study used the interpretive research paradigm where a phenomenon is analysed on the basis of the values, norms and beliefs of the society in which it happens (Hepler & Cloud, 2022). Different data collecting agents are used to understand the phenomenon of the study from the experiences of the participants.

Ontological assumptions

The study was guided by the notion that researchers should assume that the world under investigation is one in which human beings living in it have their own thoughts, interpretations and meanings (Moon & Blackman, 2017). Du Plooy (2017) posits that one of the ontological assumptions of the interpretive paradigm is the subjective nature of reality; that insights into communication can be taken from the subjects' perspectives. In this study, meaning was constructed from the participants' experiences in their different social interactions in their work places.

The epistemological stance which was used is constructivism which views meaningful reality and knowledge as dependent upon what humans do in their interaction with others in their various social contexts developed and communicated in their world (Stănicke et al., 2020). Epistemology is about the origins of nature and the limits of human knowledge, and is positioned on the connection between the knower and the known (Vialdino, 2009). In addition, it focuses on various ways of knowing and the researcher's belief system about the nature of knowledge. Creswell (2014) adds that the focus of constructivism is on the expansion of subjective meanings and understandings of individual people's skills based on specific issues in their social and historical contexts. The collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors were explored through eliciting responses from the district-based education inspectors, principals, HODs and teachers. Additionally, teacher professional development was explored by considering the collaborative practices in support of teacher professional development activities.

1.7.2 Research approach

A qualitative approach was used because it is exploratory. Qualitative research is used to show trends in opinions and as well as thoughts in order to explore the problem in depth (Kasirye, 2021). Hamed (2022) argues that the objective of qualitative research method is to address practical issues through involvement of naturalistic and interpretive approaches to various subject matters. Busetto, Wick & Gumbinger (2020) argue that this approach involves case studies, experiences of life, and news indicating the practices as well as complications that individuals encounter in their lives by focusing on their deeper interpretations and inspirations which cannot be defined by numbers. Furthermore, it is more communicative and the data thus gained is raw and pure (Bhandari, 2022). The qualitative research method was appropriate for this study to respond to questions about experiences and perspectives from the district-based education inspectors, principals, HODs and teachers.

1.7.3 Research design

This is a multiple case study with multiple sites consisting of four schools and the Ministry of Education and Training office to gain in-depth knowledge from those various sites. It was intended

to allow the me to get a deeper understanding of the phenomenon and use multiple data sources (Rashid et al., 2019). Mc Combes (2019) adds that the multiple case study is used to make a comparison, evaluate and understand different aspects of the research problem. In this case, it was used to get in-depth, contextual and concrete knowledge about the collaborative attempts that education inspectors engage in with stakeholders to improve teacher professional development.

1.7.4 Data generation

Semi-structured in-depth individual face-to-face interviews, focus groups, collages and document analysis are the data generation methods that were used in this study. Guion et al. (2011) contend that the aim of an in-depth interview is to collect detailed information beyond initial and surface-level answers. Since Marshall (2016) states that this method allows for probing, I was able to gather enough data through probing participants to answer the research questions. The individual face-to-face interviews were conducted with the district-based education inspectors, the school principals and the HODs of the four participating schools.

George (2021) defines a focus group as a research method that is carried out by bringing together a small group of people to answer questions in a moderated setting. Thus, I obtained immediate results that were more comprehensible and intuitive than raw data (Kitzinger, 1995). There was one focus group per school with six teachers in different departments who were purposively selected. This is because one focus group would not be a large enough sample to give a fleshed response to the questions (George, 2022).

A collage was also used as a data generation method to improve the trustworthiness of this study. Photographs, newspapers and magazine articles were used to create an atmosphere of collaboration between the researcher and the participants (Gerstenblatt, 2013). Photographs, newspapers and magazines were brought to the participants (district-based education inspectors, HODs, principals, and teachers) for them to arrange and prepare before the individual interviews and focus group interviews so that the collages as a visual method would be used to facilitate and inform the interviews. While carrying out the focus groups, the teachers were provided with the materials to

sort or arrange as a group to enable them to engage with the study beyond a spoken word, (Culshaw, 2019). In this field, the collage was not seen as the most common data generation method hence it was intended to add to the body of knowledge.

1.7.5 Selection of research participants

The type of non-probability sampling technique that was used is purposive sampling technique in the process of selecting participants. Gundumogula (2020) states that the focus groups should be made up of individuals who are experienced or knowledgeable about the specific issue, hence these were criteria used to select the teachers. In the focus groups, selected teachers were novice teachers with five years of experience in teaching and those with more than five years' teaching experience since their exposure to professional development may differ. A co-moderator coordinated the technology, took notes and observed the behaviour of the participants.

1.7.6 Sample size

Samples in qualitative studies are usually small and should be selected purposively in order to select the cases that have rich information. Data was collected from four inspectors from the Ministry of Education and Training; two private secondary school principals; two public high school principals, and two heads of department from the said schools. Six teachers were selected for a focus group and all participants were involved in collage-making. There were four focus groups that were conducted since in each school there was one session of the focus group. Thus, the total population was 40 participants.

1.7.7 Data analysis

I used the thematic data analysis strategy to analyse the data. This was done by examining data to identify common topics, themes, and patterns of meaning (Caufield, 2019). Verbatim transcription was done to change spoken words into the written word. The interviews were audio-recorded since

Mc Mullin (2021) argues that interviews may be audio-recorded to ensure the information obtained is authentic and well preserved.

The next step was coding which entails highlighting phrases and sentences and labelling them. Notes were written on the hard copy of the transcription, enabling me to get an understanding of the experiences of the participants (Connors, 2018). Then the next step was theming and, finally, a synthesis of the results to distil the contributions of the participants.

1.8 Value of the proposed research

It is believed that the study will be valuable in the following manner:

- It will help education inspectors to reflect on their collaborative leadership practices and evaluate which areas need improvement, thus coming up with better strategies.
- It will be a fundamental reference for policy makers in designing policies that will better suit the needs of the teachers for whom such teacher professional activities are provided.
- It will help teachers to stay abreast of new professional development activities, thus moving away from the outmoded, stereotyped teaching strategies to new innovations.
- It will bring an awareness of the need for networking intensively amongst educational leaders to foster communication at national and international levels.
- It will contribute to the body of knowledge for future researchers to access how to collaboratively improve teachers' performance.

1.9 Ethical considerations

After informing the participants orally and in writing about the intent and scope of the study, direct written consent was obtained from them. Clarity was given to them on their right to get access to their data and to ask for more information. They were given a chance to think about their participation and to ask questions where necessary.

In order to ensure confidentiality, the data collected was used with the utmost care. The participants were notified of the right to rescind from the study at any stage. The questions that were used to generate data from the participants were not offensive or discriminatory and the use of

unacceptable language was avoided. According to Richards and Schwartz (2002) qualitative data has a lot of clues to participants' identities; thus, it is imperative that their anonymity in published work be protected, hence the use of pseudonyms.

1.10 Measures of trustworthiness

Certain measures were taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the study. These are presented below.

Credibility

Data triangulation was used, which is the use of various data sources. The data which came from different people from different places and interviewed at different times, ensured deeper understanding of the issues related to professional development and the innovative perspectives around it (Devault, 2019).

Transferability

This refers to generating the study findings and applying them to other situations (Devault, 2019). The study is likely to be applicable to other contexts, for instance, in other similar populations, situations or phenomena.

Confirmability

This shows the degree to which the findings are neutral (Kasirye, 2021). To avoid any potential bias, the use of in-person interviews, with the aid of an audio recorder, followed by a transcription of the whole conversation, ensured that the results show a true reflection of the participants' co-input.

Dependability

It shows the degree to which the results of the same study could be repeated by other researchers whose findings would still be consistent (Nguyen et al., 2021). The research process and data analysis were reviewed and examined through the inquiry audit to ensure consistency.

1.11 Summary of the chapter

This chapter presented the background of this study and the theoretical framework that underpins it namely, Collaborative Leadership Theory: David D. Chrislip and Carl E. Larson, 1994 and Ralph Fessler's eight-stage teacher career cycle model, 1995. It further explored the following areas: research problem, research questions, aims and objectives of the study, research design and methodology, research paradigm, research approach, research design, data generation, selection of participants, data analysis, the value of research, ethical considerations, trustworthiness, synopsis of chapters and their layout.

1.12 Chapters Format

The study has adopted the following chapter format:

Chapter 1: Introduction / Background to the Study

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Chapter 4: Research Methodology

Chapter 5: Data presentation and Analysis

Chapter 6: Interpretation and Discussion of Results

Chapter 7: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

Dhanya, 2024 states that researchers review literature with the purpose of basing their research in the context of existing scholarly views, indicating their understanding of the topic and displaying their work's contribution to the ongoing conversation in the field. This study explored the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development. There are seven sections in this chapter. The first section discusses the conceptual framework which provides some understanding of the key concepts which will serve as the foundation for further discussions in the other sections of this chapter. The key concepts are collaborative leadership and teacher professional development. Thereafter, the second section is the review of international literature which is followed by the review of national literature in order to provide an insight into how TPD is handled in different places. The third section covers the nature of TPD in schools in order to give a picture of TPD provided in different schools. The fourth section covers the role of the district-based education inspectors in supporting TPD. This is done from the legal perspective which explores the functions of the district-based education inspectors. Section five discusses the benefits of professional development. The sixth delves into the challenges that the district-based education inspectors encounter in supporting TPD. Lastly, section seven will focus on the strategies to be used to support teacher professional development.

2.2 Conceptual framework

It is vital to note that the exploration of the concepts that are key to this study is essential in order to provide the highlights of definitions that in turn will aid in the comprehension as well as the internalization of such concepts. Each concept in this part of the thesis is uniquely valuable in that there is no concept that is more superior to the other in the overall framework. Rather, the purpose is to synthesise evidence, assist in understanding the concepts with different characteristics, objectives and purpose in informing future research. They also function as a reference and working guide in practical settings in issues related to education. To be specific, this study deals with two concepts: teacher professional development and collaborative leadership. Therefore, the

fundamental and operational definitions of these concepts will be explored in an encompassing yet limited conceptual framework to enable a more focused discussion of related issues.

2.2.1 Conceptualising teacher professional development

In an ideal world, literature shows that teaching differs from other professions in that it is conceptually a noble profession. For instance, (Sovan Kumar Singha, 2022) states that of all the groups engaged in human development activities, teachers are the largest. And as such, it is one of the most stressful professions hence the need to consider teachers' well-being because it can either hinder or enhance their teaching practice (Thien & Lee 2023).

Understanding professional development in the realm of education proves to be a nuanced endeavour, with its multidimensional nature evolving alongside the career trajectories of educators (Sancar et al., 2021). While consensus on its precise definition remains elusive, scholars converge on the notion of professional development as a broad spectrum encompassing specialised training, formal education, and advanced learning endeavours tailored to enrich teachers' knowledge, competencies, and overall effectiveness (Garces & Granada, 2016).

Central to grasping the essence of teacher professional development is the recognition of its focus on refining the professional acumen, skills, and attitudes of individual educators, thereby catalyzing enhanced student learning outcomes. This recognition underscores the intricate interplay between the growth of educators and the dynamic educational contexts they navigate, constituting a symbiotic relationship fostering continuous and tangible evolution (Taylor, 2023). Furthermore, Richards and Schmitt (2003, p.542) underscore professional development as a process marked by ongoing refinement and growth: "...the professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and knowledge and examining his or her teaching systematically."

Besides, professional development is accepted as the main mechanism that schools can make use of to aid teachers concurrently learn and advance their skills over time (Bernadine, 2019). Similarly, Kurz and Amaral (2023) view the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) of teachers as an activity which not only constitutes a new market of experienced educators, but also

a policy instrument to disseminate ideas and beliefs. Attesting to this view is Avidov-Ungar (2023) who sees it as a way of improving teachers' competence. Continuing Professional Development is a requirement for teacher educators. Every teacher is in need of it from the time they join the teaching profession and throughout their profession.

This shows that scholarly views see teacher professional development as a continuous training of teachers and as a method to keep them abreast of current trends in their subject areas by equipping them with requisite skills, educational laws change, and research on best practices change. So, professional development helps teachers keep up with the many changes in education (Bouchillon, 2021). Moreover, this structured learning approach leads to modifications in teaching methodologies and enhancements in student learning achievements (Benedict et al., 2023; Harmond et al., 2017).

Primarily, these perspectives underscore the notion that professional development constitutes an ongoing process aimed at reshaping educators and equipping them with the necessary tools to enhance both their own capabilities and those of their students. Lucas (2020) further asserts that effective professional development is continuous, exploratory, collaborative, and intertwined with the practical experiences gained from working directly with students and understanding their cultural backgrounds. This implies that the pursuit of teacher professional development is not bound by a finite timeframe but remains open-ended throughout an educator's career.

Despite variations in conceptualisation and methodological approaches across prior studies, there is a consensus that the overarching goal of teacher professional development is to enhance student performance. Additionally, in the broader context of professional growth within the teaching profession, educators' professionalism entails personal transformation stemming from introspection, reflective practices, and a reevaluation of their own identities (Singha & Sikdar, 2018).

2.2.2 Conceptualising collaborative leadership

There is growing agreement that places leadership as a necessity in all organisations. That is why it is argued that it characterises a mixture of personalities and behaviours that a leader has, which

enable the followers' contribution, development, and commitment to achieve a common goal (Davari et al., 2023). That is not solely concerned with what leaders do but crucially with the context within which leadership is embedded and its purpose, (Adhikari et al., 2023). Preceding studies found that school leaders are a vital source of advice and information concerning teaching (Bryant et al., 2020; Ortega et al., 2020; Schuster et al., 2021; Bryant et al., 2020). Sivanathan (2021) posits that there is not only one leadership style that is accepted in the world but that a leadership style influences the employees' success or failure. That is why leadership is a powerful tool to achieve goals at different stakeholders' perspectives.

In the context of this research, stakeholders encompass all individuals and organizations involved in the functioning of schools, including district-based education inspectors, school principals, department heads, and teachers. This perspective finds support in literature, which suggests that collaborative leadership entails empowering all stakeholders within the school (Arthur & Souza, 2023). Scholarly endeavours and professional insights often outline key leadership competencies that should guide all stakeholders, as reflected in many definitions of collaborative leadership. While Griffiths et al., (2021) contend that the current literature lacks a comprehensive examination of what constitutes "true collaboration" and offers scarce guidance on fostering such collaborative relationships, this standpoint is challenged by other scholars who provide nuanced definitions of collaborative leadership from various perspectives.

Collaborative leadership is defined as an approach that ditches the hierarchical organisation model and aims to bring managers and employees to work together in achieving common goals (Iveljić, 2022). It is vital to note that those common goals should be those that are understood by everyone in a school so much that whatever has to be done will, in turn, benefit every stakeholder in the system. Wullschleger et al. (2023) define collaboration as the social interactions among two or more participants within a school's social network, united by the common objective of exploring fresh ideas for enhancing school improvement. However, numerous factors may impede this process, potentially leading even meticulously designed teacher professional development initiatives to fall short in achieving the anticipated outcomes. To substantiate this claim, Montesinos et al. (2023) argue that teacher professional development is shaped by both individual and social factors, which in turn may impact student development. That is why it is very important

for the inspectors to collaborate with all the stakeholders in supporting teacher professional development in schools.

Njenga and Maina (2018) postulate that recently, collaborative leadership is acknowledged as an essential element of obtaining anticipated performance in work environments hence, a lackluster collaborative leadership technique negatively affects morale and increases clashes as employees, instead of collaborating, engage in competition in work performance. An organisation comprises of subgroups which are interdependent, share common goals and with coordinated activities geared towards accomplishing a common goal. This shows that teams are crucial with regard to collaborative leadership. So, the capability of a team to work together is crucial to their effectiveness. In this context, the team comprises stakeholders in education in supporting teacher professional development.

In summary, it is imperative to emphasise that collaborative leadership involves team members working together to make decisions that will ultimately lead to successful completion of tasks. Equal distribution of roles and responsibilities among team members also fosters a sense of trust amongst them (Mohamed et al., 2022).

2.3 Collaborative leadership and teacher professional development

Any ongoing interpersonal engagement that aims to accomplish shared objectives without exhibiting a significant power imbalance is considered collaborative leadership (Stephanie et al., 2014). As a result, cooperation is required to ensure that the educational system functions smoothly in terms of teacher professional development. Research shows that 58% of workers in the post-pandemic era work in hybrid arrangements, indicating that hybrid employment has become the norm (Samur and Akman, 2023). It could therefore be concluded that teamwork is essential to mixed work environments. Teams may improve their services and their ability to work together by working together (Suleiman et al., 2023). This means that contacts between the parties involved in teacher professional development would be necessary wherever possible.

Moreover, consensus is reached, to some extent, in the emerging literature that the effect of teacher professional development is more pronounced when it is continued, collaborative and relies on external expertise (Sims & Fletcher-Wood, 2021; Sancar et al., 2021). The question would be who

arranges such external expertise, for whom, and when. The answer may probably be that the stakeholders in collaboration with the inspectors would arrange such. The collaboration that is needed would then make it easier to arrange the rest of the necessary activities. The purpose of the whole activity would be to help support teacher professional development.

Having people of different abilities and outlooks makes decision making processes meaningful leading to fruitful results. To illustrate this, the results of a study by Prenger et al. (2021) show that the right leadership, the perception of a shared goal, collaboration and facilitation and support appear to influence outcome. This, in turn, is likely to have a positive effect on the learners' scholastic performance. Admiraal et al. (2021) found that professional study opportunities and joint work and learning were the ones that were oftentimes mentioned in their study to indicate their effect in teaching and learning. It is therefore appropriate to conclude that for improved teacher professional development; collaborative leadership is key.

As discussed in the literature, collaborative leadership is a widely discussed practice. For instance, a recent literature review found that teacher collaboration benefits students, teachers, and the school (Lerang et al., 2021). While collaboration may manifest differently depending on the context, there is consensus regarding its benefits. Collaboration fosters more effective communication, cultivates stronger and enduring relationships, alleviates pressure among stakeholders, and facilitates the achievement of goals that might otherwise remain unrealised. It is important to note that personality also plays a significant role as some leaders may prefer a collaborative approach while others thrive in a more authoritative role (Arthur & Souza, 2023).

To further substantiate this, more literature indicates that collaborative leadership is not solely essential in the education sector, but in other sectors as well. For instance, a study that explored professional development support for the minority black nurses and midwives' professional development highlights that the project has provided a fresh perspective on the experiences of the Black and Minority Ethnic workforce. The findings indicate the importance of a diverse workforce and an inclusive organizational culture in fostering effective teamwork, ultimately benefiting overall workforce management (Adhikari et al., 2023).

According to Watenpaugh (2021), a collaborative leader nurtures an environment where team members treat each other with respect, especially when they disagree, sets the stage and tone for

the dialogue, encourages everyone to bring forth ideas, and supports the team and welcomes every idea and point of view even when they disagree. However, the more one communicates, the more they will improve the team's capacity to come up with fresh concepts and find solutions to issues.

It is worth noting that leaders' focal point should be on the collaborative process that defines common values within their community (Urick et al., 2021). This shows that this whole process cannot be a one-man initiative, instead, it involves people who should have the common understanding of issues that lead to some improvements that will in turn be beneficial to the whole organization and, in this case, a school. Furthermore, successful student learning — the desired "end product" of the school development process — depends on cooperation on leadership practices (Wullschleger et al., 2023). According to this perspective, collaboration is crucial for school improvement because it can help develop organizational, personal, and professional capacity (such as a professional culture in schools or the professional development of teachers). This, in turn, should improve instructional quality and, eventually, improve student performance (García-Martínez et al., 2021; Nguyen & Ng, 2020).

2.4 International perspectives on teacher professional development

International research evidence postulates that teacher professional development is a way of equipping teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge for tackling instructional challenges (Avidov-Ungar, 2023). Teacher professional development is organised differently in various countries globally. For example, there are very few minimum requirements in some countries, like Germany, for teachers to participate in professional development activities, and research indicates that German teachers frequently perceive the professional development programmes they have participated in as being of low quality and ineffective (Holstein, 2021). This may not be the case in other countries. On the contrary, the Australian Professional Standards for Teachers (APST), a public declaration of what defines teacher excellence, is one example of a teaching professional standard that is widely regarded as an essential tool for teacher preparation, recruitment, development, and promotion (Teng & Alonzo, 2023). This demonstrates the importance that other nations place on teacher professional development. Conversely, Blandford (2000) highlights that the successful administration of professional growth relies on personal zeal rather than coercion and people who are prepared to take initiative in attending to their own professional requirements.

In Australia, regulations outlining the primary responsibilities of teachers have been designed to help educators and define good teaching. One of these regulations is the professional teaching standards, which are based on the firm philosophical conviction that they will ensure educators meet the needs of providing high-quality and productive instruction. Most educational institutions' first-year teacher education programmes are designed to help teachers meet graduate-level standards, and work-related professional development (PD) programmes aim to help teachers enhance the knowledge and abilities outlined in the standards (Teng & Alonzo, 2023).

Additionally, the compatibility of teacher career development in European nations with the teacher competency framework has been reviewed, and it has been reported that in certain countries, career aid is provided to teachers in the form of information, coaching, and counselling. Furthermore, chances for educators to pursue professional growth and advancement to more advanced career stages have been closely examined (Sadovets, 2021). This suggests that not all nations have neglected supporting the professional development of teachers.

Participating in a "hands-on" workshop activity does not constitute an active professional role for teachers (Huang et al., 2019). Perhaps these scholars prefer an array of activities for them to form part of the professional training, but workshops also offer training. However, Shambaugh (2023) contends that professional development that uses instructional design to analyse crucial teaching decisions can help with the design of courses for online distribution. While there are differing opinions on how professional development for teachers is provided, one common belief is that it revolves on the instructor's learning, their development as a teacher, and the transformation of knowledge into something that students can use to improve their performance. Comparatively speaking, in relation to their Western counterparts, developing nations in Southeast Asia, including Malaysia, give less consideration to how school culture affects teachers' well-being (Thien & Lee, 2023). This influences how educators react to issues pertaining to their exposure to professional growth.

Similar findings to Germany's are found in other national and international studies. West and Bautista (2022) share the belief that educational researchers, policymakers, and administrators concur that providing in-service teachers with high-quality professional development opportunities is essential to educational success, in line with the opinions of the scholars mentioned

above and their presumptions regarding teacher professional development. In an effort to support this even further, efforts are being undertaken to guarantee that educators have access to professional development. Researchers in Los Angeles conducted a study with the goal of determining how to organise visual art teachers outside of districts and schools to pursue their own suitable, high-quality collaborative professional development that could take costs, time, and distance into account (Taylor, 2023).

This view implies that teachers do not need low-quality training and exposure to some methods that are to benefit them in their teaching. That would not in any way ensure the favourable input that would in turn enhance learners' performance. These opinions tend to stress that instructors should receive sufficient professional development to improve students' learning. Considering the aforementioned points of view, the Turkish Ministry of Education developed the Egitim Bilisim Agi (EBA) collaborative platform for online distance learning in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. Teachers at Turkey's elementary, middle, and high schools all utilized the platform and connected with one other. This demonstrates how important professional development for educators is to raising student achievement (Shambaugh, 2023).

Despite constantly being cognizant of local perspectives in education systems that instructors are exposed to, they also must deal with global challenges (Portillo & Lopez de la Serna, 2020). Scholars even go further in showing that even in times of challenges, different countries still strive to find ways of relieving the teachers off some challenges in education by ensuring that they improve teacher professional development although in some cases that comes with a number of challenges.

In their study that examines the extent to which cross district collaboration assists teachers, Clothier et al. (2022) generated findings that revealed that the value gained from sharing of ideas amongst teachers became an unanticipated but welcome outcome, and a major help to schools. This was not only about certain projects, but also from the collaboration of general educational practices. This sheds some light that shows teacher professional development can continue to bring about positive outcomes in schools.

The demotivating consequences of COVID-19 on teachers' motivation to engage in professional development are discussed by West et al. (2022). They also highlight the shortcomings of the

current frameworks used to justify professional development's efficacy, particularly in the context of the US. Kennedy (2022) also describes how Scottish teachers in the UK have experienced personal and professional changes as a result of COVID-19. She voiced worry about the concerning problems with fairness and access to professional development that have emerged in Scotland as a result of the pandemic. She considers how legislators and school administrators have either maintained or disturbed specific pre-pandemic professional development discourses and explains how current events have either benefited or hindered teachers, particularly in school settings.

On the same issue, the United Arab Emirates, which is currently recognised as the Middle East's centre of excellence in education and educational research, has recently presented ambitious national reforms. These reforms place strong emphasis on ensuring and optimizing the professional development of teachers in both government and private schools. Teachers are to create their own individual roadmaps with the ultimate goal of collectively redefining the evolving educational landscape (Bacsal et al., 2022). Scholarly publications also indicate that a new phase of modernising teacher education in Ukraine began, with the aim to address systemic issues (such as old didactics, low social status and pay for teachers, lack of professional development incentive) and shift education towards the values of social equality and cohesion, economic development, and competition (Shyyan & Shyyan, 2023).

According to Vaillant et al., (2022), Uruguay's Ceibal Plan provided the technology foundation for online education, enabling instructors to swiftly adapt to the COVID-19 problems. But this sudden shift was the result of a major redesign of institutional support and professional development for teachers, which brought with it a number of difficulties. Also, research indicates that offering professional development in digital technologies to educators is crucial in order to equip them for situations with a higher degree of unpredictability (Celik, 2023). By presenting the greatest Global Perspectives on Teacher Professional Development at the COVID 19 Pandemic, Bacsal et al. (2022) give a thorough overview of the teacher professional development system in the United Arab Emirates. They further show that teacher professional development is considered a requirement and a necessity in ensuring that teachers are exposed to situations where they are equipped with the skills that would be beneficial to them as well as to the learners during challenging times when the world was going through the worst of all

experiences. Similar to this, West and Bautista (2022) reported paradigm shifts in teacher professional development practices in the United Arab Emirates in response to the COVID-19 pandemic in a study that examined the practices and challenges in four specific areas (early childhood, special education, educational leadership, health, and physical education). According to a study by Bautista et al. (2022), attempts were made in Hong Kong to create a high-quality professional development infrastructure within a hierarchical educational system, where teacher agency and autonomy were subordinated to the amount of service and subject coverage. The scholars contend that a further study is necessary to determine the precise effects of professional development on instructors and students. Similar to this, the New South Wales Department of Education introduced school-university partnership programmes, or "Hub partnerships," in order to foster a more cooperative partnership approach to professional experience (Winslade et al., 2023). These global viewpoints provide evidence to support the idea that different nations place such a high priority on teacher professional development that they would do all in their power to make sure teachers have access to it.

In Indonesia, the findings from a study on individual teachers' perspectives on TPD, after more than 20 years of experience, revealed that two participants said they had both come to the conclusion that in order to learn new skills and advance their expertise, teachers must continue to pursue professional development opportunities throughout their careers. By participating in workshops, reading widely, and connecting with the English community, one can gain benefits from subject-focused learning connected to teaching English as a second language as well as the advantages of technology. This demonstrates how much instructors may benefit from TPD exposure, particularly when stakeholders work together. Knowledge of the topic, comprehension of pedagogy, and teaching methods are all part of a teacher's professional development, according to an Indian study (Singha et al., 2018). The study further shows that there are several ways in which teachers' views towards professional development differ; in terms of their personalities and the schools in which they work. Thus, in order to implement a new reform for instructors' professional development (TPD) programme in Indonesia, a further study on the programme for EFL (English taught as a foreign language) instructors based on teachers' beliefs and needs would be necessary (Fitri et al., 2021). This would help improve teacher professional development.

2.5 Local perspectives on teacher professional development

According to Lesotho Education Sector Plan 2016-2026, the professional development of teachers is also aided by teacher formations, proprietors, non-governmental organisations, the Institute of Development Management, and subject associations. These organisations arrange In-service Training (INSET) in the form of workshops and quick courses. If all goes according to plan, Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs) ought to be able to provide instructors with In-service training and Continuing Professional Development. Their teacher preparation programme ought to go beyond pre-service and include post-production training for the teachers they generate. However, existing literature shows that adequate teacher professional development is lacking in Lesotho (Makafane, 2022). Setungoane (2010) had earlier raised a similar concern stating that there is an issue with teachers' and schools' overall lack of awareness of professional development in Lesotho. Lesotho teachers need to participate more in teacher professional development programmes according to the case study's conclusions, which examined school leadership and teacher professional development in the country. According to Njenga and Maina (2018), teachers' knowledge of TPD at the time was restricted to workshops or, at most, induction sessions offered to new employees. The findings imply that Lesotho schools need to be more cognizant of the importance of collaborative leadership in teacher professional development.

It is worth noting that teachers in Lesotho have always had problems that prevented them from performing to the best of their abilities. The Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) is perceived to have failed to provide help in areas where the instructors lacked any understanding at all, which led to these issues. For example, Mofolo (2017) reports that among the reasons provided in a research on professional development intervention in the teaching of English, teachers cite being overworked and not having time for certain activities. Additionally, the instructors said although they were obliged to adopt inclusive education, their opinions were not taken into account (Shelile & Dipane, 2014). These previously mentioned issues suggest there has not been enough professional development for teachers.

The Ministry of Education and Training also faces a number of serious issues, which are highlighted in the Lesotho Education Sector Plan 2016–2026. One of them is the shortage of teachers which is not planned in accordance with national goals or managed to meet national needs.

This explains the high rate of unemployed skilled instructors, the lack of a Continuous Professional Development (CPD) Policy that results in disorganised training, and the inadequate training that teachers get in new inclusive techniques to meet the needs of all students. Instructors are not provided with sufficient ICT-based pedagogy, professional standards, or funding for CPD or INSET. These factors may have adverse effects on instructors' career advancement. These are some of the obstacles that might potentially impact the collaborative leadership techniques district-based education inspectors attempt to employ in order to assist TPD.

Lekhetho (2021) asserts that high failure rates on the school-leaving tests support the idea that Lesotho's educational system is essentially worthless. This predicament is linked to inadequate primary education due to low-quality teachers, incompetent school administrators, and a lack of funding, all of which have an impact on secondary education. This indicates that the recent years are characterised by such inadequacies that emanate from the lower level of the education system. All these problems stem from lack of exposure to teacher professional development which would give teachers the necessary skills to improve their teaching capabilities (Lekhetho, 2021).

The results of recent studies show that there is still a deficiency in teacher professional development in schools. Tafai (2021) suggests that the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) provide teachers with more frequent training sessions and that after teachers receive training, there should be follow-up activities and teacher monitoring in the schools. This advice appears to be a result of the observation that educators were facing difficulties in executing their duties efficiently. Additionally, this emphasises the necessity of ongoing professional development programmes that include guidance, supervision, and instruction to help instructors integrate new information into their regular classes rather than putting the onus on them when they return to the classroom (Tafai & Tsakeni, 2022).

Additionally, research indicates that the type of school has an impact on teachers' experiences with professional development. For example, time constraints were listed as the primary challenge in a study evaluating teachers' responses to differentiation practices in private and public high school classrooms in Lesotho. In contrast, government school teachers reported a lower frequency of differentiation and named resource scarcity and the student-teacher ratio as challenges among other things (Leballo et al., 2021).

However, Makafane (2022), in a study on novice teachers, highlighted some of the challenges they experience as a result of the limited or rather inadequate provision of support for them. These challenges are blamed on both the Ministry of Education and Training the schools. The study came to the conclusion that the lack of mentorship and induction programmes had an impact on the professional growth of new teachers. According to Makafane (2022), the MOET provided rules and regulations to new instructors. There were no organised or methodical induction procedures in Lesotho schools, and the MOET remained mute about the mentorship and induction procedures for these instructors.

According to Makafane's (2022) results, Heads of Department served as mentors to new teachers, offering guidance on designing lessons, presenting lessons, and observing a mentor. Thus, at the school level, there were a few attempts made to furnish the novice teachers with the necessary skills in teaching and learning, but most of the teacher professional development activities were still left out since there is a wide range of activities that teachers should be exposed to. This indicates that adequate support is still lacking to date.

Mphunyane (2021), in his study about teacher identities and classroom practices, recommends that the design and execution of pre-service teacher training and professional development programmes should be guided by research on teacher professional identities, because teacher identities influence meaningful classroom experiences. While emphasising the benefits of teacher professional development, Mohale (2022) specified that sharing knowledge is a valuable learning activity among teachers that leads to individual and joint development which contributes to students' learning outcomes and school effectiveness.

2.6 Teacher professional development activities

In the policy document regarding teacher quality by the Association for Teacher Education in Europe, teaching is depicted as a profession involving reflective thinking, continuous professional development, autonomy, accountability, creativity, research, and personal judgment (ATEE, 2006). This indicates that activities aimed at enhancing the aforementioned skills are imperative for teachers to improve their job satisfaction and students' learning outcomes. Supporting this perspective is Sovan Kumar Singha (2022) who argues that alongside professional growth towards a more rational understanding of teaching, teachers' professionalism encompasses personal

transformation resulting from self-examination, reflection, and exploration of self-identity. A recent survey conducted by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2019) projected that 94% of teachers in OECD member states participate in professional development activities regularly.

Teachers must also reinforce their knowledge base and identify suitable support to fulfill their educational responsibilities and meet the demands of their profession. Teacher professional development is essential as a delay in educational training means many students are deprived of the knowledge or skills required to lead effectively in a global context since their teachers would not have imparted such knowledge to them (Hill et al. 2023). Teacher learning has always been perceived as an active and productive process that is problem-oriented, grounded in social settings and circumstances, and occurs continuously throughout teachers' lives (European Commission, 2010). Zarrow (2020) observes that professional development ranges from one-shot workshops to more intensive, job-embedded professional development that enables teachers to learn in their everyday work environment rather than attending external training sessions.

Literature indicates that the professional training of a teacher includes knowledge of the subject, understanding of pedagogy, and teaching techniques (Singha & Sikdar, 2018). Other professional development activities typically involve formal processes such as conferences, seminars, workshops, collaborative learning among team members, or courses at colleges or universities. Similarly, TALIS 2009 suggests that professional development activities also include participation in education conferences or seminars, qualification programmes, observation visits to other schools, involvement in teacher networks, individual or collaborative research, and mentoring or peer observation and coaching as part of a formal school procedure.

Professional development may also occur informally through discussions among colleagues, independent reading and research, observations of colleagues' work, or learning from coaching (peer or expert coaching) (Mizell, 2010; Kampen, 2019; TALIS 2009). Professional development activities may take place in schools at various times, such as before or after classes, during scheduled professional development times, or during school holidays.

Additionally, Bernadine (2019) suggests that continued professional development includes demonstrations, school clustering, team and group mentoring, teacher networks, designing and

executing school development projects, job rotation, induction programmes for novice teachers, reflective supervision, and technical assistance. Action research is considered one form of professional development activity as it allows teachers to explore their own contexts and involves planned action to improve conditions for teaching and learning (Villegas-Reiners, 2003).

Richards and Farrell (2005) view workshops as short-term, one-time learning opportunities that help teachers acquire specific knowledge or skills. Workshops have the advantage of being held regularly throughout the school year (Schneider & Blumenfeld, 2005; Sparks, 2004). However, professional development activities vary from country to country depending on factors such as economic conditions, school locations, and the type of leadership in the education sector, thus making it a systematic and planned process.

In Brunei's Kampung, the Director General of the Ministry of Education and Culture National Education mentions several alternative professional development programmes for teachers, including qualification enhancement programmes, equalization and certification programmes, competency-based integrated training programmes, education supervision programmes, empowerment programmes, teacher symposiums, traditional programmes, reading and writing journals or scientific works, participating in scientific meetings, conducting research (Pare, 2019).

Teachers do not actively engage in professional roles simply by participating in "hands-on" activities during workshops (Singha & Sikdar, 2018). However, they are involved in exploring their teaching through reflective teaching in a collaborative process with learners and colleagues. Learning from examining one's teaching, conducting research, creating teaching portfolios, interacting with colleagues through critical friendships, mentoring, and participating in teacher networks are all considered forms of professional development through which teachers can acquire new skills and knowledge. This is supported by Dönmez et al. (2021) who state that mentoring is of great importance as it ensures continuity and focuses on school needs regarding specific subjects, thereby contributing significantly to teachers' professional learning. Conferences, workshops, lesson studies, coaching, peer observation, and professional learning communities are experiences that constitute the diverse landscape of professional development activities in which teachers worldwide regularly engage (West & Bautista, 2022).

Participation in workshops among teachers is most common in Austria (92%), Estonia (93%), Lithuania (96%), and Mexico (94%), but much less common in Italy (66%), Turkey (62%), and particularly the Slovak Republic (50%). This shows that there are countries where TPD through workshops is given more priority while in other countries, it is less priority. Ambitious national reforms have been introduced in recent decades, with a strong emphasis on ensuring and maximizing teachers' professional development in both government and private schools (West & Bautista, 2022). The forum where teachers share skills is considered important to provide opportunities for teachers to communicate, share ideas and experiences, and deliberate among themselves and with teachers in more developed regions, as well as with experts (Ikhsanudin, 2021).

In conclusion, it should be emphasised that after experiencing everyday stress related to teaching, classroom management issues, workload issues, health and safety issues, teachers must also navigate the realm of secondary traumatic stress. For educators working in communities with significant social issues such as crime, drugs, homelessness, and poverty, continuous professional development focused on trauma-informed self-care is essential. Educators need training on how to deal with trauma and manage their emotions so that they are not overwhelmed by traumatic or stressful situations (Roberts & Murray, 2023).

2.7 The nature of teacher professional development in schools

Teacher professional development refers to those processes and activities intended to improve the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers at an individual level so that they might in turn, enhance the learning of students (Ngole & Mkhulu, 2021). The chief executive secretary of the Progressive Association of Lesotho Teachers (Sematlane, 2010) argues that the welfare of teachers in Lesotho is taken for granted and that the teachers do not get study, welfare leave when they want to further their studies. They are forced to resign yet the Ministry of Education and Training expects the teachers to improve professionally. This actually shows that the challenge of teachers' lack of exposure to teacher professional development has been a long-standing one.

Professional development is regarded as the key mechanism that schools can use to help teachers continuously learn and develop their skills over time (Bernadine, 2019). Similarly, continued training and education of an individual keeps them updated on current trends and enables them to develop new skills for the purpose of advancement in the field. Notably, many teachers in the low- and middle-income countries lack skills to teach effectively, and professional development programmes are the principal tools that governments use to upgrade those skills (Popova et al., 2022). All these views emphasise the fact that professional development is an ongoing process whose function is to transform teachers in order to provide them with the tools intended to improve them as well as their learners (Jacobs, 2023). Research substantiates this with the argument that female teachers, teachers with more experience of professional development and more efficacious teachers tend to have higher levels of job satisfaction (Toropova et al., 2021). This is a result of their exposure to teacher professional development.

Overall, the nature of teacher professional development globally is such that countries are very much aware of the needs of teachers in ensuring improved teaching and learning as well as their job satisfaction. The only challenge could be the differences in terms of the level of economic development amongst countries since the developed countries seem very much able to cater for the needs of their teachers. On the other hand, less developed countries are still left behind in the provision of teacher professional development. But indeed, the presence of knowledgeable teachers is vital for schools to fulfill their goals and to provide quality education. As a result, it is important to guarantee the professional development of teachers in the workplace and to guide them (Özalp et al., 2016).

The rapid development of online education, for example, the new mode of providing internet on educational resources, breaks through the time and space limitations of the traditional education industry, and mitigates the unequal distribution of educational resources caused by regional differences and other factors to a certain extent (Zhang, 2023). This, therefore, points to the fact that new developments in technology have a positive influence on teacher professional development.

2.8 Exploring the virtues of teacher professional development

In today's fast-paced world, the juxtaposition of individualistic perspectives and collective well-being looms large amidst the evergrowing web of connections and the multitude of social and environmental challenges transcending local and national boundaries. However, the significance of teacher professional development manifests in myriad ways.

2.8.1 Enhancing Instructional Practices

Delving into how professional development influences educators' knowledge and practices proves pivotal in establishing a robust research foundation aimed at enhancing teaching methodologies (Benedict et al., 2023). The essence of CPD for teacher educators lies in its ability to refine their professional and instructional practices (Tyagi & Misra, 2021). Instructional practices span beyond classroom teachings to ancillary realms that significantly impact teaching and learning. Given the intricate nature of the teaching profession, standards emphasising non-cognitive skills serve as guiding frameworks, aiding educators in cultivating attributes that positively influence both themselves and their teaching endeavours, thereby yielding augmented student outcomes (Teng & Alonzo, 2023). A wealth of literature corroborates the fact that elevated levels of professional competence are posited to culminate in effective teaching practices, thereby fostering enhanced student learning (Chistoforidou & Kyriakides, 2021).

2.8.2 Nurturing social and Intellectual bonds

Professional development serves as a catalyst for strengthening social bonds, particularly amidst the prevailing uncertainties stemming from global phenomena like the COVID-19 pandemic and other crises. In these tumultuous times, individuals increasingly seek experiences fostering connections beyond themselves (Huntereece, 2021). Hence, professional development fosters meaningful intellectual, social, and emotional engagements with ideas, materials, and colleagues, both within and outside the educational spectrum (Singha & Sikdar, 2018; Huang et al., 2019).

Teachers represent the largest professional cohort engaged in human development activities, directly or indirectly intersecting with other professions (Sovan Kumar Singha, 2022).

2.8.3 Embracing technological advancement

Given the rapid integration of technology into our daily lives, training of practitioners assumes paramount importance. Technological advancements significantly influence the learning paradigms of students and teaching methodologies of educators, necessitating modern teachers to possess not only fundamental skills but also proficiency in emerging skill sets (Cox, 2023). Therefore, to enhance the efficacy of educators' endeavours, comprehensive professional training is imperative. Induction training coupled with continuous education equips teachers with the requisite knowledge and skills to discharge their professional duties proficiently (Singha & Sikdar, 2018). Furthermore, through active engagement in professional development initiatives, educators garner exceptional opportunities to emerge as leaders within their educational institutions, championing student achievement and bolstering school practices and policies, particularly in the realm of education (Torres & Statti, 2023).

Additionally, e-learning platforms offer optimal avenues for cultivating a collaborative learning community, facilitating the exchange of ideas and experiences among educators (MOOC, 2023). This dynamic interaction fosters the transition from traditional pedagogical approaches to innovative practices, fostering creativity, interaction, development, and skill acquisition among teachers.

In essence, a tightly-knit community of educators provides invaluable support to its members through peer interactions, collaborative efforts, constructive feedback, and mutual assessments, thus bolstering teachers' self-confidence and motivation as integral parts of a cohesive network (Portillo & Lopez de la Serna, 2021). Moving forward, the focus should shift towards the Ministry of Education and Training empowering inspectors to transcend mere recognition of skills and instead recalibrate research and policy endeavours to embrace 21st-century skills, evaluate their implementation in classrooms, and cultivate expertise in pedagogical methodologies supporting their integration (Kennedy & Sundberg, 2020).

2.8.4 Effective teaching and learning

Teacher professional development significantly contributes to improving school quality and student performance. Research conducted in a Vietnamese province examined the workplace conditions established by principals to promote teacher professional growth across four schools, revealing that favourable environments notably enhance teachers' pedagogical knowledge and practice (Tran et al., 2022). This underscores the pivotal role of creating conducive environments as the initial step towards fostering teacher professional development, enabling educators to positively engage in activities aimed at yielding desired outcomes.

Furthermore, active engagement with shared materials serves to sharpen teachers' cognitive faculties and provides opportunities for accessing content beneficial to their professional growth. Despite potential hindrances to teachers' full involvement in the process, maintaining an open mindset towards exploration enables educators to derive maximum benefits.

There are numerous avenues through which teacher professional development can be facilitated. For instance, online platforms offer teachers expedited access to resources on questioning techniques, assessment methods, and classroom management (Scarborough, 2022). Moreover, some professional development programmes enable teachers to stay abreast of the latest research findings on innovative practices and teaching tools tailored to meet students' needs (Holstein et al., 2021). But departing from outdated teaching methodologies that fail to address present challenges remains paramount. However, it is essential to acknowledge that not all professional development initiatives are equally effective. Consequently, district-based educational inspectors should evaluate the suitability of such programmes for their teachers, who should also have the autonomy to select programmes aligned with their specific needs.

Teacher professional development has long been recognised as a pivotal component of teacher education, serving as a catalyst for enhancing educators' professional competencies and attitudes, fostering school improvement, and ultimately enhancing the learning process and student achievements (Carney et al., 2019; Haug & Mork, 2021). Therefore, district-based education inspectors play a crucial role in supporting teachers professionally, ensuring that teacher professional development initiatives effectively fulfill their intended objectives.

2.8.5 Collaborative pathways

Shal et al. (2024) observe that teacher professional development (TPD) presents opportunities for educators to forge new professional alliances, engage in collaborative academic endeavours, hone their online collaboration skills, and acquaint themselves with innovative teaching methodologies. The study underscores the significance of collaboration in TPD, highlighting how it paves the way for various stakeholders in education to create platforms facilitating teacher interaction with the broader educational community. Such collaborative efforts are envisioned to foster an environment where the exchange of ideas and the enhancement of students' performance become inherent practices.

Furthermore, Bautista et al. (2022) delve into the structure of the Hong Kong education system, providing an overview of both pre-service and in-service teacher education. They examine the teacher professional development landscape, outlining initiatives offered by key stakeholders such as the Education Bureau, local universities, schools, teacher unions, and private organizations. This comprehensive analysis underscores the global recognition of the importance of teacher professional development in addressing educators' evolving needs throughout their careers.

2.9 Novice teachers and teacher professional development

Early-stage educators' professional growth remains a global concern, and recent years have seen a disturbing trend of teachers leaving the profession shortly after completing their education (Huang, 2021). There is a consensus that experienced educators possess different knowledge, skills, and beliefs compared to novices (Rodriguez & McKay, 2010), suggesting divergent needs in professional development. Waters (2006) argues that most research on professional growth focuses on teacher training before they enter the workforce.

Despite this, educators continue to evolve throughout their careers (Tsui, 2003). Early-career teachers require more extensive personal and professional support than schools typically provide, underscoring the importance of guidance from other stakeholders, including district education inspectors (Kratka, 2022). Kratka's findings highlight the value of experienced educators' personal

insights in aiding beginning teachers through moments of frustration, fostering continuous self-reflection.

Even experienced educators face challenges in their professional development, yet they can still offer valuable guidance to novices. Literature suggests that both novice and experienced educators can benefit from tailored support programmes focusing on online teaching (Scherer et al., 2022). Corry and Stella (2018) advocate for development initiatives enhancing self-efficacy and online teaching practices for educators at all experience levels. Similarly, Scherer et al. (2023) emphasise the benefits of support programmes for both novice and expert educators in online teaching.

Understanding the factors influencing educators' agency, including resistance and proactivity, is essential for effective professional development (Huang & Yip, 2021). Supporting novice teachers through circuit managers is crucial for the comprehensive growth of schools (Mafuwane & Pitsoe, 2014). The assumption that experienced educators are better prepared for online teaching can lead to inadequate support for novices, risking the neglect of experienced educators' needs (Brooks & Grajek, 2020; Damşa et al., 2021). It is vital to assess the needs of both novice and experienced educators to provide balanced support. Ultimately, professional development is imperative for enhancing teaching and learning outcomes in schools (Nieuwmeijer, 2023; Chatlos et al., 2023). Novice teachers benefit greatly from exposure to professional development opportunities, such as mentorship programmes (Yan, 2021), highlighting the importance of induction programmes for new educators.

2.10 The role of education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development: functions of the inspectors (legal perspectives)

In compliance with the legal perspectives on the functions of the education inspectors in Lesotho, it is vital to note that the inspectors are tasked with different activities that ensure that in one way or the other, they leave their offices and go to different schools to carry out their duties. Their functions, which are discussed below, are going to be considered from the two legal documents that serve as guides in the Ministry of Education and Training. The first part covers the School Supervision and Management Regulations 1988 while the second part is based on the Basic Education Act 2010 as amended in 2021. The last part discusses the general roles of the inspectors in supporting TPD.

2.10.1 School Supervision and Management Regulations 1988)

To be precise, as stated in Part XII, 74 of the regulations (*School Supervision and Management Regulations 1988*), a primary, secondary and high school shall be subject to a full-scale inspection once in every two years or as frequently as may be determined by the Principal Secretary in relation to any particular school. This actually means no school shall avoid being inspected and as such, the inspectors are likely to reach all schools while carrying out their duties. Such schools have teachers who in one way or the other, need to be empowered in order to perform their duties in a way that will improve teaching and learning.

Furthermore, number 75 (a) of the same (*School Supervision and Management Regulations 1988*), states that a full-scale inspection shall comprise the inspection and evaluation of the general and detailed organization and administration of the school by the headmaster or such person as may be acting in his/her place. So, when the inspectors go to schools for inspection duties, they first meet with the principals.

According to (b) of the same School Supervision and Management Regulations, the inspectors have to visit schools for inspections on the organization and teaching of each subject in the school. This means inspectors should have a knowledge of the curriculum of the schools in the district so that they can be in a good position to monitor as well as support teachers in the different fields that they specialise in. This actually starts from the exploration of teachers' professional record books which among others, include the syllabi, scheme and record of work done, and lesson plan preparation books. This indicates that in such areas where the teachers need support and empowerment, the inspectors are expected to offer some intervention in order to eradicate whatever challenges the teachers face.

Additionally, c) states that the inspectors should visit schools in order to look into the competence of each teacher in the school. That manifests itself in the classrooms during teaching and learning as well as in the outcomes of the tests and examinations. That is why wherever and whenever there are problems, the inspectors should ensure that the challenges are curbed by the support that they offer to the teachers in schools.

Correspondingly, d) specifies that the inspectors are expected to visit schools to offer support on the curriculum of the school. If this is the case, the inspectors should have a thorough knowledge of the curriculum of the schools that they are expected to support. That in itself will enable a smooth interaction and skills sharing that could help the teachers to improve professionally.

2.10.2 Basic Education Act 2010 (as amended in 2021)

As per the Basic Education Act 2010, amended in 2021, the principal assumes the role of both school leader and teacher. This dual responsibility necessitates professional development tailored to both roles, emphasising the crucial need for direct engagement with district-based inspectors to fulfill these responsibilities effectively.

Furthermore, Section IV, 18, (4) of the Basic Education Act 2010, as amended in 2021, outlines the functions of school inspectors, which include conducting annual school inspections and providing reports on trends, achievements, and policy implementation. However, their role extends beyond mere reporting; they are also tasked with devising strategies to address challenges identified during inspections. By doing so, inspectors can pinpoint areas requiring teacher professional development to enhance the overall quality of teaching and learning. The following are the key roles of inspectors as specified in the Act:

- a) Provide support and advice to schools: This is the major function since it is actually the backbone of this study. The support that should be provided will, in one way or the other, open doors for effective teaching and learning in the schools that inspectors visit. This function is not only limited to the schools that they visit, but to all schools in the districts in which they are based.
- b) Monitor the effectiveness of teacher training, including teachers on probation. The process of monitoring how effective teaching and learning is a very vital one as it enables the teachers to know their strengths and weaknesses through the intervention of the inspectors. Novice teachers are usually unsure of the proper ways of conducting themselves as well as their lessons. The best thing they need is the support of the inspectors.

- c) Monitor the effect and effectiveness of testing and examinations. Testing is the most important requirement in teaching and learning and it is necessary that it is handled with utmost care. This means the inspectors' involvement in ensuring that it is done effectively enables the teachers to receive the guidance that in turn may make it easier for them to examine and test learners correctly.
- d) Identify in-service development priorities and monitoring of effectiveness of related training. This shows that during their inspections, education inspectors should look for all possible ways to understand the professional needs of teachers so that they can organise with the relevant stakeholders to provide relevant training. Not only will the inspectors arrange for the training, they should also ensure that it is relevant and responds to the challenges that the teachers have in their everyday lesson deliveries.
- e) Provide advice and participate in the Ministry's policy formulation. The inspectors' involvement in policy formulation is meant to facilitate the activities that are meant to help the teachers and all stakeholders in improving the ministry.
- f) Use a whole-school-team approach to inspection to ensure evaluation of overall school performance and of individual teachers.

The above legislation details indicate that in one way or the other, the education inspectors should visit schools as part of their duties and in doing so, they would be meeting teachers and school principals with whom they have to interact in ensuring teaching and learning takes place smoothly. As such, teacher professional development is expected to be at the heart of the district-based education inspectors and teachers' conversations.

2.10.3 General roles of inspectors in supporting teacher professional development

A comprehensive review of the literature has unveiled the various roles education inspectors undertake to support teacher professional development, particularly within district contexts. It is evident that education inspectors across different countries assume similar roles, albeit with slight variations. For instance, Education Standards Officers in Zambia not only fulfill inspection and supervision duties but also take the lead in guiding curriculum implementation by offering professional advice to schools (Mooya & Mulenga, 2021). It is essential to underscore the significance of curriculum implementation as it directly impacts what learners receive in schools,

which shapes their future prospects. Munoz Chereau and Ehren (2021) elucidate how the utilization of performance feedback and stakeholder actions enhances teaching and learning outcomes, emphasising that inspection models contribute to school improvement by setting clear expectations.

Despite the Ministry of General Education's provision of Education Standards Officers to support teachers in curriculum implementation, educators still perceive inadequacies in the support provided. Mooya and Mulenga's (2021) study revealed that some Education Standards Officers hold the belief that inspection primarily involves identifying teachers' faults. Particularly at the district level, Education Standards Officers lack subject specialization in content, pedagogy, and curriculum when supervising teachers due to insufficient subject expertise. Moreover, Education Standards Officers often fail to notify schools in advance of their visits, leading to panic among teachers during observations. In contrast, a comparative study on education inspection systems in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Turkey, and England highlights differences in institutional positioning and reporting practices, despite similarities in the aims of assessing education quality (Gurkan & Deveci, 2012). Similarly, schools are typically notified in advance of inspections, ensuring readiness for inspector visits (Munoz Chereau & Ehren, 2021).

The aforementioned discussion underscores how the effectiveness of teachers' work may be compromised due to inspection practices, ultimately affecting job satisfaction. This raises questions posed by Ye and Zhao (2019) regarding the ability to support one another without creating a conducive environment. Scholars also emphasise the role of interpersonal relationships in mitigating tensions between institutions and individual teachers in school settings. Mafuwane and Pitsoe (2014) advocate for Circuit Managers to assume instructional leadership roles, fostering development and support across schools within their jurisdiction. Collaborative planning and communication of a shared vision for all schools in the circuit are highlighted as key strategies to ensure collective success.

In conclusion, while all inspectorates have standards for academic student outcomes, they vary in the types of broader student outcomes they prioritise. For instance, in Scotland, 'success and achievement' encompass progress in improving attainment and achievement, along with standards related to wellbeing, equality, and inclusion, while Wales explicitly focuses on wellbeing (Munoz Chereau & Ehren, 2021).

2.11 Challenges encountered by education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development collaboratively

The professional development requirements of educators have undergone significant transformations over the past quarter-century (Pernnerman & Connery, 2022). It is pertinent to highlight that the well-being of teachers within organizations pertains to various workplace-related factors, including interactions and communication between educators and administrators, the level of support and recognition provided by administrators, and teachers' involvement in decision-making processes (Thien & Lee, 2023). According to the findings of Or and Berkovich (2021), the present study validates the notion that teachers' engagement in decision-making activities varies depending on the size of the school, thereby influencing the organization of their professional development. This perspective is reinforced by scholars who argue that many educators across Europe encounter difficulties in accessing effective forms of ongoing professional development throughout their careers, owing to changes in educational policies, societal trends, and shifts in pedagogical ideologies, necessitating continuous adaptation and innovation in their teaching practices (Hertz et al., 2022). Furthermore, it is crucial to acknowledge that providers of professional development programmes face the challenge of meeting educators' needs while simultaneously guiding them towards a deeper understanding and awareness that prompts them to reassess their knowledge and beliefs. It is imperative for educators to recognise that achieving a teaching practice aligned with visionary reforms to foster sustainable changes requires diligent effort, as there are no quick solutions (Berit et al., 2021).

While educators play a vital role, the professional development of early childhood teachers remains ambiguous (Montesinos et al., 2023). This underscores the continued need for professional development among educators at all levels of the education spectrum, reaffirming the indispensable nature of teacher professional development across all educational tiers.

2.10.1 Teacher workload and accessibility

Some of the challenges that inspectors experience are caused by some challenges that teachers have themselves. Thus, inspectors' challenges cannot be divorced from those of teachers. To illustrate this, if teachers have high teaching loads, it means even in cases where the inspectors may want to intervene in the form of support, they will not manage to offer such a support. In

addition, organising workshops or any form of teacher professional activity that requires teachers to leave school will be a challenge for some of the teachers.

It is crucial to acknowledge that the current global landscape is marked by some of the most complex challenges ever encountered. For instance, the COVID-19 pandemic plunged educators into a realm of uncertainty, disrupting traditional modes of teaching and learning and significantly impacting collegial connections and access to teacher professional development opportunities (Wu et al., 2021). Given the heightened need to examine the role of school leaders as guides through this crisis, district-based education inspectors and other stakeholders in teacher professional development demand our attention. The pandemic-induced shift to online teaching and learning, commonly referred to as "remote teaching," has compelled educators worldwide to adapt to new instructional methods (Brown et al., 2020). This transition underscores teachers' eagerness to embrace novel approaches to pedagogy, necessitating comprehensive professional development programmes to enhance their knowledge and skills in navigating these evolving circumstances. However, as the world gradually returned to a semblance of normalcy post-COVID-19, with schools resuming physical operations and workshops reverting to traditional formats, the nature of professional development has evolved (Zarrow, 2020).

Professional development initiatives now range from one-shot workshops to more immersive, job-embedded training sessions that enable teachers to learn within their daily work environments. Despite these developments, various barriers to teacher professional development persist, including financial constraints, time limitations, and logistical challenges, particularly in regions like the Philippines and Lesotho (Chin, 2022; Alneyadi, 2021). Furthermore, educators continue to face obstacles such as poor working conditions and excessive workloads, which can hinder the effectiveness of education inspectors in supporting teachers (Matete, 2009; Bongomin, 2019). Nevertheless, it is essential to underscore the demanding nature of supporting teacher professional development for education inspectors, who must collaborate with other stakeholders and provide individualised support to teachers facing diverse challenges. Inclusive education presents another critical aspect of teacher professional development, particularly in addressing the needs of students with special education requirements. While challenges persist in this domain, research indicates that participation in professional development activities can foster positive attitudes towards inclusive education among teachers (Holmqvist & Lelinge, 2021). Therefore, it is imperative to

ensure that such training opportunities are accessible to all educators through the efforts of education inspectors and other relevant bodies.

2.10.2 Teachers' exclusion from decision-making process on TPD

Scholars argue that the existing literature on teacher learning overly emphasises individual teachers and activities or programmes, neglecting influences from the institutional or school system context (Modha, 2021). This limits teachers' participation since not all have access to such activities. Additionally, significant findings from one study revealed that participants at various levels of leadership tend to attribute low learner academic performance to all other involved parties except themselves (Schlebusch, 2020). This practice is concerning because effective leaders should be willing to acknowledge their own faults, which demonstrates professional growth.

While some scholars advocate for teachers to initiate their own professional development activities, other research indicates that various factors may hinder teacher educators' attitudes and capacity to initiate their CPD activities (Tyagi & Misra, 2021). These factors include questions such as: To what extent are suitable platforms created for teachers to voice their challenges? What are their needs? How can these needs be addressed more effectively? Some teachers may not articulate their challenges and needs simply because they are unsure where to direct their complaints. Furthermore, it is noted that although school and education system leaders can mandate teachers' participation in professional development activities, the ultimate impact on teaching and learning is influenced by various school-related, teacher-related, and student-related factors (Mc Chesney & Aldridge, 2021).

Moreover, a study conducted amidst rising concerns that current models of in-service training in Sweden are not yielding the anticipated impact on teacher motivation and student achievement found that the teaching profession feels disengaged, disempowered, and distrusted as a result (Karlberg & Bezzina, 2022). However, to address this issue, teachers are gradually shifting away from traditional, adversarial forms of conduct and focusing more on collaborative approaches that promote mutual cooperation, which is the focal point of this study.

Data from another study further revealed a lack of smooth relationship between the Ministry of Education and Training and schools, characterised by randomised placement of beginning

teachers, lack of follow-ups, and unavailability of evaluation reports (Makafane, 2022). Consequently, the implication for the success of teacher professional development is that a holistic and integrated approach is necessary to establish and maintain collaboration among stakeholders, requiring continual efforts throughout all processes. Looking ahead, the role of education inspectors is crucial, and rather than assuming that pointing fingers will solve teachers' problems, it is necessary to explore the challenges they face.

2.10.3 Lack of resources

Inquiry-based teaching has been shown to be hampered by a lack of resources in the past (Haug & Mork, 2021). The district-based inspectors would assist the instructors in using this inquiry-based teaching methodology. Lekhetho (2021) further asserts that low teacher quality, ineffective school administration, and a lack of funding are the main causes of the Lesotho education system's perceived inefficiency, which is further supported by the country's high school-leaving exam failure rates. These issues also have an impact on secondary education. This demonstrates that if there are no ways to guarantee that the requirements for certain TPD activities are satisfied, such as financial or human resources, then there will probably be difficulties with TPD provision for teachers.

2.11 Strategies for supporting teacher professional development

Following from the previous section that dealt with the challenges that education inspectors and teachers face, this section dwells primarily on the strategies that can possibly be employed in curbing some of the challenges that affect provision of teacher professional development support. Amidst societal, demographic, and educational changes, teachers are required to participate in professional development and learning (PDL) throughout their careers (Tarnanen et al., 2021). This suggests that all educators ought to have access to certain professional development activities. According to Cai and Tang (2021), instructors who work in schools that encourage their colleagues' sense of competence, independence, and collegiality are more likely to be driven to alter their conventional teaching methods.

One of the most important points to make is the fact that worldwide, the education sector is a victim of the COVID-19 pandemic, but it can also be a key driver to the recovery from the terrible

occurrence. It is during such occurrences that the support of the district-based education inspectors is required. Holmqvist, and Lelinge (2021) suggest that education spending should be protected where possible through the prioritization of education in national recovery planning. However, this may not be easy for all countries owing to the differences in the economies.

2.11.1 Adequate planning

When planned effectively, teacher professional development activities can help close the gaps in instructors' pedagogical and subject knowledge, which will improve student performance (Maboya et al., 2022). This highlights the necessity for the organizational level to invest more time and energy in the planning phase since a well-thought-out programme is more likely to provide sustainable outcomes. According to Pennerman and Connery (2022), it would be beneficial to use digital platforms for teacher training, knowledge sharing, and best practice adoption because 21st-century innovations offer educators accessible, meaningful professional learning opportunities.

2.11.2 Online multimedia training platforms

Both MCoy and Lynam (2021) and Yilmaz and Sever (2021) hold similar views, arguing that video offers several options for research and supports teacher professional development on a global scale. This point of view is unavoidable given that teaching students in the twenty-first century demands that teachers expose them to current, generally correct knowledge; hence, the use of cutting-edge technology is necessary. Furthermore, it is important to remember that educators who lack a strong foundation in technology do not capitalise on pedagogical potential (Celik, 2023).

2.11.3 Enrolment for Higher Degrees

Since continued teacher professional development gives teachers time to learn and implement new strategies, there is a recommendation that teachers should be frequently afforded study leaves or time off to do training and that during this time, part-time teachers be hired (Mugarura et al., 2022). However, in the Lesotho context, this can be a challenge as a result of the policy that was made which does not allow the teachers to go on a paid study leave. This then compels them to only depend on part-time learning. Moreover, literature states that the people who tend to work most

fruitfully in leadership positions are often drawn directly from their places of duty by their superiors in an attempt to provide support (Hentschell & Thomas, 2023).

2.11.4 Improved inspectors-teachers' cordiality and adequate provisions for inspection

Furthermore, it is recommended that educators give their decision-making authority over their subject areas more authority and that they focus more on the institutional bonds that exist between school administrators, facilitators, and participants (Jesacher-Roessler & Agostini, 2021; Dille & Rokenes, 2021). In turn, this action may encourage educators to collaborate with other interested parties in order to achieve their shared educational objectives. Additionally, it is advised that the government allocate funds to the school inspectorate agency in order to effectively oversee the calibre of education delivered (Bantwini & Moorosi, 2018). This will assist in resolving issues such as instructors' accessibility issues, transportation issues and resource shortages; all of which will lead to better teaching and learning.

Moreover, one of the most essential moves that can bring about positive change in TPD is believed to be incorporating learners in the whole process of arranging for teacher professional development. Scholars further posit that applying professional-vision skills to classroom situations depends on knowledge about what matters in these situations (Martin et al., 2023). This would allow transparency for teachers and learners in coming up with the programmes that would positively respond to their needs. All these should be done by district-based education inspectors in their support for TPD. Treacy and Leavy (2023) content that student voice can provide unique context-specific professional development yet it is underutilised in professional theory and practice. The 21st century is characterised by advancement in different areas of life, and the education sector is no exception. Current students are of the type that is very active in engaging in matters involving them. So, allowing them to have a say in their learning needs can be one way of ensuring that collaboration that this study is exploring is experienced by them and the district-based education inspectors.

2.11.5 School leaders network approach

Scholarly perspectives emphasise the importance of several factors to enhance the role of Professional Learning Networks (PLNs) as sustainable alternatives for practical and evaluative professional development for teachers and school leadership (Jesacher-Roessler & Agostini, 2022). These factors include the establishment of new formal bureaucratic structures within Universities and Colleges for Teacher Education and the institutionalized collaboration among school leaders, facilitators, and participants within professional learning networks. This collaborative effort among stakeholders is crucial for ensuring provision of effective teacher professional development and fostering a shared sense of purpose and goals.

Supporting this notion, Lopez et al. (2022) suggest that professional learning communities aim to enhance the capacity of school leaders by creating a collaborative environment and fostering collective responsibility among them. Similarly, Nembambula (2023) stresses the importance of ongoing communication among team members and stakeholders, scheduling regular times for reflection and debriefing both individually and collectively, and viewing differences as potential obstacles as well as opportunities for enriching educational practices.

2.11.6 Establishment of professional learning communities

In recent years, there has been a notable increase in research focusing on professional learning communities as a strategy for professional development. Many of these studies centre on how professional learning communities support the professional growth of school leaders and facilitate collective learning to enhance schools and improve learning outcomes. Strengthening teamwork and fostering trust within professional learning communities could further contribute to school improvement efforts (Wullschleger et al., 2023).

Social networks are crucial in generating social capital. Participating in such networks provides individuals with access to various resources, including assistance, support, and a sense of well-

being. Through professional interactions and networking, educators can exchange knowledge, share information, and access social support.

Literature indicates that factors such as internet connectivity, transportation infrastructure, government regulations, and teacher readiness play significant roles in enabling rural teachers to develop virtual learning forums. However, a key challenge lies in finding highly motivated teachers to initiate and manage these forums (Ikhsanudin, 2021). This challenge could be addressed if education inspectors proactively identify strengths and weaknesses within schools under their jurisdiction, and also identify individuals with strong leadership qualities who can coordinate professional development forums where teachers collaborate. Additionally, motivated teacher leaders can receive mentorship from both experienced teachers and university experts in the initial stages until they become established (Ikhsanudin, 2021).

Maintaining a culture of openness and effective communication among colleagues is essential for sustaining professional development, especially for early career teachers (Gaikhorst et al., 2017). Teachers are encouraged to create platforms within their workplaces where they can openly discuss issues related to professional development.

2.11.7 Mentorship on teacher identity formation

Moreover, there should be greater focus on the experiences and circumstances that shape teacher identity formation. Early career educators ought to be provided with opportunities for self-reflection on their teaching practices. Preparing pre-service professionals for roles in special education demands explicit instruction on collaborative approaches within multidisciplinary teams (Chatlos et al., 2023) to ensure they acquire the necessary skills. Nordgren et al. (2021) further emphasise the importance of regular access to coaching, expert support, and opportunities for feedback and reflection for both teachers and principals to deliver high-quality teaching. While the implementation of these practices may vary across different contexts, principals' leadership in teaching and learning remains critical for shaping teachers' beliefs and practices (Çoban et al., 2023). Supporting these assertions, Huang et al. (2021) suggest guiding teachers to engage in deeper reflection on their roles and professional development, addressing aspects that may not be immediately evident during their early career phase.

Juuti et al. (2021) assert that teachers play an active role in their own learning processes and are accountable for their professional growth. This implies that teachers should demonstrate a willingness to improve their skills before seeking external support. In contrast, Huang (2021) argues that teachers require guidance to reflect on their vulnerabilities and potential constraints in their practice, indicating a need for support from others. It is suggested that fostering a collaborative culture would encourage teachers to engage in integrated professional learning activities, fostering collective innovation (Nguyen et al., 2021). Before designing professional development courses, educators must understand the processes of teacher professional development and the conditions that facilitate growth (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Korthagen, & Nuijten, 2022; Komba & Mwakabenga, 2019). The current study aims to address these gaps by examining the conceptualisations, models, features, approaches, benefits, and impacts of teacher professional development programmes in the field of second/foreign language education, thus contributing to the theoretical and empirical foundations of the discipline.

2.11.8 Adoption of various multimedia platforms for TPD and peaceful school climate

Dreesen et al. (2020) suggest that for international teacher professional development strategies to evolve, countries must adopt a blend of remote education methods, including digital platforms, television, radio, take-home packages, home visits, text messaging, and phone calls. Integrating these recent findings into the use of cost-effective technologies could prove highly motivating. Additionally, the increased emphasis on Online Teacher Professional Development (OTPD) aligns with economic considerations, offering greater accessibility, flexibility, and new opportunities for distance collaboration (Purnell, 2022). This sentiment is echoed by West and Bautista (2022) who argue that technology now occupies a central role in our classrooms, whether for online teaching, flipped learning, or traditional in-person instruction. Strengthening technological infrastructure in schools can therefore enhance teachers' proficiency in modern teaching methods.

Effective collaboration among school team members is crucial for fostering positive student outcomes and ensuring equitable educational opportunities. The relationship between school staff lays the groundwork for students' educational experiences and long-term achievements, underpinned by shared goals. Despite variations in school contexts, there should be a collective recognition of the necessity of teacher professional development. Saw and Preudhikulpradab

(2021) advocate for improvements in collaboration and the advancement of network activities, enhanced communication to reduce misunderstandings, and fostering a sense of ownership and co-creation within the alumni network.

While the COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges for school leaders worldwide, it serves as a reminder that schools must be prepared to respond to future crises with agility. Governments should devise strategies to ensure the continuity of education during such times, emphasising the adoption of multimedia platforms to facilitate ongoing teaching and learning for both educators and students.

2.11.9 Teacher professional development during ‘troubled times’

Maak et al. (2021) argue that what has become clear throughout the global pandemic crisis though, is that many leaders have not only failed to instill hope in progress in education, but instead have engaged in acts of selfish, destructive and outright ‘toxic leadership’ to the detriment of a great many people around the world. Such behaviours are discouraged as they are in no way likely to bring any positive impact on teacher professional development. There is need for the reflection on some of these failures, but examining instances where leaders have succeeded is also important (Maak et al., 2021). On the other hand, there are indicators of success. For instance, in cooperating with the government’s epidemic prevention policies and procedures in the post-COVID-19 era, the trend of e-learning and distance teaching has augmented the establishment of integrated online curricula with interdisciplinary programmes for undergraduates in the college of education to facilitate effective future teacher professional development (Chen et al., 2022). These and other positive factors should be continued to facilitate teacher professional development.

2.11.10 Collaborative leadership goals

Previous research has established an important contribution of education inspectors to teacher professional development by stating what they should do to improve their intervention. For instance, Mafuwane and Pitsoe (2014) suggest that in their mission to improve the performance of their schools, inspectors should participate in instructional leadership and school development and support activities such as providing frequent, suitable and school-wide development and support activities. Furthermore, they should make efforts in defining and communicating a shared vision

and goals for the circuits through setting up monitoring systems and providing feedback to all schools on the impact of the development and support activities provided, and expect the schools to do the same.

Above all, Circuit Managers should see and portray themselves as institutional development and support officers to their schools as opposed managers of the status quo. In that way, teachers under their jurisdiction will have so much to benefit from them in terms of skill development, which in the long run will have a positive impact on the general performance of learners. In view of the aforementioned, the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET) may have to review the conditions for the appointment of headmasters by reviewing the National Professional Qualification for Educational Leaders (NPQEL) policy to ensure that every leader is skilled in practising collaborative leadership (Abidin & Alias, 2022).

Notably, the shift towards non-traditional style of leadership will lead to improved performance of both teachers and learners. Garces-Bacsal et al. (2022) conclude that there is a need for a more cohesive and centralised framework to structure the implementation of professional development by ensuring that learning initiatives are responsive to the needs of the various stakeholders. This strengthens the argument that to address the problem of marginalization and exclusion, workshops should be purpose-driven not just carried out for conveniences and reports and the Department of Basic Education needs to liaise with school-based stakeholders in the education sector in order for inclusive education to materialise in schools (Jama & Buka 2021).

The main recommendations emanating from the literature were that the Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho should implement strategies aimed at equipping teachers with various skills and beginning teachers can follow the proposed induction programme (Makafane, 2022). This will enable the novice teachers to start working in the profession where they will feel valued. They will also know where to start and what to do to ensure proper teaching and learning. In order to improve the effectiveness of Lesotho secondary schools, it is recommended that teacher quality, school management, monitoring, and professional development be intensified aggressively (Lekhetho, 2021).

The final step and ultimate goal of the collaborative process should be to determine solutions and implement them. As such, the final stage of collaboration entails shared decision making and effective implementation of these decisions.

2.12 Conclusion

In conclusion, this review of the literature adds to the expanding corpus of empirical studies aimed at comprehending ways in which collaborative leadership influences teachers' practices and knowledge and, in turn, enhances students' academic performance. There are traces of the research that has been carried out in relation to collaborative leadership practices and TPD but more still needs to be done to date to ensure a collective effort in ensuring continued TPD that district based education inspectors should do. For instance, Makafane, (2022) posits that existing literature shows that adequate teacher professional development is lacking in Lesotho. As stated in the background, there is a gap in knowledge as the studies that have been conducted do not address the collaborative leadership practices of the district based education inspectors in Lesotho but are on TPD and collaborative leadership. Furthermore, the ministry or department of education should develop more influential professional learning opportunities that strive to establish a cohesive network among the stakeholders. Having said that, it is imperative to draw the conclusion that school administrators ought to be motivated to think about how the methods recommended for enhancing teacher professional development relate to their specific requirements (Brauckmann et al., 2023).

Theoretical Framework

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter covered the growing body of empirical research that was reviewed to understand how collaborative leadership practices are essential in supporting TPD. This chapter discusses insights conveyed from previous collaborative leadership and teacher professional development research related to the research problem. This study is guided by the theoretical framework consisting of David D. Chrislip and Carl E. Larson's Collaborative Leadership Theory and Ralph Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Career Cycle Model. In the first part, I will discuss Chrislip and Larson's Collaborative Leadership Theory and the second part will be about Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Career Cycle Model. The two theories will be discussed in order to provide a more relevant in-depth knowledge on their key aspects. The second part explores the explanatory research of the theories by discussing them in relation to the contexts in which they can be applied. The last part will show how the two theories complement each other.

3.2 Collaborative Leadership Theory (David D. Chrislip and Carl E. Larson, 1994)

As mentioned earlier, this study adopts the theory developed by David Chrislip and Carl Larson, stemming from their research on civic leadership and collaboration in the 1980s and early 90s. The core tenet of their collaborative leadership is that every member of the organisation contributes their unique ability to make it exceptional (Chrislip & Larson, 1994). They further state that collaborative leadership entails the following principles; a shared vision and goals, coordinated activities, communication, delegation, shared decision making and complete cooperation at all levels. The Collaborative Leadership Theory posits that when individuals cooperate and coordinate, transcending personal interests to pursue common goals, they can achieve success.

Collaboration as an alternative strategy for addressing public concerns grows out of the increasingly destructive consequences of current practices. The idea of working together incorporates several closely related concepts fundamental to its practice. These include the distinction between adaptive and routine challenges; the notion of a holding environment in which

to do adaptive work; the use of facilitation to guide or orchestrate adaptive work; and the use of consensus-based decision making rather than majority rule, (Chrislip, 2002)

Effective collaborative leaders are those who can bring together diverse individuals to create vision and address challenges (Lawrence, 2017). Key characteristics of collaborative leadership include shared vision and values, interdependence, mutual respect, effective communication, and synergy (Lawrence, 2017; Ang'an & Kilika, 2022). In the context of this study, education inspectors are seen as leaders responsible for bringing stakeholders together to support teachers through collaborative professional development initiatives.

Success in collaborative leadership occurs when individuals can set aside personal interests to work towards shared goals (Modha, 2021). By empowering all stakeholders, schools can benefit from shared purpose, participation, and empowerment fostered by collaborative leadership (Arthur and Souza, 2020). When organizations have a shared vision, it serves as a guiding force and fosters cohesion among stakeholders (Stoner, 2017). In the context of this study, district-based education inspectors are expected to align with this theory by fostering a shared vision among all stakeholders in schools.

3.2.1 Principles of collaborative leadership

In accordance with Stoner (2017), the most effective way to move collectively toward a positive future is through collaborative leadership. Block (2023) adds that collaborating with others is a fundamental skill. In this context, collaborative leadership is vital to promoting inclusion, transparency, and progressiveness in the workplace (Mäkitalo, 2022).

There are some principles that should act as a guide for leaders. An inclusive vision is the glue that creates networks not boundaries, opens the flow of information, involves people in decisions that affect them, seeks and utilizes diversity, aligns the personal and public behaviour, and treats people like human beings. An environment that enables collaboration must be created (Stoner, 2017) with the aim of empowering employees and allowing them to reach their full potential by giving them more responsibility, and making it possible for them to adapt to changes in practice and at the workplace (Herrity,2023). Hentschell & Thomas (2023) add:

As we reflect on our own leadership transformations, and how better to support others in pursuing theirs, we should keep asking these hard questions, to sit with the productive discomfort that comes with real growth and authentic analysis. Whom are we serving and how? In what ways can we prepare ourselves and others to be more inclusive, effective leaders at our schools and in our communities? How do we realize inclusion and support of our marginalized colleagues and students through our decision-making? (p. 265)

Additionally, people bring their best thinking and contribute fully, and want their organizations to be successful, when given an opportunity to participate in decisions affecting them (Stoner, 2017). It is important to note that leadership, being a highly complex phenomenon, has gained even greater significance in today's fast-paced and increasingly globalized world (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). Therefore, theoretical grounding is considered crucial for sound research (Nguyen et al., 2022).

In today's landscape, leaders must adopt a collaborative approach, facilitating multi-organizational arrangements to solve complex problems that could not be solved over the last 100 years, the focus on the psychology of leadership has led to the introduction of various leadership theories aimed at explaining how and why certain individuals become great leaders (Cherry, 2022). This approach involves involving all stakeholders in decision-making processes, ensuring a credible and open collaborative process that values participants' input, thus avoiding a top-down approach (Njenga and Maina, 2018). Collaborative leadership fosters a cohesive team by establishing a shared vision and strategies for implementation (Ang'an & Kilika, 2022).

Since collaborative leadership is predicated on sharing leadership with others, fostering the humanistic principles of liberty, fairness, and justice to develop an open, democratic, and participatory learning environment for everyone is what fosters collaborative leadership (Egitim, 2022). This suggests that rather than acting with hostility against the teachers, the district-based education inspectors should try to create a learning environment for them throughout their interactions. Delegating responsibilities in a collaborative team fosters enhanced trust, creativity, and effectiveness. It also lessens the burden on the leader and increases the likelihood that team members will realise their own worth (Cho, 2023). But occasionally, many cooperative projects

fall short, and many of the leaders discover that they are unable to overcome their own difficulties with ceding authority (Collaborative, 2023).

Academic research indicates that attempts to change the nature of leadership from individual to collaborative may continue in the foreseeable future as knowledge expands, specializations become more specialized, and the demand for integrating expertise from various fields grows. Therefore, Maalouf (2019) adds that collaborative leadership entails having the correct mindset, cutting operational costs, seeing outside the walls of the organization, cooperating, and retaining the capacity to effectively interact with people as well as handle conflict.

3.2.2 The collaborative premise

Collaborative leadership has gained popularity as a leadership technique and an approach in education that emphasises the essence of shared decision-making and collaboration among all stakeholders (Khalifa & Alrasheed, 2023). This suggests that education inspectors should be collaborative leaders who prioritise the trust of group members and are strong enough to assist in fostering relationships that are based on commitment when assisting in the process of supporting teacher professional development. Furthermore, existing research indicates that collaborative procedures concentrate on creating a common knowledge of the issue in addition to available resources, growing trust, and strengthening commitment to group goals and activities (Lima, 2021).

Furthermore, collaboration involves appropriate people who are affected by the issue, who have some power to take action or anyone who simply cares about the issue (Mickel and Farrell, 2021). In this study, the appropriate people are the stakeholders (all the people or groups of people who have a part to play as far as education is concerned) in teacher professional development. In addition, collaborative leaders' understanding is that one of their more important roles is to foster the creation of networks for the open flow of information (Stoner, 2017). Dibello (2022) argues that this style of leadership is particularly effective in situations where issues that need to be addressed are complicated. The relevance of the collaborative premise is that the stakeholders, having built the highest level of trust amongst themselves, are able to have a common understanding of ways that can in turn help them solve the problems that they encounter.

But prior work provides a fantastic starting point for conceptualising collaborative leadership. A community's concerns can be addressed by developing a vision of an ideal future when traditional leadership practices are insufficient or ineffective for meeting the needs of the community as a whole. Witt and Weber (1998) demonstrate the value of collaborative leadership as an approach that can be used to find a resolution when major and complex issues plague a community or region. In addition, it comprises diverse groups with differing but overlapping interests. In this particular setting, there exists a teacher community that faces obstacles that could have been resolved with the assistance of district-based education inspectors.

According to Chrislip and Larson (1994), people can tell if they are successful when they get results that are tangible, substantial, systematic, and sustainable. Effective cooperation requires a clear need statement and timely execution, well-organised stakeholder organizations that can speak or act on behalf of their constituents, and widespread participation from a variety of sectors. Further essential elements of collaborative leadership include the legitimacy and transparency of the process, the engagement or commitment of high-level, visible leaders, the backing of established authorities, the capacity to overcome distrust, and effective leadership process. Thus, the purpose of this study is to investigate how education inspectors work together with stakeholders to enhance teacher professional development by utilizing these indicators. According to Abidin and Alias (2022), collaborative leadership is crucial since it improves teachers' work satisfaction.

3.2.4 Relevance of Collaborative Leadership Theory

According to Colbry et al. (2019), the purpose of Collaborative Leadership Theory is to explain how cooperation functions without considering whether the formal structure is between a manager and subordinate, a subordinate and subordinate, or any other variation. As a result, this idea is applicable to all structures, including the systems that support educators in classrooms. Witt and Weber (1998) indicate that the ultimate long-term benefit of this idea is the development of a new civic culture and a stronger feeling of community among participants who are empowered by actively participating in policymaking. In essence, all stakeholders in schools have challenges that require some reviews in policies that govern them and teacher professional development is one

major field that requires a lot of focus by the Ministry of Education and Training in collaboration (through education inspectors) with the other stakeholders to help teachers by exposing them to diverse professional development activities.

In collaboratively operating institutions, advocacy becomes engagement, hostility gets to be civility, confrontation becomes conversation and separation gets to be community. Watenpaugh (2021) states that when every team member collaborates, that improves their diversity into becoming the most creative team that inspires the other members to apply their collective energy to produce valuable outputs.

Chrislip (2002) described collaborative leaders as insistent yet not domineering, compelling, credible, and much more behind the scenes than on centre stage. In situations where one would feel the need to quit, collaborative leaders build confidence, sustain hope and participation, and celebrate relationship-building value (Chrislip & Larson, 1994).

On the other hand, although collaborative leadership has been shown to be yielding fruitful results, research has shown that there is frequently ambiguity and complexity surrounding the membership of collaborations, so there is no clear, consensual sense of who should be influenced or which organizations should be influenced (Huxham & Vangen, 2000). Secondly, there is a problem with the presumption of specified goals. Here, research has demonstrated that the process of agreeing upon collaborative goals can be extremely difficult because of the variety of goals and constraints that different organizations and their individual representatives bring to a negotiating table (Eden, Huxham, & Vangen, 1996).

Opponents argue that those involved in collaborative leadership in a way Chrislip and Larson state, therefore, often have to take action without clear specification of what the endpoint should be since efforts to make a collaboration move forward are likely to be thwarted by difficulties and dilemmas. For example, trust building generally requires creation of a "virtuous circle" in which initially more needs to be done in trying to understand one another. Leading across the full range of activities and processes that need to be addressed to drive a collaboration forward holistically is thus highly resource consuming. In collaborations people are working with different views and ideas, sometimes these will turn into conflict, (Huxham & Vangen, 2000). Therefore, where there are conflicts, productivity or success is minimal.

All in all, Hentschell & Thomas, 2023 posit that collaborative leadership provides professional promise, calls on everyone to engage in the work of transforming themselves and their institutions, and to hold one another accountable, irrespective of how hard or unsettling it may be. This means leaders should engage with the past as well as the current mistakes of those they are leading, and learn from such, making difficult and sometimes unpopular choices but always striving to do right.

3.3 Ralph Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Career Cycle Model, 1995

In this model, fessler shows a progression that includes organization and personal change both due to environmental factors. He argues that a teacher's environment has variables that influence his or her career cycle. For instance, family, positive critical incidents, crises, organizational influences avocational interests and life stages which may be in the professional sphere, going through unwanted and unexpected experiences. According to Fessler, organizational influence has to do with influences from within the school as an organization that can affect the success and the satisfaction of teachers over the career cycle (schools' regulatory system, leadership style, community relations, and professional organization) if teachers are not allowed to do the things that drew them to the profession.

Figure 1: Fessler’s eight stages of teacher career cycle model



Figure 1 above shows the different stages in the teachers’ career cycle as explained below.

3.3.1 Eight stages of teacher career model

Changes in teachers' professional lives are made possible by the multifaceted structure of teacher professional development (Atal and Derryakulu, 2021). Pre-service, according to Fessler, is the initial phase and marks the start of the process of being ready for a particular function. The initial few years of service, or the induction, is the second. The third step is competency building, when instructors are highly motivated to participate in professional development programmes after becoming socialised in their field. Most of the time, they are keen to learn new things connected to their jobs, hone their talents in those areas, and expand their knowledge of various teaching resources (Ching Ting Tany Kwee, 2020).

Teachers who have reached the fourth stage — enthusiasm and growth — remain highly competent and continue to advance as professionals. Those who are in the fifth stage of professional frustration exhibit negative emotional behaviour, appear dissatisfied with their jobs, and may be questioning why they chose to work in this field. The sixth stage is career stability where teachers are either highly motivated or demotivated. Teacher professional development may create stability

due to lack of flow in. The seventh stage is career wind-down which is the preparation for retirement or career change (Zysberg & Maskit, 2017). This period can be interesting or unfavourable. The eighth stage is career exit whereby teachers may choose to quit their profession or be bound to leave by circumstances beyond their control. The reasons may be their search for another job seeking different work experiences, for personal or family reasons, other career exploration or moving to a non-teaching position (Fessler & Christensen, 1992). Roberts et al. (2020) argue that although areas of commonality exist across career stages, it is critical to understand professional development across programmatic dimensions.

It is on the basis of this theory that the study will examine the teachers' professional needs in as far as their work environments are concerned. Teachers go through some of these stages in their profession and this study seeks to uncover such experiences. According to a research looking at the professional development requirements of teachers in a particular career phase, the teachers' needs were in the areas of time management, stress management, work organization skills, and personal growth (profession and family) (Tyson et al., 2014). This demonstrates the applicability of this technique in identifying the requirements of educators.

There is an expanding body of knowledge emphasising the importance of offering teacher's professional development opportunities at various stages of their careers and the ongoing exploration of professional development needs across different career stages. Additionally, scholars have recommended researching the potential effectiveness of professional development opportunities tailored to specific career stages. They also recognise the significance of customising these professional development experiences to meet the specific needs of teachers at different points in their professional lives (Tyson et al., 2014). Additionally, providing teacher professional development based on their needs can motivate professional growth and practise transformation. Management and leadership styles that do not engender trust or are perceived as 'inspection oriented' can yield less motivation and job enthusiasm among teachers. Collaborative leadership that genuinely values teacher inputs can inspire or reinvigorate their spirits.

With high expectations and fewer resources, teachers find themselves in a no-win situation of wanting to do more for their learners but without support to do so. They may therefore find themselves leaving the profession.

When the community, local colleges, and other partnerships step up to provide these resources, teacher esteem and motivation are boosted. Thus, receiving support for professional development, such as opportunities to present at conferences, take on leadership roles, conduct research, can breathe life into the careers of teachers (Fessler & Christensen, 1992).

When applying collaborative leadership theory to diverse situations where the leader's goal is not only to motivate and reach her/his own internal colleagues but also an external community of teachers and other stakeholders, interesting and critical aspects of teacher professional development come to the foreground. Hence, the relationship between the collaborative leadership theory and Fessler's eight-stage teacher cycle model.

Fessler (1995) proposed this theory in an attempt to conceptualise teachers' career cycle in the context of a dynamic and flexible system. According to him, teachers move through those developmental stages reflecting responses to personal, organisational and environmental factors in their profession. It illustrates how development proceeds through the interplay and resolution of conflicts between needs and demands of the organisation (Fessler, 1995). New challenges manifest themselves throughout the careers of teachers. Some of these challenges emerge from changes in the work environments whereas others come from changes in personal needs and conditions (Fessler and Christensen, 1992; MOOC, 2023).

As teachers progress in their careers, they engage in transformational processes and critical reflection on their practice, aiming to redefine their assumptions, beliefs, and self-worth. Conversely, disengagement from the work environment, which serves as a source of stimulation for new learning, can lead to a gradual decline into professional withdrawal. Therefore, it is essential for educational administrators to promote transformative in-service education among all staff, particularly classroom teachers (Fessler & Rice, 2010).

However, critics' perception of this model is that although Fessler has identified personalized support systems for teachers at various stages, no special attention has been paid on how and why teachers make an effort to transit to different career stages, (Chin Ting Tany Kwee, 2020). More literature argues that like most categorizations, focusing on differences and similarities concerning one particular aspect often leads to a neglect of differences and similarities concerning other aspect. However, such a categorisation of teachers' stages is somewhat arbitrary and more a

constraint than a support with regard to the intention of examining the research within the field. That is not to say that the attempt to divide studies of teachers' career stages into a paradigmatic and a narrative category is without value, but like most categorizations, focusing on differences and similarities concerning one particular aspect often leads to a neglect of differences and similarities concerning other aspects. This means that there are other aspects that may have been ignored in teachers' professional lives (Bayer, 2005).

The two theories complement each other in that the Collaborative Leadership Theory is relevant as a guide to explain collaborative leadership practices while Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Cycle Model is relevant in terms of explaining TPD issues. None of these two theories can serve these two purposes alone, hence the reason they have been paired in this study. For instance, for the teachers to have job satisfaction, there is need for them to be provided with professional development. That TPD that they need should be a collaborative effort of all stakeholders so that they can feel supported for teaching and learning to go on without any hindrance.

3.4 Summation of the chapter

The chapter presented the theoretical framework in which Chrislip and Larson's Collaborative Leadership Theories as well as Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Cycle Model were explored. The chapter gave some explanations on the theories' key aspects and their relevance in this study. It further focused on the different contexts in which both theories can be applied as well as detailed explanations of the two theories on how they complement each other.

CHAPTER FOUR

Research design and methodology

4.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter dealt with the theoretical framework underpinning this study. The current chapter presents the research methodology and design that were followed in carrying out this study. It further explores the research paradigm and research approach. The data generation methods that enabled me to gather data from different participants will be explored in this chapter. In addition, the selection of research participants, sample size, data analysis is also highlighted. Lastly, I will explain how measures of trustworthiness, the value of research and ethical considerations, which are also the primary components of this chapter to be covered, were considered.

4.2 Research paradigm

This study adopts an interpretive research paradigm, wherein interpretivism is characterised as a sociological research approach that examines actions and events based on the beliefs, norms, and values of the culture within which they occur (Hepler & Cloud, 2022). Interpretivists posit the existence of multiple realities and acknowledge that diverse pathways lead to knowledge acquisition (Nickerson, 2023), implying that no single methodology can comprehensively capture phenomena. Within this paradigm, phenomena are analysed through the lens of the cultural background of the society in which they manifest.

Lambert (2012) notes that in the interpretivist paradigm, researchers reject the notion of an external reality waiting to be uncovered; instead, they contend that reality is constructed through the varied perceptions of individuals navigating intricate social and physical environments. Consequently, studies within this paradigm are contextualised within the social milieu in which they are conducted. Adom and Ankrah (2016) assert that this paradigm aims to understand phenomena from the perspectives and viewpoints of the participants involved. It operates on the principle that individuals seek to comprehend the world by constructing subjective meaning from their lived experiences (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). According to Creswell and Poth (2018), knowledge is formulated as individuals engage with their environment and interpret their experiences.

Interpretivists recognise and account for the diversity among individuals, considering how these differences shape the ways in which people attribute meaning to their experiences.

Therefore, this paradigm was used because I wanted to explore the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors in supporting TPD from the perspectives of the participants. They had to respond on the basis of their different schools and offices which are their different social contexts. Not only that but the participants also took part through their different positions (district-based education inspectors, principals, HODs, and teachers). The participants had different experiences which were brought about by their duties and responsibilities. So, whatever each said during the data generation was what he or she believed and understood from their context. My intention was to evaluate what would be expressed by the participants to ascertain the facts about the collaborative leadership practices of the inspectors to support TPD.

Cohen et al. (2020) assert that the interpretive researchers' aim is to try to understand how the reality happens at one time and in one place and compare it with what goes on in different times and places. That is why in this study, the participants' responses are based on their experiences in their workplaces at different times.

A paradigm has some philosophical assumptions which are discussed below. These include ontology, epistemology.

4.2.1 Ontology

As stated by Lincoln and Guba (2013), ontology denotes the nature of reality, which is actually about how we know that something is real. In this world, researchers have to make assumptions that in the world they investigate, people have their own thoughts, interpretations and meanings (Moon & Blackman, 2017; Shahzad et al., 2021.) In this study, the participants expressed their multiple views on the leadership practices as well as their knowledge of what is really happening in their cases or contexts.

Data is gathered from individuals and organizations while they go about their daily business, not in the safe haven of a laboratory or a library (Yin & Wang, 2014). In this study, the realities of the participants were better known by them and could be expressed by them and not anybody,

hence the reason they were involved in the study. The interprevists believe that there are multiple realities, so this study is centred on that believe.

4.2.2 Epistemology

Epistemology studies how we know and what counts as knowledge. It actually answers questions like: what is knowledge? How do we know that this or that exists? (Trivedi, 2020). Du Plooy (2017) states that one of the ontological assumptions in the interpretive paradigm is that reality is subjective and that perceptions into communication, as part of the social world, can be derived from the perspectives of the subjects. The epistemology is about the information that counts as acceptable knowledge and how it should be acquired and interpreted (Meem, 2020).

The idea that epistemology is an inference or meaning that is produced in consideration of the sort of knowledge and how the world is perceived and thought critically about is in line with the same viewpoint. In its most basic form, it refers to the process of obtaining and disseminating information (Crotty, 2020; Stănicke et al., 2020). The study of epistemology focuses on the interaction between the knower and the known while examining the beginnings of nature and the boundaries of human knowledge (Vialdino, 2009). It also deals with the different ways of knowing relative to the nature of knowledge from the point of view of researchers' belief system in terms of beliefs about the certainty, structure, complexity, and sources of knowledge (Gillani, 2021; Khan & Muhammad, 2022.). In this study, epistemology is crucial for me in exploring the differences between people, especially in their capacity as social actors in the various positions that they hold.

In this study, teacher professional development was explored considering the district-based education inspectors and other stakeholders in their attempt to ensure that teachers were exposed to professional development activities. Those groups of people have to interact in one way or another under normal circumstances in their workplaces for teaching and learning to occur. Specifically, the education inspectors work very closely with the school principals particularly about the overall running of schools. Similarly, the school principals interact with the HODs and teachers almost all the time. Therefore, the major social contexts in which the participants in this study interact are the schools and the education office.

4.3 Research approach

The method I chose to gather, evaluate, and interpret data is known as a research methodology (Budert-Waltz & Moffitt, 2021). Because this study is exploratory in nature, a qualitative research technique was used to conduct it. To go further into the issue and identify patterns in ideas and mental processes, qualitative research is employed (Kasirye, 2021; Wyse, 2011). I was able to learn more about the inspectors' collaborative leadership techniques in this study through the questions posed to the various participants. Moreover, the qualitative research technique is a research investigation that emphasises on the experience and significance of a phenomena of interest, in line with the interpretative research paradigm (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This shows that it is more communicative in that participants opened up on issues surrounding them and the information was perceived from the situations where it was collected.

Additionally, Nguyen et al. (2022) state that in qualitative research, the understanding of the phenomena is explored through the varied, lived experiences of people or communities. That is why the qualitative research approach is appropriate in this case so that it could help to respond to questions about experiences, meaning and perspective from considering the opinions of the participants. It is the study of what the phenomena are, including its many forms, the environment in which they exist, or the viewpoints from which they might be investigated, according to Busetto et al. (2020). Since the data gathered via qualitative research is unvarnished and unfiltered, people can grow to trust it (Hoover, 2021; Bhandari, 2022).

Ugwu and Eze (2023) argue that qualitative studies rely on the direct experiences of people and interpretation of the meaning associated with their experiences. In this study, the district-based education inspectors, school principals, HODs and teachers shared their experiences and such experiences were interpreted in order to come up with the meaning.

4.4 Research design

A case study is defined as an examination of a single instance within a bounded system, such as a child, a group, a classroom, a school, or a community and it offers a detailed, empirically rich, and holistic portrayal of phenomena (Creswell 1994, p. 12; Willis, 2014). There are different types of case studies. This study employs a multiple case study approach, which is utilized to investigate similarities and differences across cases (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018).

This study focuses on four selected schools and the Ministry of Education and Training department office, constituting the five cases under scrutiny. According to Yin (2014), when feasible (and resources permit), multiple-case designs may be preferable to single-case designs. This is because conclusions drawn from the analysis of multiple cases, independently arriving from two cases, akin to two experiments, carry greater statistical power than those derived from a single case alone. In this case, there are five cases that were explored, which makes the findings even more credible.

By using numerous data sources in the investigation, this type of research design gives the researcher the chance to comprehend the phenomena at a deeper level (Rashid et al., 2019; Hoover, 2021; Gustafsson, 2017). In particular, this study used the four groups of participants (district-based education inspectors, principals, HODs and teachers) from their different offices, duties or responsibilities with the purpose of exploring their perspectives on the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors in supporting TPD. This was helpful in that the different groups helped generate rich data that enabled me to draw enough conclusions to help compare and contrast the cases.

Moreover, Mc Combes (2019) asserts that it is a design that is employed to assess, examine, and comprehend several facets of the study topic. The many facets being investigated in this context include the inspectors' collaborative leadership styles and their backing of TPD. Case studies frequently purposefully concentrate on uncommon, disregarded, or outlier examples that might provide fresh insight about the study question (Mc Combes, 2022). This design was appropriate for this study since in this context, there are five cases that were explored. For instance, the cases

were identified in a particular pre-planned manner in which the four schools selected were in terms of their types (two were private schools while two were public). The fifth case is that of the district education office. It is advantageous to use this design when a study is conducted on a person or a group of people and in this case, education inspectors, principals, heads of department and teacher were studied.

Due to its many benefits, this design was the best type of research design for it used different research methodologies whose analysis would offer a comprehensive, empirically rich, and nuanced explanation of a particular phenomenon (Willis, 2014; Yin, 2018).). This indicates that the study's findings are particularly rich since they draw from a variety of situations and individuals, each of whom had their own unique perspectives and understandings.

One advantage of this design is that data is collected from various sources, allowing for an in-depth examination of the experiences of a single person, a family, a group, a community, or an organization. For example, during interviews, researchers can interact with participants to gain deeper insights. Mc Combes (2019) suggests that this research design is useful for making comparisons, evaluating, and understanding different aspects of the research problem. In this case, it was used to obtain concrete, contextual, and comprehensive knowledge about the collaborative efforts of education inspectors with stakeholders to improve and support teacher professional development.

Additionally, case studies utilize multiple data sources (Rashid et al., 2019). For instance, in this study, data was collected from education inspectors, teachers, principals, and heads of department (HODs) to ensure a diverse range of perspectives. This comprehensive approach to data generation enabled me to analyse findings from various viewpoints, thus addressing research questions more effectively. This was done with the aim of understanding what really goes on within the Ministry of Education and Training in relation to the management practices and the professional development support provided to teachers.

This research consists of five different case studies. In these particular examples, my goal was to determine if the district-based education inspectors provide assistance for the professional development of teachers in those four schools, considering that teachers are the ones who need it

most. I wanted to establish if the inspectors at the education office would admit to working with the other stakeholders to promote TPD.

Moreover, utilizing the multi-case study in this study enabled me to focus on the participants' opinions, feelings, experiences and inner thoughts (Ahmed, 2008; Yin, 2014). The assumption was that the education inspectors, principals, HODs and teachers have their feelings and perceptions on issues happening around them and they have their different ways of interpreting their experiences.

Although Crowe et al. (2011) state that case study research has received some criticism for lacking scientific thoroughness, and giving little basis for generalization, transparency was achieved in this study by giving a detailed description of the steps involved in case selection, data generation, and providing the reasons for the particular methods chosen. In addition, the background of the study will assist the readers to assess its trustworthiness.

Multiple cases may be carried out for several reasons. They extend developing theory, fill theoretical categories, provide examples of polar types or replicate previously selected cases to come up with new theoretical directions, (Halkias et al., 2023). In this case, the theoretical framework in this study helps to explore new theoretical directions. In this study, the multiple case study served as a potentially valuable means of capturing the complexity of collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors while revealing the rich exploration of the context in which collaborative leadership is practiced.

4.5 Data generation methods

In order to get participant data and answers to the study questions, certain data generation methods are used. This section addresses the data generation techniques that were employed. The present study included various data gathering techniques, including in-person interviews, focus groups, document analysis, and collage.

4.5.1 Semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews

The study included semi-structured individual face-to-face interviews as one of its data gathering techniques. For conducting qualitative studies, interviews have long been the standard procedure

(Saarijärvi & Bratt, 2021). A face-to-face interview is one in which only the respondent is present during the interview session. This strategy is conversational and allows for the opportunity to ask participants detailed questions. An in-depth interview, according to Guion et al. (2011) is the type of interview where the goal is to get detailed information beyond basic and cursory responses. All participants (district-based education inspectors, principals, HODs) had to share their experiences in accordance with their roles in the different working environments that they operate in. For this reason, these interviews often take a long time and can involve many questions with one participant. The multiple questions enabled me to get deep details of the participants' experiences.

The use of semi-structured interviews, which are characterised as interviews in which some questions are preset and others are not, was justified by the study's emphasis on probing replies (George, 2022; Belotto, 2018). These interviews were performed in order to obtain a thorough understanding of the collaborative leadership techniques employed by the district-based education inspectors. The participants' perceptions of the professional development requirements of teachers were taken into consideration when interpreting the meaning of the interviews. The interviews were steered by an interview schedule, which included open-ended questions that prompted the participants to explore the nature of experiences they have in their work environments regarding the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development. Semi-structured interviews allow flexibility and adaptability because its direction is fully controlled by the researcher (Ruslin et al., 2022). The interviews allowed me to get as much data as I needed since probing was done in order to get the necessary details for this study. Even in cases where the participants could not hear clearly, I made sure I repeated for better understanding of what was asked.

According to Singh et al. (2023), the goal of doing this kind of interviewing is to gather in-depth data that illuminates a person's perspective, experiences, emotions, and the meaning they draw from a certain topic or situation. So, in this study the principals and HODs each have their own perceptions of the ways in which they see the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors since they come into contact with them during the inspections in their respective schools. Apart from that, the inspectors are expected to provide their own opinions on the ways in which they support teachers in those schools. So, all the participants were able to give their feelings regarding their experiences with the other stakeholders. This was the most suitable

method since during an interview, one is able to capture non-verbal and verbal cues and the interviewer is the one in control of the whole conversation. The literature demonstrates that the researcher can obtain sufficient data to address the study issues since this strategy permits probing (Marshall et al, 2016; Bhat, 2020). Using this approach offers a compelling way to get comprehensive information on people's beliefs and motives.

The data collected was non-numeric since this is a qualitative study. The nature of responses that the participants gave determined which questions I asked further. This is because the data was collected through one-to-one discussions. The conversations were audio taped for proper storage of data. However, field notes that were also written were helpful in recording the occurrences that would have a bearing on the analysis of data in the later stage. Additionally, those field notes helped during the transcription of data before analysis. In this study, the interviews were conducted in such a way that I asked one question at a time and when I was satisfied with the answer, I proceeded to the next. The first participants to be interviewed were the district-based education inspectors. In the schools, the first participants interviewed were the principals, then followed by the HODs.

4.5.2 Focus groups interviews

Focus group discussions, which are described as a research approach that involves gathering a small group of people to respond to questions in a monitored setting, are an additional type of interview that I conducted (George, 2021). The groups of teachers who were involved in the focus groups were a reasonable number to allow moderation to happen smoothly. According to published research, focus group participants are carefully selected people who possess experience or knowledge in the relevant field and who can contribute to the information on the intended topic in order to obtain the necessary data (Gundumogula & Gundumogula, 2020; Kitzinger, 1995). The focus group participants in this study were limited to the teachers from the four schools that were chosen. Furthermore, it was anticipated that the teachers would be aware of their TPD experiences.

As George (2021) states that it is vital to have more than one moderator in the room, that was the case in this study. Additionally, as the moderator, I took a lead in asking questions. There was a co-moderator who was given some training prior to the activity. She was the one who coordinated

the technology, took notes, and observed the participants' behaviour during the discussions. One of the benefits of focus groups is that one can be open to a wide variety of opinions, which can lead to unexpected conclusions. The teachers in all the four cases showed some eagerness to take part in the discussions though to a lesser extent a few of them were passive. Unexpected findings were revealed from the focus groups and as such, they increased the utility of the study. In all cases, the discussions got so heated when the teachers were expressing their opinions about the inspections that are conducted in their schools by the district-based inspectors.

Focus group discussions have certain advantages. They save time in comparison to a surveys or experiments, and one gets immediate results and the results are often more coherent and intuitive than raw data (Kitzinger, 1995). Focus groups are entirely different from other data collecting techniques that allow for individual data gathering since they encourage spontaneous cooperation among participants (Gundumogula, 2021). Additionally, when gathering data, organizations have a good opportunity to observe and take into account the thoughts, feelings, attitudes, opinions, and answers of the populace (Gundumogula, 2020). The opportunity for the participants to talk about their experiences in a group environment made it easier for the other teachers to interact with them. The discussions allowed the teachers to fully engage with me in the questions since there were some questions where they sought clarity and were able to provide responses.

4.5.3 Collage

This study also used a collage which is one of the art-based data generation methods. It provides an engaging and collaborative approach to support exploration of complex understandings and meanings of the phenomena; that includes capturing some contexts that might not be easily shown via traditional interviews (Stubbs et al., 2021). Such an approach is an innovative way that explored deeper understandings of the education inspectors' support of teacher professional development that would not be easily verbalised or explored in interviews. In order to represent something pertinent to a study, usually a brand or an activity, research participants create rough collages from magazines or other visual materials using a projective or enabling technique called collage (Culshaw, 2019).

In this study, this data generation method was divided into two sessions. The first was collage-making and was followed by the interviews. The collage-making activity was done with the use of photographs, newspapers, and magazine articles. Participants were provided with a range of drawing/painting materials in case their views and feelings were not covered among the photographs, newspapers and articles. They received some verbal guidelines from me which were clear enough to guide them in the activity they were to engage in. For instance, in this activity, participants were expected to find pictures from magazines or newspapers and cut them out and paste them on a piece of paper to make a collage. After making the collage, the next step was to write their description of their collages, responding to the points that were given to guide them and that would be showing how their collages were related to their professional lives and feelings. This departure from spoken communication facilitates the acquisition of spontaneous information and may provide access to non-verbal facets of the subject that would not otherwise be expressed, opening them up for debate (Gerstenblatt, 2023).

A series of interview questions targeted at various individuals guided the collage-making exercise. In Stubbs et al.'s study (2021) which employed the art-based data collecting approach, participants provided descriptions of their artwork to aid in interpretation and analysis once it was completed (as confirmed verbally by me). This study was conducted in a similar manner. Voice recordings of the participant descriptions of their artwork were made, and the transcriptions were verbatim. The participants were invited to relate their experiences to the professional growth of teachers. They were made aware by me that the purpose of the arts-based activity was to explore their opinions rather than their creative abilities. Gerstenblatt, (2013) states that collage-making allows collaboration between the researcher and the participants. Moreover, artworks always represent anonymised personal experiences of the participants (Smyth et al., 2022). Since a collage is an artwork, this also applies to it.

The findings – later to be presented – imply that art-based approaches enhance insightful capacity and social existence and that they should be related to participants' individual work-context (Sandberg et al., 2022). The collages made were actually based on each individual participant's working context. A collage was used with the purpose of allowing creativity and multimodal formats to foster a holistic approach and knowledge towards education (Tsompanaki, & Magos, 2022). This shows that collage-making is worth using judging from the number of benefits this provided in this study. The appropriateness of collage-making in this study increased awareness of teacher professional development conditions which were not well understood or managed. It was also helpful in connecting participants with the challenges they have, while at the same time, generally highlighting the experiences of teachers in different types of schools.

The collage was made with the following materials: a collage box containing the pictures, magazines, newspaper articles and words (which were based on the themes and sub-themes explored in the study), glue stick, pencils, voice recorder, and camera for photographing. In addition, the collage-making started before the interviews. Participants were allowed to chat while working on their collages. There was note taking while participants were still making their collages. Time was given to participants to explain their collages.

Furthermore, the participants were asked to select different pictures showing their different emotions about the collaboration of the stakeholders in supporting teacher professional development. Then they were also asked to choose or select a topic under which the pictures fell as well as matching the challenges with the recommendations appropriate for them.

After that, the participants gave their reflections on the collaging activity. The purpose was to get feedback on how they felt about the collaging activity on the basis of the availability of materials as well as the time given. Once complete, the collages were photographed with the permission of the participants. During the interviews, the participants were free to refer to the collages they had made.

4.5.4 Document analysis

In this study, document analysis was used as a data collecting technique. Documents are defined by Merriam & Tisdell (2016) as a broad category of resources, including graphical sources like

images, movies, and videos. According to Patton (2015), document analysis is an important research technique that has been applied for a long time. Document analysis, according to Kutsyuruba (2023), is a qualitative technique that entails a methodical process for locating, picking, assessing (or making sense of) and synthesising the data contained in documents in order to study and evaluate them. In a similar vein, other academics claim that document analysis is an organised method of researching or assessing printed and electronic materials, requiring data analysis and interpretation in order to extract meaning, comprehend, and produce empirical knowledge (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Rapley, 2007).

In document analysis, a variety of documents can be examined; these include books, brochures, manuals, background papers, agendas, attendance records, and minutes of meetings. These might also include notebooks and journals; printed event schedules; memos and letters; maps and charts; and newspaper clippings and stories. Press releases; program proposals, application forms, and summaries; radio and television show scripts; institutional or organizational reports; survey results; and various public documents from other data sources are all possible inclusions (Bowen, 2013). Analysing various sorts of documents, such as novels, newspaper articles, academic journal articles, and official reports, is the process of document analysis. According to Patton (2015), any document containing text can serve as a source for qualitative analysis. The advantages of using document analysis include, among others, its efficiency in comparison with other methods, that is, it is time-saving since there are several available documents in the public domain, particularly during this age of the internet, and are accessible without the authors' permission.

Document analysis is less costly compared to the other research methods and is often an alternative method when the collection of new data is not practicable. As Merriam (1988) argued, locating public records is limited only by one's imagination and industriousness. In this study, some documents were also used whose purpose was to serve as evidence for the better understanding of how teachers' professional development is being managed as well as for the exploration of the district-based education inspectors' collaborative leadership practices. The documents that were requested from the principals for analysis were school action plans, school progress reports, school staff minutes, departmental minutes, and school board minutes. The reason for asking for the minutes' books was to find out if there were any deliberations during meetings that involved the

inspectors' support in TPD activities in the schools. Similarly, the action plans were viewed in order to be familiar with the school plans for TPD activities and also to see if there were any plans involving the district-based education inspectors' intervention in TPD activities. The progress reports were used to explore the extent to which the TPD activities were done in the schools.

4.6 Selection of research participants

In qualitative research, participant selection is contingent upon the study's objectives and is largely left to the researcher's judgment (Musarrat et al., 2019). According to Abrams (2010), sampling is a crucial part of any study design. Non-probability sampling was the method utilised in this study to choose the participants. The population's chances of getting chosen are not equal for each member using this method (Bremer, 2016). The type of non-probability sampling method used in this study is a purposive sampling method which is used to reduce the number of potential participants in a study (Thomas, 2022). It is used for selecting participants in terms of their positions, knowledge and experiences for they hold different positions and have different roles they play in their work places (Crossman, 2020; Gundumogula, 2020; George, 2023).). This was appropriate for the participants in this study were selected in terms of their positions, knowledge and experiences without using statistical or mathematical tools. To be precise, teachers, principals, and education inspectors all hold different positions and play different roles in their workplaces. Each of them has full knowledge about their day-to-day activities at work and can best provide all the necessary data in answering the research questions.

Even while greater knowledge and effort are required at the beginning of each stage, it saved a great deal of time by making data collecting easier. This approach was crucial to the study since it gave me a wider range of options for the purposive sampling and because of the flexibility it saved money and time while collecting data.

Nonetheless, given that their experiences may vary with regard to professional growth, the instructors who were chosen were those who had less than five years of teaching experience as well as those who had more than five years. Because of their maturity, each of them was therefore in an excellent position to provide a thorough account of their interactions with the principals, department heads, and education inspectors in their varied school settings.

For the purpose of this study, six teachers who were involved in the focus groups were selected according to their experience in the teaching profession (those who had less than 10 years and those with less than 20 years and those with more than 20 years in the teaching profession). This was because their experiences were likely to differ according to their teaching experience. The questions were open-ended and designed to shed light on their exposure to professional development. There was only one focus group in each school, making the total of four groups. Each group in each school had six teachers with their varying years of experience; meaning there were novice as well as experienced teachers who were chosen purposively. The reason for that was to have a balanced representation of teachers in their different experiences in the teaching profession.

4.7 Sample size

Qualitative samples are typically small and should be selected purposively in order to make a selection of the cases that are rich in information for the in-depth study. Furthermore, in certain cases, there may be very few people of around five who serve as a population in a qualitative study (Creswell, 1998; Patton, 2002). In most focus groups, there are 6–10 participants and it is advisable to over-recruit just in case someone does not show up (Staff, 2022; George, 2023). It was on these grounds that data was collected from four inspectors from the Ministry of Education and Training. Additional participants in the study were four high school principals who were equally involved in terms of school type; two private high schools and two public high schools. From each school, two Heads of department participated in the study. Additionally, six teachers in each school were selected for the interview in a focus group. The total population was made up of 24 participants. The reason for using different types of schools is that they have different proprietorship which makes them different in terms of financial power and organisation.

4.8 Data analysis

Once data has been collected, one should find patterns, connections and relationships with the aim of finding meaningful insights in the data (Bhatia, 2020). Data analysis is explained as the proceedings taking place when examining, filtering, adapting and modelling data to help come up with solutions for the problems (Stephens, 2022). In addition, the research questions, participants, the environment, and the kind of data collected from the qualitative research are used to inform selection of analytic technique (Creswell & Poth, 2018). There is a variety of techniques for analysing qualitative data and since there is no prescribed way to address the process, one that was found appropriate in this study is a thematic data analysis strategy.

This section also offers some explanations of the various data analysis methods applied in this qualitative investigation. Since this is a multiple case study, data analysis calls for me to go over the data multiple times to ensure that it is all appropriate for the interpretations offered or conclusions drawn (that is, without unexplained irregularities or contradictions; this is known as the constant comparison method). Additionally, I must ensure that all of the data is accounted for, that competing interpretations are taken into account, and that the most significant aspects of the case are highlighted. These procedures were followed in this study.

4.8.1 Thematic data analysis

This data analysis approach is one of the most commonly used in the field of qualitative research. Finding patterns is the method's primary goal, and the results are presented as themes created by the researcher (Lochmiller, 2021; Wiltshire & Ronkainen, 2021). A popular technique for methodically analysing qualitative data, including transcripts from focus groups and interviews, is thematic analysis. It analyses categorizations and current themes (patterns) in connection to data

(Ibrahim, 2012). Several topics in this study emerged from the data that was produced. It is one of several techniques aimed at finding themes or patterns of significance within a set of data.

Using this method, the researcher carefully examines the data to find recurring themes — topics, concepts, and meaning patterns (Caufield 2020; Wiltshire & Ronkainen, 2021). Other scholars view this as a method of data analysis that identifies trends and patterns of the data, which is key to analysing qualitative data (Li, & Zhang, 2022). This actually strengthens the fact that it allowed me to relate very closely with the collected data, thereby exploring it in order to know it fully. It was on that basis that in this study, the content from the interviews of the respondents was explored.

This data analysis strategy is known to have several advantages. It is a method which commonly allows for a nuanced understanding of what people say and do within their particular social contexts in order to understand their experiences, ideas and perceptions about a given topic. In this study, this method of data analysis was appropriate since this is a multiple case study that deals with people who have multiple realities. Thematic analysis can also be used with interviews and focus groups and other sources of data, such as documents or images, (Jowsey et al., 2021). That is why in this study, the same data generation methods mentioned above are used, hence the suitability of the thematic analysis of data for this study. Further to this, it was the appropriate strategy to use since the principals, HODs, teachers and education inspectors gave their opinions, experiences, knowledge and values in the data and therefore, it was easier to use the inductive approach which allowed data to determine the themes to be used in the analysis.

The most important part of data analysis and management is to be true to the participants, (Sutton & Austin, 2015). So, care was taken to hear their voices so that they could be interpreted and later reported on for others to read and learn from them. That is why the participants in this study were audio recorded during the interviews. This facilitated the process of keeping data and helping in keeping the exact record of the participants in their exact words and alleviated data loss or misinterpretations.

4.8.1 Transcription

While there is a vast literature that considers the collection and analysis of qualitative data, there has been limited attention to audio transcription as part of this process (McMullin, 2021). This is one of the reasons for having chosen to transcribe data in this study. Writers on transcription have pointed to the understanding that transcription represents an audiotaped or videotaped record, and the record itself represents an interactive event (Clark, 2017). This is substantiated by literature that states that representation of audible and visual data into written form is an interpretive process which is therefore the first step in analysing data (Bailey, 2008).

Researchers across disciplines for many years have found transcription to be an important component of the data analysis process (Lapadat, & Lindsay, 1999). It is not just the transcription product — those verbatim words written down — that is important; it is also the process that is valuable. In this study, the analysis of data took place and understandings were derived through the process of constructing a transcript by listening and re-listening, viewing and re-viewing. Transcription facilitates the close attention and the interpretive thinking that is needed to make sense of the data (Lapadat & Lindsay, 1999). This is what made this strategy suitable for this study in particular.

Since the interviews were recorded, transcription helped catch every single detail by providing the interviewers with enough time to focus on their specialty rather than worrying about the speakers and writing down every detail. Transcription also eliminated the need to rewind and replay audio/video in this study. Most importantly, transcriptions enable the general public to access the research content easily and completely, which can be time-consuming and frustrating. This is because in this situation, human verbatim transcription services can accurately detect background noises, conversation pauses, mumbled words and phrases, and grammatical errors.

Many qualitative studies collect audio or video data (for example, recordings of interviews, focus groups or talk in consultation), and these are usually transcribed into written form for closer study. Transcribing appears to be a straightforward technical task, but in fact involves judgements about

what level of detail to choose. Thus, care was taken to choose those relevant parts of data that would help answer the research questions.

Additionally, verbatim transcription was done to change spoken words to the written words for proper interpretation of data analysis. There was the numbering of the lines of texts. After transcribing the interviews, the lines were read listening to the recordings for the purpose of checking or correcting any errors and the notations were inserted for pauses, laughter, looks of discomfort so that anything that might have any impact on the findings was shown clearly.

4.8.2 Coding

The next step was coding. According to Caufield (2020), coding entails highlighting phrases and sentences and labelling them, and coming up with codes that describe their content. Additionally, O’Kane et al. (2021) posit that developing codes for the data helps simplify the data analysis methods in qualitative research. Assigning codes implies categorising and setting patterns and properties to the collected data and helps in compressing the vast amount of information collected. Applying codes from text retrieval allowed for consistency in coding and as such, no specific words or phrases were missed. In this study, coding was done so that the issues, topics, similarities, and differences identified in the study were revealed through participants’ responses.

4.8.3 Interpretation of data

The next step was the interpretation of data which according to literature, is the process of reviewing data and making meaningful conclusions using different analytical approaches (Connors, 2018). Similarly, this is defined as a method for breaking down or analysing qualitative data (Whatagraph Team Dec 17, 2021).

I was then able to comprehend the experiences of the participants by interpreting the data and taking notes on the physical copy of the transcription. To address the study questions, data interpretation aids in the categorization, manipulation, and summarization of the material (Dates, & Schoen, undated). Similar to this, Syracuse University describes data interpretation as the act of

giving the gathered information meaning and figuring out the ramifications, relevance, and conclusions of the results.

For this study, data interpretation was handled in four steps. The first was to assemble the information that was needed. This refers to the process of writing down all the responses and organising them in a way that they would convey the real meaning that the participants wanted to convey including all the actions that would form part of what had to be analysed.

The second step was developing findings or isolating the most appropriate inputs. This was done by identifying parts of the data that was available and actually formed part of what was relevant for this study. Ensuring that only the relevant information was included entailed the fact that only the data that was helping answer the research questions and aligned with the research aims and objectives was explored.

The third stage included creating insights or determining the most pertinent inputs. This was achieved by determining which elements of the available data were actually relevant to this inquiry. To ensure that only relevant information was included, care had to be taken to confirm that only the data that supported the study's aims and objectives and addressed the research questions was processed.

The fourth step was to come up with recommendations or relevant solutions that would help curb the problems relating to district-based inspectors' collaborative leadership practices and their support of teacher professional development. Care was taken to consider how the findings dictated the course of action, while at the same time ensuring that the analysed data was actually relevant to the problem being addressed. Data interpretation aided me in making categories, manipulating, and summarising data in order to make meaningful decisions. Those decisions helped me to gain deeper understanding of the phenomenon under study.

To evaluate the data, the qualitative data interpretation approach was utilized. Instead of using names or patterns, words were used to make descriptions of data (Calzon, 2022).

Ultimately, a synthesis of the study findings was created in order to gather and summarise participant opinion, backed up where needed by direct quotations. Findings are conclusions drawn from the data gathered from participant replies. These are the quotes that encapsulate the key ideas.

Findings support the formation of a more detailed and accurate interpretation, which is advantageous for drawing conclusions. As a result, I examined the data in this instance and attempted to explain it before carefully noting and summarising any trends, patterns, or absence of patterns. As a result, I was careful to draw conclusions from the gathered data.

4.9 Measures of trustworthiness

Transparency is the most significant factor in determining the trustworthiness of qualitative research (Adler, 2022). Importantly, good participant communication that tackles knowledge asymmetry and eases participants' concerns about taking part in a study shows a high degree of trust. For this reason, during the study process, the following measures were guaranteed: credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability.

4.9.1 Credibility

In order to show or establish how true and accurate the study findings would be, the use of purposive or selective sampling was of great help since making use of the population that actually experiences and are indeed in the situation curbed the problem of misinformation. Inspectors, principals, HODs and teachers as adults did not show signs of immaturity to the extent of giving wrong information about their experiences since one of the things one gathered is that they appeared eager to change the circumstances they are facing in relation to teacher professional development. The school principals, as administrators, are the very people who deal with professional development of teachers under their supervision, and the teachers' experiences in the day-to-day dealings with the principals could provide deeper insights into PD-related matters.

A case study database can provide an evidence source for verification and responder validation, according to Yin (2009) Yin emphasises the need to maintain meticulous documentation of all elements and phases of the research so that they may be verified (transparency). Thus, such records were preserved for this investigation as part of ensuring its credibility.

According to Adler (2022), triangulation refers to the process of verifying research twice in order to increase its credibility (Stahl & King, 2020; Patton, 1999). Another technique to make sure the researcher's conclusions are true from a native viewpoint is to have study participants to read the

analysis and results and provide feedback. Member-checking is the term used to describe this type of triangulation (Stahl & King, 2020). Researchers might utilize techniques like triangulation in ongoing comparisons of new patterns and data to build trustworthiness (Nguyen et al., 2021).

In this case data triangulation, which is the use of various data sources, was used. Teachers, principals and education officers were the chief data sources for this study. Since these sources were different people from different places, occupying different positions, and interviewed at different times, that helped generate the kind of data that would not be influenced to change by anything or anyone.

Another strategy for guaranteeing accuracy is methodological triangulation, which is the process by which a researcher uses many methodologies (often three) to confirm validity (Patton, 1999). Because of this, the four data gathering techniques utilized in this multiple case study — focus groups, document analysis, collage, and in-person interviews — helped to ensure the study's credibility.

Environmental triangulation is used in cases where it is likely that the findings may be influenced by environmental factors. This ensures the correctness of the data and a thorough understanding of the issues that surround professional development and innovative perspectives around it (Devault, 2019). In addition, I had made myself familiar with the culture of participants before the data generation took place by making preliminary visits to their workplaces. This was done in order to guarantee that the conclusions would not be impacted. Various papers may be utilized as information sources to provide context, elucidate the attitudes and behaviours of the subjects, and validate specific facts provided by the participants (Shenton, 2004; Guba, 1981). As a result, in this instance, the information used to determine the degree to which school administrators integrate professional development in their policies came from the action plans and minute books.

4.9.2 Transferability

This has to do with generating the study results and trying to apply them to other situations (Devault, 2019). This study is likely to be applicable to or replicated in other contexts with similar characteristics. Therefore, the findings have been presented using thick descriptions in order to

indicate that teachers' experiences in Lesotho are still similar to those of other teachers in different places. Literature further emphasises that transferability can be achieved by a full description of the research context and underlying assumptions (Trochim, 2006).

4.9.3 Confirmability

This refers to the extent of objectivity in the results (Kasiry, 2021). The use of in-person interviews with the help of an audio recorder to capture the participants' conversations with me, followed by transcription of the entire conversation, was thought to be a way to guarantee that the findings would be a true reflection of the participants' co-input in the entire research project. This would ensure that the findings were based on the responses of the participants, not any potential bias.

4.9.4 Dependability

This is the degree to which the study's results would hold up to replication by other researchers (Nguyen et al., 2021). To verify that the results are consistent, an inquiry audit was utilized to evaluate and scrutinise the data analysis and research procedures. This guaranteed that all the data from the study would be available to anybody wishing to repeat it, and that the results, interpretations, and conclusions would remain the same. This therefore guarantees that the study is based on authentic processes which other researchers could verify.

4.10 Value of the research

This study is intended to act as a tool which could guide teachers who aspire for professional development and growth. They will be informed about the range of professional development activities available to them, and which they could use to better their teaching for students' improved performance. Knowing about those activities will be a way of empowering the teachers since they in turn could aspire to engage in those activities.

Moreover, this study will be a fundamental reference for policy makers as it highlights some of the challenges teachers encounter in their attempts to access professional development activities. Such knowledge could help them in designing some policies that will better suit the needs of teachers for whom such activities are provided. If teachers' needs are met, that could eventually

lead to the improvement of their work of teaching as well as enhancing the performance of their learners.

In addition, this study will also be an essential tool that helps education inspectors to improve their work by working collaboratively with the relevant stakeholders to improve teacher professional development. That collaboration could open doors for more innovation in as far as teaching and learning is concerned.

Adding to that, school administrators will use this study to assess their professional development policies and the execution of their duties in relation to teachers' job satisfaction and needs. They would be in a position to know how their provision of professional development activities impacts the teachers and the learners. This will therefore enable them to make informed decisions and address teachers' grievances in relation to professional development activities.

The study will also help district inspectors to reflect on their collaborative efforts, decide which areas need improvement and come up with better strategies to improve them. Once areas of improvement are known, it becomes easier to map the way forward towards strengthening teacher professional development processes.

Another intended outcome is that educational leaders will carry out their responsibilities by taking part in professional development programmes that allow them to apply new knowledge and skills to implement the best professional development practices for teachers in their schools, thereby updating and improving their job performance.

Exposure to this study will also help teachers to stay abreast with the new advanced professional development activities that would help them move away from the old, stereotyped teaching strategies to new innovations in the teaching profession. This could make them dynamic individuals who in turn will improve the quality of their instructions leading to improved students' performance.

School principals will also benefit and be informed about the necessity of updating their teacher preparation programmes to satisfy the demands of educators in light of the growing expectations on schools to demonstrate students' growth as 21st century learners. As a result, this will serve as

a tool to support teacher professional development, which is something that school administrators occasionally fail to see.

In addition, the study will create an awareness of the need for rigorous networking between the educational leaders for communication at both national and international levels. People, as social beings, learn a lot from one another through their interactions, both physically and otherwise. Further values of the study will be as follows:

- Inspire teachers to participate in professional programmes to improve their teaching as well as other benefits like certification of attendance, certification of successful completion, salary increments, career advancement and promotions. Some of these achievements contribute to raising teachers' levels of job satisfaction.
- Make principals aware that their continuous improvement and learning is vital for student learning, teacher performance, implementation of policies, and working towards healthy and supportive school communities.
- Add to the body of knowledge that future researchers will have access to in order to improve their understanding of issues related to teacher professional support and growth.
- Serve as a tool that will help improve teacher-principal and teacher-teacher relationships as a result of the exposure to collaborative encounters that professional development creates for both school leaders and teachers.

4.11 Ethical considerations

Ethics must be taken into account at every stage of a qualitative study in order to maintain a balance between the possible dangers of the research (Fleming & Zegwaard, 2018). The extensive nature of the study procedure lends a particular resonance to the potential advantages of the research and

ethical issues (Arifin, 2018). Every research project involving human subjects must carefully weigh the ethical implications of utilizing subjects for study, and this is especially true for qualitative research because of its generally in-depth, intimate character (Roller, 2018). Sanjari et al. (2004) posit that researchers are responsible for protecting all participants in a study from the possible harm that might affect them as a result of their participation. Parveen and Showkat (2020) describe research ethics as a set of standards for conduct that discriminates between what is correct and incorrect, and the acceptable and unacceptable conduct.

Scholarly perspectives highlight the importance of ethical considerations in qualitative research design, implementation, and dissemination (Goodwin et al., 2019). In accordance with ethical standards, obtaining informed consent is a fundamental requirement in all research endeavours. Therefore, I got ethical clearance approval from The University of the Free State and also requested permission from the Ministry of education in order to get to the four schools and the Ministry education office for data generation. Permission was also sought from the principals of the four schools in order to access the them, Heads of Departments. Those should be discussed participants in this study were provided with both verbal and written explanations regarding the purpose and scope of the research, the type of questions that would be asked, and how their responses would be used in reports.

Additionally, participants were asked to sign a written consent form which outlined key details such as my name, the research purpose, the data to be collected, the expected level of commitment from participants, and how the data would be utilized and reported. This ensured that participants were fully informed hence willingly consented to their involvement in the study. They were informed of their right to access their data and the right to request more information. They were also given time to make decisions about their participation and ask questions where they felt they needed clarity. This was done to assist the participants to voluntarily make their own decisions to participate in the study.

Participants were guaranteed that the information obtained from them would be handled with the highest care in order to maintain confidentiality. They were informed that participation in the study was voluntary and would not include any form of force or pressure because they were granted the

freedom to withhold their participation in the study at any time if they so desired. That was done to ensure that only those who were genuinely willing to take part did so.

Moreover, there was some probing which enabled me to uncover deliberate lies by referring to the matters previously raised by participants through phrased questions. The questions that were used to extract data from the participants were not in any way offensive or discriminatory and I avoided the use of unacceptable language. Care was taken that the works of other authors that were used in this study were acknowledged with the correct Harvard system of referencing and citing. Since qualitative data by definition contains many hints about the identities of participants, care was taken to ensure their anonymity in published work in order to safeguard them, according to Richards and Schwartz (2002).

4.12 Summary of the chapter

This chapter explored the various methodology and design elements adopted in this study. These include the following: research paradigm, research approach, research design, and techniques for gathering data. In addition, sample size, data analysis, and participant selection were also presented. The trustworthiness metrics, the importance of research, and ethical considerations were all further explored in this chapter.

The data presentation and analysis are covered in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 5

Data presentation and analysis

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter outlined the methodology and design employed to investigate the collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development. This chapter presents the data and its analysis. Data generation primarily utilized face-to-face interviews and focus group interviews, supplemented by collage creation and document analysis. Inspectors were prompted to respond based on their district's context, while the other participants (principals, heads of department and teachers) were asked to respond based on their respective schools. The study addressed the research questions below:

Primary research question

How do collaborative leadership practices of district-based educational inspectors support teacher professional development in Lesotho?

Secondary research questions

1. What is the nature of teacher professional development in the selected schools?
2. How do collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors benefit the TPD activities in the selected schools?
3. What collaborative leadership challenges do district-based education inspectors and other stakeholders encounter in supporting teacher professional development?
4. What recommendations can be made about district-based education inspectors' collaborative leadership practices in supporting teacher professional development?

Ethical considerations have been followed because pseudonyms have been used to keep the participants anonymous. The district-based inspectors are going to be referred to as Inspector 1, Inspector 2, Inspector 3 and Inspector 4. The four schools where the data was gathered are referred

to as School A, School B, School C, and School D, in that order. While school's C and D are public, schools A and B are private. The identities of the principals' respective schools have not been disclosed. School A is Green, Check is School B, Navy is School C, and Grey is School D. At each of the four schools, the Heads of Department were designated as HOD1 and HOD2, respectively. The focus groups, which were made up of five instructors from each school and were given the titles Green Focus Group, Check Focus Group, Navy Focus Group, and Grey Focus Group. Data will be presented, interpreted and analysed in relation to the themes and the sub-themes that developed during the data generation process.

Additionally, data presentation is also made with the use of the participants' verbatim words that are put in quotes. The purpose of that is to give their exact words in order to ensure that the message conveyed gives the same impression that the participants gave as they spoke. Data presentation also express the emotions where the participants showed them especially in cases where such behaviour or emotions would have a bearing in the analysis of data.

Apart from that, the presentation of findings includes the indication of the methods of data generation in which such findings emerged with direct quotes of the participants' words and emphasis on the specific points that the participants made during data generation.

5.2 Participant profiles

This section presents the profiles of the participating schools and study participants. Literature indicates that the goal of characterising the study site is to increase credibility and transparency, help detect confounding factors that may have an impact on the results, and contextualise the population research (Fonseca,2023). To better understand the variables that might affect the results, the profiles of the four cases of schools are provided, each with a unique description.

Table 1. School profiles

SCHOOL	SCHOOL TYPE		SCHOOL SIZE	NUMBER OF HODS	NUMBER OF TEACHERS	CURRICULUM OFFERED
A	Private		Small school	2	14	Local and Pearson (international)

B	Private		Large school	3	44	International (Cambridge)
C	Public		Large school	6	33	Local
D	Public		Large school	4	33	Local

Table 1 above shows the profiles of the four schools that participated in the study. Two of them were private schools while the other two were public. Of the four schools, School A is the smallest with the fewest number of HODs while School B, C, D are large schools. School A is doing both the local and international curriculum. Because of its size, School A has fewer teachers compared to the rest of other schools. The size of the school is in the strategic plan 2005-2015 which considers the number of learners in a school. Large schools are those that have a large number of learners and as a result, that determines the number of teachers in such schools.

The local curriculum is one that has been designed and implemented within Lesotho. This type of curriculum is done by almost all public schools and only a few private schools.

Participant profiles

The table below depicts the participants' profiles, which include the district-based education inspectors, principals, HODs and teachers. The profiles cover the participants' ages. This is useful in that some people may hold certain perceptions as a result of their age and that may impact the results of this study. To ensure there was no bias in the study's outcomes, gender had to be evenly distributed. The length of the participants' teaching experience may influence their current views of their profession, thus the information about their teaching experiences in their profiles was also crucial in forming the study's conclusions. The participants' best credentials are included in their profiles. It was useful in figuring out how knowledgeable and skilled each member was in their various fields of work. As described in this chapter and the one that follows, each category included distinct information that aided in the analysis and interpretation of the data.

District-based education inspectors

Table 2 below shows the profiles of the district-based education inspectors who participated in the study.

Table 2. Profiles of district-based inspectors

DISTRICT-BASED EDUCATION INSPECTORS	GENDER	AGE	TEACHING EXPERIENCE	WORKING EXPERIENCE	HIGHEST QUALIFICATION
1	F	41	16YRS	4YRS	M ED
2	F	40	10YRS	7YRS	M ED
3	F	40	9YRS	7YRS	M ED
4	F	46	11YRS	9YRS	M ED

The above table shows the profiles of the district-based inspectors. They are all females ranging between forty to forty-six years. They all have Master's degree in Education with their experience in the current position under 10 years. All of them were teachers before the current position of district-based education inspectors, hence the indication of the teaching experience.

School principals

Table 3 below shows the profiles of the four principals.

Table 3. Profiles of principals

SCHOOL	GENDER	AGE	EXPERIENCE AS A TEACHER	EXPERIENCE AS A PRINCIPAL	HIGHEST QUALIFICATION
A	M	52	30	4	BA ED
B	M	50	32	19	M COM
C	M	52	27	4	BTECH ED
D	M	52	30	12	B ED HONS

Table 3 above shows the profiles of the principals of the four schools. They are all males, with their age ranging from 50 to 52. Most of them hold the Bachelor's degree with the exception of one with a Master's Degree.

Heads of department

Table 4 below shows the profiles of the HODs in the four selected schools

Table 4. Profiles of HODs

SCHOOL	HODS	GENDER	AGE	EXPERIENCE	HIGHEST QUALIFICATION
A	1	M	45	20 YRS	B ED HON
	2	M	38	12YRS	B ED
B	1	F	35	9YRS	B ED
	2	M	40	15YRS	B ED
C	1	F	42	17 YRS	BSC ED
	2	F	46	15 YRS	B ED
D	1	M	41	16 YRS	B SC ED
	2	F	59	27	B ED

Teachers

Table 5 below portrays the profiles of the teachers who participated in the focus groups during the data generation process.

Table 5. Teacher profiles

SCHOOL	TEACHERS	AGE	GENDER	EXPERIENCE	HIGHEST QUALIFICATIONS
A (Green focus group)	1	44	F	8YRS	B ED

	2	27	M	3YRS	B ED
	3	30	M	7YRS	B ED
	4	28	F	3YRS	B ED
	5	38	M	12YRS	B ED
B (Check focus group)	1	28	F	1YR	B ED
	2	-	M	22YRS	B SC
	3	30	M	4YRS	B ED
	4	33	F	5YRS	DIP ED
	5	28	F	1YR	DIP ED
C (Navy focus group)	1	33	M	6YRS	B SC
	2	-	M	2YRS	B COM ACC
	3	50	F	15YRS	B ED
	4	40	M	12YRS	B ED
	5	47	F	24YRS	B ED HON
D (Grey focus group)	1	37	F	3YRS	B ED
	2	33	M	10YRS	B TECH
	3	24	M	2YRS	B SC
	4	49	F	5YRS	B COM ACC
	5	26	F	3YRS	B ED

The table above shows the profiles of the teachers in the four schools where data was generated. All the schools had mixed gender profiles of staff whose ages ranged from 24 to 50. They also had different years of experience as the table shows. Two teachers did not disclose their ages. The

focus groups were arranged such that they comprised novice as well as experienced teachers. All the teachers had a Bachelor's degree in Education.

Theme 1: Teacher Professional Development Activities (TPD)

Data generated from the four schools indicates that there are several activities that schools undertake to improve their teachers' performance. Some of the activities were directly supported by the inspectors while others were initiated and supported by the schools. From the data, workshops emerged as one of the supporting activities as a sub-theme.

1.1 Sub-theme 1: Workshops as supporting activities

The participants in the four selected schools indicated that the workshops were the teacher professional development activities that were availed for the teachers. This is consistent with Richards and Farrel's (2005) perspective which sees workshops as intensive, one-time, short-term learning experiences that help teachers gain certain knowledge or abilities.

All inspectors indicated that the workshops were the only means through which the teachers were given exposure to professional development in the district. For instance, Inspector 1 stated:

We have those activities that are organised by the national office as well as at district level. We have workshops which are organised by the district following the inspections that we have in the district, where we have workshops that are targeted to improve teachers' knowledge in different subjects.

Concurring with the inspectors is Mr. Green, the principal of School A, who remarked:

We get that opportunity to be part of the workshops that are organised at the district level where we work together with the inspectors, inspectors giving support in terms of skills, in terms of knowledge for our schools to perform well in different subjects.

Moreover, agreeing with the inspectors are all principals, although Mr. Check, the principal of School B added:

We advise the teachers to take some of the workshops organised by Cambridge in Zimbabwe and in South Africa. But internally we have workshops organised by departments and also senior teachers sometimes deliver their kind of workshops to the teachers. And recently we had a workshop on Shift in teaching.

Mr. Navy said:

We have internal workshops that we run for teachers, basically being for the most experienced, to help the new teachers, to help them develop professionally. Again, our teachers are able to attend workshops arranged by the Department of Education in the district or by the subject associations.

Mr. Grey, the principal of School D, posited that:

We do have workshops in different subjects organised at district level, regional level, national level. We invite examiners to come and help us in certain areas of certain subjects. And sometimes we do invite some teachers who excel in their own schools.

Data from the interviews held with the HODs revealed the same views as those of their principals and the inspectors. For instance, HOD 1 in school B showed that they hold school-based workshops:

We have access to the Cambridge support hub where teachers can discuss with teachers from across the world through online workshops.

On the same issue, HOD 2 of School A added:

We usually host the internal workshops more often. And of course, there are others at district level and at national level which are conducted by the Ministry of Education.

In addition, all teachers in their focus groups seemed to concur with their principals and HODs regarding the teacher professional development activities that are availed for them in their schools.

Moreover, all participants in the collages they made before the interviews, cite workshops as the TPD activities availed for teachers.

Inspector 2 responded as follows in her collage presentation:

I have put a picture showing workshops. This is the only way in which we try and support teachers even though it's not all schools.

To illustrate this in his collage, Mr. Green, the principal of School A, wrote the word “workshops” using a marker, and said in his presentation:

In this case, there is only one activity which is done at district level, even availed in schools, that is a workshop.

The collage of the teachers’ focus group in School A also revealed the workshops as the way in which the teachers are supported. Additional research demonstrates that a teacher's professional preparation includes knowing the subject matter as well as pedagogy and instructional strategies (Singha & Sikdar 2018). Figure 1 below shows a collage made by HOD 1 in School A and is followed by the HODs explanation.

Figure 2. A HOD’s collage in School A



Teachers attend workshops for further opportunities, capacity building enterprise, pedagogical training for new teachers, unpacking of professional books usage, internal marking training, sourcing out skills.

In analysing the documents in the four schools, there is evidence of planned workshops in all schools. The evidence was found in the following professional records: staff meeting minutes, and calendars of events. Further to this, the analysis of the minutes of the meetings of inspectors showed that workshop activities by the teachers were not documented by the inspectors.

However, data suggests that several workshops were arranged for teachers in the four schools, for instance, the school-initiated and the district-initiated workshops. School-initiated workshops are planned by the individual schools to cater for the professional needs of their teachers, while the district-initiated workshops are planned through the district education office by the district-based inspectors. The inspectors do so after establishing the professional needs of the teachers. All the schools seem to be having one thing in common, and that is, the exposure to the workshops as one of the TPD activities. However, School B, which is a private school, gives the teachers exposure where they are allowed to mingle academically with international partners and counterparts for

better and more advanced ways of teaching. This is done through workshops which the teachers jointly attend with international partners. This suggests that teachers in Schools A, C, and D lack exposure to international workshops and that is likely to limit their skills and competence in teaching and learning. This also limits their exposure to professional teaching practices adopted in other countries and regions. For example, Singha and Sikdar (2018) suggest that teacher professional development activities include investigating one's own teaching, doing research, creating teaching portfolios, interacting with colleagues through critical friendships, mentoring, and joining teacher networks. These are just a few examples of how teachers can learn new skills and knowledge.

Furthermore, the collaborative leadership practices of the inspectors in this case seem to be limited to planning and coordinating only the district workshops. There is no collaboration between the inspectors and other stakeholders since the schools cater for their teachers' workshops by planning and facilitating them without any intervention from the district-based inspectors. To a certain extent, one can say that the inspectors support TPD through coordinating and also opening up collaboration routes thereby exercising their duties as instructional leaders.

1.2. Sub-theme 2: Planning of teacher professional activities

From the generated data, all the participants except the inspectors indicated they had no idea how the inspectors decided which activities to plan for. However, the inspectors said they found out during their inspections in schools where they saw what the teachers' weaknesses were and, as their way forward, they would plan on the type of intervention needed to support the teachers. Workshops would then be arranged where the teachers' weaknesses would be addressed. For instance, Inspector 3 stated as follows:

During those inspections, we are able to plan the activities based on the findings that we have where we see what actually the teachers seem to be lacking. So, from there, the teachers themselves, since we have created a platform where they are open to make some

recommendations, they do tell us that they would like to be helped, they would like to be developed in a certain area.

Contrary to what the inspectors said, HOD 2 in school C stated:

We have never seen them trying to help us.

The principal of School B, Mr. Check stated:

Frankly, to date, there has not been any involvement of the district inspectors in any activity in my school.

Agreeing with Mr. Check, HOD 1 in School B said:

They work with the deputy principal. So, I don't know what they are discussing, but I've never come to a realization that maybe the inspectors can help us in any way.

Similarly, the teachers in the focus groups indicated that the inspectors had never met them as teachers to learn about their needs and challenges. For instance, in the Navy focus group, one of the teachers said:

Those people do not meet us, they meet the management. Really this kind of question would be better posed to the management because they are the ones the inspectors meet not us.

Data generated from the collage-making activity also shows that many trainings that schools have are planned by them without the inspectors' support. For instance, a teacher in Check focus group expressed:

The inspectors don't know what we do here and what we need, they are never there for us.

Contrary to all these arguments made, Inspector 2 indicated:

Even if we are not facilitating, we do show up at such activities to give them our support. And also, we try to encourage the teachers during such activities that their attendance really is important.

On the other hand, in the analysis of the documents in all the selected schools, there were action plans that showed the schools plan their activities. They even include the Inspectorate in their plans to show that they expect support. Figure 2 below portrays the action plan of School D.

Figure 3. School D action plan

Professional development: In-service training at the school level	Organize School-Based In-service Training. Train staff on legal documents	School Boards Principal, HODs All Teachers 2 teachers per school	Principal HODs Inspectorate	When needed Mid-January	Improved Learners' performance, Professional development
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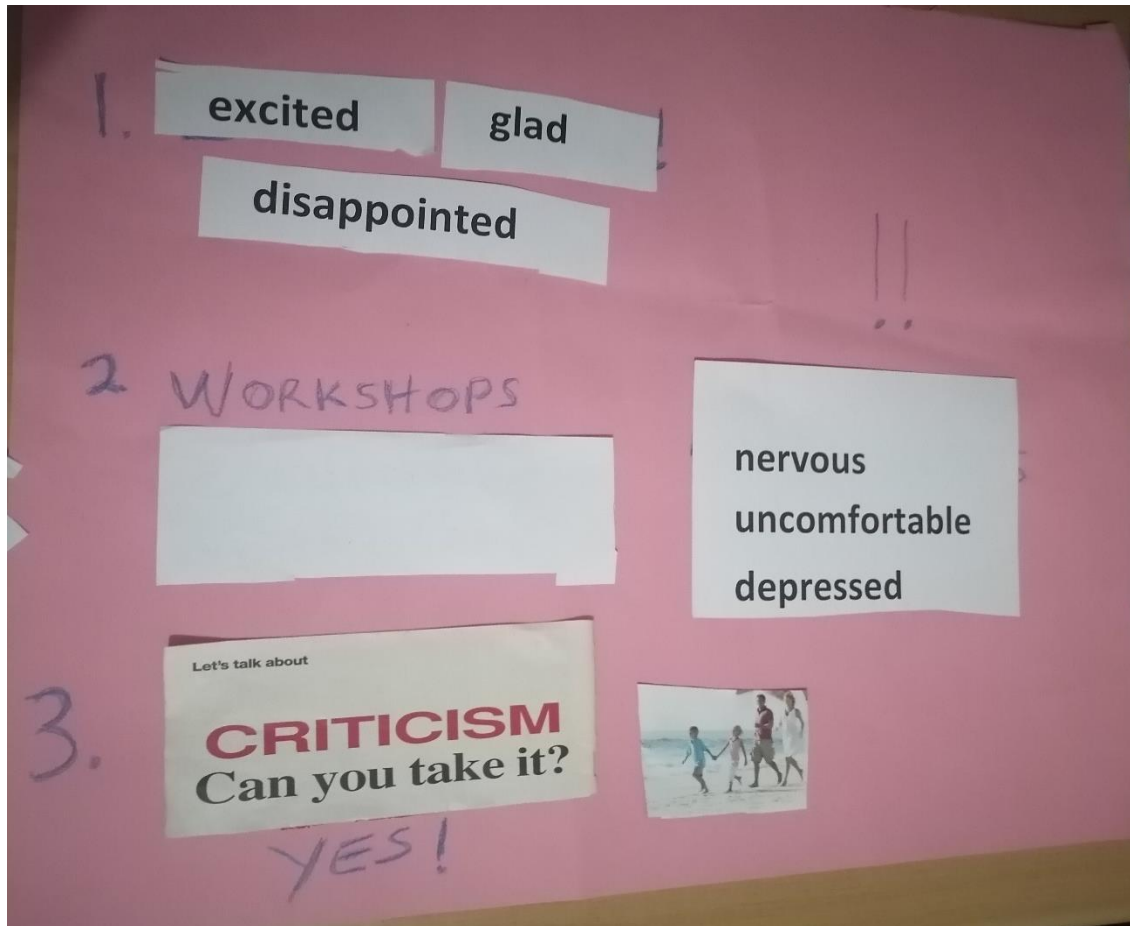
In other cases, the school arranged workshop attendance lists, and there are no records of the inspectors being present. Additionally, the schools even produce reports that are submitted to the Ministry of Education and Training for record keeping. Such reports show the extent to which the schools have been able to stick to their action plans. Figure 3 below shows the school report on TPD from School C.

Figure 4. School C report on TPD

Professional development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● School based workshops were organized where teachers were inducted in marking at LGCSE level ● Teachers were also workshopped on financial management. 	-
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Figure 4 below is a collage prepared by Mr. Navy, the principal of School C.

Figure 5. A principal's collage



The principal said although he was glad about a few things that the district- based education inspectors do; he was disappointed in them for failing to fully support TPD. He said:

We feel depressed and uncomfortable but we still think we can take criticism positively where we are wrong. But we are trying as the school to arrange our own workshops since the inspectors do not seem to be bothered.

All these findings further show that although the inspectors said they contact the teachers to establish what needs they have, there is no evidence from the teachers to corroborate what the inspectors claimed. However, the inspectors' responses seem to be contradicting what the other participants said in that the teachers in all the schools (private and public) indicated that the inspectors do not meet them when they visit the schools, instead they meet the principals and the HODs.

There seems to be diverse views from the participants. The leadership practices that the schools adopt appear to follow a pattern where they first assess the needs of their teachers and then run in-house workshops while the inspectors say they plan workshops for all schools. However, document analysis at the education office does not show any planning of the workshops for the schools. Even the focus groups do not show any evidence of the workshops being arranged by the inspectors in the schools.

1.3 Sub-theme 3: Facilitation of workshops

The findings show that all inspectors indicated they facilitate district-based workshops in all the places where they are held. They further explained their role from the planning of the workshops to the actual activity. Similarly, all the participants in the four selected schools said the district-based education inspectors plan the district-based workshops although they did not go into the details of what the inspectors specifically do in their arrangement of workshops. But the inspectors themselves explained what they do during the facilitation of workshops. Inspector 2 stated as follows:

During workshops, my role as an inspector is also to try to source out the resource people who could be invited during those workshops. We ensure that the workshops are a success by setting up the venue, and making sure that whatever that is needed for the workshop is available. And ensuring that invitations are indeed sent out to teachers, to principals, to whoever has to know about the activity, so that we maximize the attendance.

Inspector 4 emphasised:

We send out invitations for workshops well in time to ensure that they do know about the workshops and during their activities, our presence is felt whereby we do support them. Even if we are not facilitating, we do show up at such activities to give them our support. We also try to encourage the teachers during such activities that their attendance is important.

In support of what the inspectors said, a teacher in Grey focus group said:

I once attended the workshop (LBSE) whereby the inspector was there to try to help us because that is a new subject. So, I think inspectors are important somehow.

The above data suggests that the inspectors collaborate with stakeholders in education to support teachers' professional development as indicated. They indeed perform one of the roles of the district-based inspectors which is to facilitate the workshops that are held to support and empower teachers. As indicated in the literature review, the Basic Education Act 2010 as amended in 2021 stipulates that an inspector should: g) identify in-service development priorities and monitoring of effectiveness of related training.

Theme 2: District-based education inspectors' practices in supporting TPD

After examining the data, it became clear that the district-based education inspectors collaborate with the school administration on various projects and that they assist instructors at the selected schools. The data revealed the following subthemes: subject associations as support, collaboration between district-based inspectors and principals, school inspections as support, monitoring school functionality and offering assistance, and support in curriculum implementation.

2.1 Sub-theme 1: School inspections as support

The findings from the inspectors revealed that inspectors undertake the duty of visiting schools with the purpose of monitoring the laws and policies of the Ministry of Education and Training. All the inspectors mentioned that their role in schools is guided by the specifications of their duties as inspectors. This is in line with Part IV, 18, (4) of the Basic Education Act of 2010 as revised in 2021, which states that an inspector's duties include yearly inspections of school operations and reports on accomplishments, trends, and the overall application of regulations. Inspector 4 said the following:

As it is our duty, we go to schools to implement policies and laws of the Ministry of Education and Training, so we inspect the schools to see if they are doing what they are expected to do. Then we give support where need arises.

In agreement with the inspectors, all the principals showed that the inspectors sometimes go to their schools for inspections.

Mr. Green, principal of School A, articulated:

The inspectors do not visit our school often but when they do, they want to see to it that teachers adhere to what has been planned and the tools are used properly and the work done according to their expectations.

Contrary to that what Mr. Green said, Mr. Navy, School C principal had this to say:

They come to my school several times to check whether we are still on the right track.

The teachers in their focus groups, even though they seemed angry, still concurred with the rest of the participants that the inspectors visit their schools although private school focus groups showed that their schools are seldom visited. For instance, the teachers in Navy focus group, though they seemed hostile and passive, indicated that the inspectors go to their school and meet their principal though they indicated that they have no idea what they go there to do.

Therefore, in such inspections, the inspectors get into contact with the principals of the schools they visit. More data shows that the principals are the ones who inform the HODs about the requirements of the inspections and in most, if not all cases, the HODs are expected to give the inspectors all that they need to be able to provide the required support.

A teacher in Grey focus group said:

We meet with our HODS and they tell us what the inspectors have said.

This indicates that the teachers do not meet the inspectors in person. One would think this is not a problem as long as the HODs ensure there is a clear dissemination of information from the inspectors and the HODs, but evidence in the data shows that the HODs are also not happy with the way the inspectors deal with them.

HOD 1 in School A stated in the interview with a high-pitched angry voice:

No, our district inspectors are concerned with our principals. They are interested in ensuring that the principals have meetings. I don't even know what they discuss, but I know

that there are organised and scheduled meetings for principals, not even deputies. They only meet the high-level management and they discuss issues in that regard, they do not necessarily come to the lower level of miniscule departments.

In one privately owned School B, HOD2 said:

The only fortunate thing is that we are a private entity and therefore we have to make sure that we try as much as possible to be organised on our own otherwise, if we were a public school, then we would not be where we are.

In analysing the documents, in the selected schools, the entries shown were the records of the inspections called spot checks (checking school readiness when schools reopened) and Aspect (monitoring the implementation of the school year plan). There were no full inspections carried out in all the schools.

The data suggests that the inspectors perform their duties of carrying out the inspections in the schools although public schools seem to be given more attention than private schools. This thus contradict Part XII, 74 of the regulations (School Supervision and Management Regulations, 1988), which stipulates that a primary, secondary and high school shall be subject to a full-scale inspection.

The data shows that during their inspections, education inspectors look for all possible ways to determine the professional needs of the teachers so that they organise with the relevant stakeholders for such training. These findings align with the Basic Education Act 2010 (Amendment 2021) g) which states that inspectors should identify in-service development priorities and monitor the effectiveness of related training.

This data shows dissatisfaction among the teachers as the people who desperately need support. This causes some inconsistencies in the operations of the inspectors if they do not seem to be giving schools equal treatment. One should state that the findings do not go together with the Basic Education Act 2010 (as amended in 2021,) which says all schools are subject to inspections irrespective of their types. However, this does not seem to be the case in this study.

2.2 Sub-theme 2: Monitoring school functionality and providing support

Generated data revealed that all the participants, inclusive of the inspectors, said that one of the roles of inspectors is checking professional records in the schools they visit during the inspections. They only talked about the lesson plan book, scheme and record of work and the registers. There are indications that the schools are not visited regularly. Furthermore, the log books in most of the schools indicated that even the administration records were checked although none of the principals mentioned it during the face-to-face interviews. Inspector 4 stated:

Although we do not visit schools often, when we do, the principals ensure that we get to check professional records in those schools. In that I mean the administration records and teachers' schemes and record of work, lesson plan books, registers. HODs are always the ones who bring teachers' books.

To illustrate this, HOD 2 in School D said:

When they arrive, we already know they are going to ask for schemes and record of work.

HOD 1 in School C agreed:

The inspectors see to it that we use the professional books, registers, scheme books, lesson plan books.

A teacher in Green focus group added:

They assist us in ensuring that we do our work according to book, check that lesson planning is done accordingly. So, when they arrive, the HODs are the ones asking us to submit the books.

In the Check focus group, a teacher stated:

HODs asked for our lesson plans and the scheme and record of work to give to the inspectors when they came here.

The document analysis findings showed that there were some records in the school inspection log books in which the district-based inspectors recorded the details of their inspections. However,

there were not many visits reflected although there is no policy that stipulates the number of school visits over a certain period by inspectors.

The data shows that the district-based educational inspectors offer support to schools by monitoring the schools' functionality. This is carried out in cooperation with the principals, heads of department, and educators, demonstrating that various individuals in various roles inside the schools engage in some kind of cooperation. This is consistent with research that demonstrates how teacher educators may benefit from continued professional development by using it to enhance their instructional and professional practices (Tyagi & Misra, 2021). Data demonstrates and supports the idea that one of the most crucial yet neglected areas of teacher development in the inspectors' assistance to teachers is the content of the various topics. This finding is at odds with (b) of the School Supervision and Management Regulations, 1988, which state that the inspectors have to visit schools for inspections on the organization and teaching of each subject in the school. That confirms that the inspectors do not reach all areas of the teachers' professional development needs.

The HODs collaborate with the inspectors by giving them the professional record books of the teachers in their respective departments. For instance, schemes and record of work, lesson plan books and registers. Principals also give inspectors the school administration records and one of the expectations is for inspectors to equip principals with skills to handle such records. It is notable that as much as the collaboration on the professional documents is revealed in the findings, none of the principals mentioned it. Instead, it came from the HODs and teachers.

2.3 Sub-theme 3: support in curriculum implementation

The data revealed that although all inspectors argued that they support the schools (though not fully) in teaching and learning, all participants in the four schools stated that the inspectors do not support teachers in the subjects they teach in their schools. In the data, the participants in privately owned schools revealed that both schools are doing the international curriculum, (Cambridge and Pearson). Evidence of data from the inspectors shows that the inspectors are not familiar with such curriculums, hence no support is given to these schools. Inspector 2 stated:

We try as much as possible to support teachers in order to be effective in their work. However, we are not fully doing that since there are some challenges that we encounter.

To illustrate this, HOD 2 in School D said:

As for giving teachers support in terms of the subjects they are teaching, I haven't seen the inspectors doing that.

However, the only subject which seems to be coming up from most of the participants is Life Skills and Sexuality Based Education in which they seem to be getting a little support from the inspectors. They mentioned that this is a newly introduced subject that is still being implemented, hence why there is more focus on it. Mr. Navy, principal of School C stated:

It has not happened a lot, but a few times with one particular subject, they came and they visited the school quite a number of times with that specific subject, probably because the subject is a new one. It's Life Skills. They came quite a number of times following up on each and every activity that was being done. I think probably with that one, it's because the subject was being launched.

On the other hand, Mr. Green, the principal of a private schools said:

So, there is still a challenge on the side of the international curriculum. So, their role is to some extent not fully played for our whole package that we have in terms of Pearson curriculum.

Mr. Check said:

In our environment, we are normally left alone. No help with our Cambridge curriculum, nothing at all.

HOD 1 in School B added:

My school does not partake in most of the activities because of maybe the different syllabus that we're doing.

In the collage-making activity, Mr. Green stressed his point that the inspectors seem to only support them in the local curriculum not the international. He stated:

We feel challenged because of the pressure of work, particularly in this kind of school whereby we are offering two curriculums. We offer both the local curriculum and international curriculum and, in most cases, inspectors come to help only with the local curriculum, not the international curriculum.

The findings show that in all the schools, participants said the inspectors do not do much to support teachers in terms of teaching and learning in the classrooms. In their focus groups, all the teachers in the participating schools said they never had any contact with the inspectors. This goes against the regulations that guide the inspectors in their duties and responsibilities. For example, d) in the School Supervision and Management Regulations 1988, specifies that the inspectors are expected to visit schools to offer support on the curriculum of the school. If this is the case, the inspectors should have a thorough knowledge of the curriculum of the schools that they are expected to support.

This thus becomes a great challenge since the inspectors are superior to everyone in the high schools that they visit. So, if they are incompetent, it places them in a very vulnerable position since the schools are looking up to them for solutions of every problem they encounter. Literature even substantiates this and argues that inspectors, in addition to their inspection and supervision roles, are responsible for giving a lead in curriculum implementation by their provision of professional advice to schools (Mooya & Mulenga, 2021).

Theme 3: Collaboration of district-based inspectors with stakeholders in supporting teacher professional development

The generated data revealed that the district-based education inspectors play certain roles in supporting teacher professional development. Such roles are embedded in the principles of

collaborative leadership. In exploring them, the following sub-themes arose: collaboration with internal stakeholders; participants' perspectives about the collaboration of the inspectors with the stakeholders, shared vision, knowledge of the inspectors' roles in supporting teachers, delegation of duties, follow-ups and feedback.

3.1 Sub-theme 1: Collaboration with stakeholders

Generated data shows that all the inspectors said they collaborate with other stakeholders in the education system in ensuring that every activity that they plan to have with schools is successful. For instance, in relation to workshops Inspector 1 said as follows:

We learned that it is important that before the teachers are given any workshop, it is important that whatever that we want to discuss with the teachers, we first of all pass it through the principals because the principals are the ones who actually can help or can make whatever that we want to implement become a disaster if they are not well sensitized first. Because having been sensitized, they are able to better assist and support teachers.

This is supported by Mr. Grey, the principal of School D, who said the following:

When there are principals' meetings, they say out their expectations when they come to school, so that we principals should pass such information to the teachers.

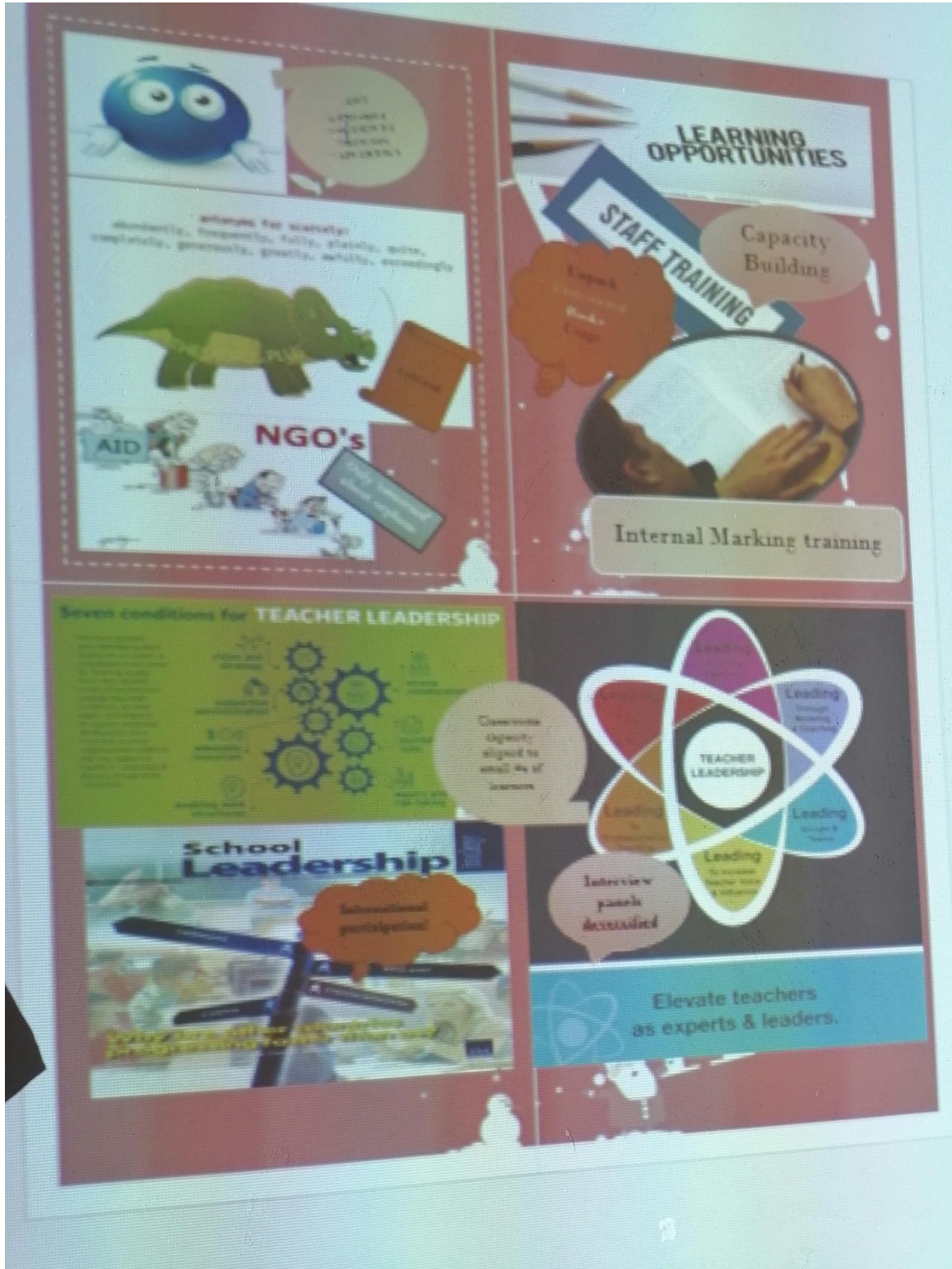
In all the focus groups, the teachers stated that the inspectors do not directly collaborate with them but always reach them through the principals and HODs. A teacher in Navy focus group was agreeable to that since she indicated that the inspectors have a way of communicating with the principals and further said the challenge is that they do not get the information directly from the inspectors which results in their challenges taking long to address. She said as follows:

The administrators communicate with the inspectors. It means the inspectors are not giving us the information firsthand. It takes time for our grievances to reach the inspectors.

The teachers in Green focus group said they had had no access to inspectors on one-on-one basis and that the failure to meet meant the inspectors would not be able to know their needs. They stressed the need for inspectors to avail themselves to teachers.

HOD 1 in School A in his collage presentation, argued that the inspectors' collaboration with the external stakeholders is only done for their own benefit and not to help teachers in their professional development. In his digital collage below, there is an indication of his opinions in pictures;

Figure 6: The collage made by HOD1 in School A



HOD 1 in school A says,

In my collage I am showing that the NGOs that go to our schools go there for their selfish intentions and only give aid to a few students and are less concerned about our PD.

Data shows that the inspectors collaborate with the different stakeholders (principals, HODs, Ministry of Education and Training officers from different departments like Examinations Council of Lesotho and National Curriculum Development Centre) in activities such as workshops and meetings. However, though the inspectors are trying to create a collaboration path between them, HODs and the principals, the teachers are not able to personally meet with the inspectors. This denies the teachers the opportunity to share their needs and challenges with the inspectors. The teachers are therefore stuck with challenges they cannot solve. Moreover, the findings show that there is collaboration, to a certain extent, between the inspectors and the principals, as well as the HODs. Though one of the teachers raised this matter rather negatively, it still points to the collaborative leadership practices that the inspectors have with the principals since if they are able to delegate the duty of informing teachers about their expectations to the principals. This suggests they are following the line of command which is a requirement in as far as the dissemination of information is concerned.

However, most of the participants highlighted that the inspectors are seen collaborating with the Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL) and the National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC). All inspectors, and almost every participant who is part of the school administration (for instance principals and HODs), cited that there is collaboration between those entities and the district-based Inspectors. Other than that, teachers do not seem to know which other organisations work together with the inspectors in supporting TPD. Inspector 1 said:

We collaborate with different departments, for instance, Examinations Council of Lesotho, National Curriculum Development Centre whereby, for instance, following the results of the students who had written external examinations, we do invite them to have a discussion with our teachers where we target maybe subjects that we did not perform very well as a district.

Mr. Navy, principal of School C said:

The inspectors do work with health professionals, police, and Correctional Services officials. So, there are cases where they come with them to schools to make sure they disseminate the right information to the teachers and even to the learners. They bring people who come and help specifically in terms of discipline and equip the teachers with skills to approach learners with special needs, such as those who are dependent on drugs and those who are into gangsterism.

In their collages, most of the participants gave negative opinions or perspectives about the collaboration of the inspectors with other stakeholders in supporting TPD. To illustrate this, Inspector 1 in her collage description said:

I am disappointed because I don't see many other people and organisations we collaborate with except ECOL and NCDC whom we seldom meet. Even the other NGOs that sometimes fund the projects, I don't remember any that did recently aim at improving teachers professionally, even the teachers I believe they don't know anything. It's a pity.

Mr. Grey of School D added:

And these other people from ECOL never mention inspectors when they come here.

HOD 1 from School A argued thus in his collage presentation:

All what these NGOs that come into our schools do is consume lots and lots of money for themselves and their counterparts and only bring the little that remains to our schools which is used to buy things like shoes, hygiene packs and a few items for the orphans or needy learners. They do not care about the teachers and their professional development. I wonder if the inspectors ever talk about TPD with them.

On the other hand, in their different focus groups, all the teachers seemed to have no idea who collaborates with the inspectors in supporting teacher professional development. For instance, a teacher in Grey focus group collage-making presentation said:

We cannot say there is collaboration when we don't even know who collaborates with whom. That is the problem. We are never involved in things happening in the ministry. We just see the car arriving and being asked to bring professional books. That's all.

Moreover, one HOD 1 in School A argued that the inspectors do not seem to show any interest in collaborating with the other stakeholders in developing the teachers professionally, but rather collaborate with some organisations and people in order to help learners with some of their needs, such as school fees, stationery, school uniforms, and food. The HOD added:

Maybe their approach is the one that has problems because they are only interested in the students and not in the teachers.

Contrary to the previous perception, a highly experienced teacher in Green focus group indicated that he remembered that inspectors usually play a very supportive role (though minimally) in that they sometimes bring the required expertise to the workshops depending on the type of workshop, and they also bring resource people from other departments who provide valuable training.

In this study, data revealed that to some extent, there is collaboration among the stakeholders within the education system and that enhances teacher professional development to some degree in that the workshops and meetings are usually meant to support and empower teachers. On the other hand, the external stakeholders, particularly Non-Governmental Organisations, do have some interest in schools though not on matters dealing with TPD but on the learners' material needs such as school uniform. This means the collaborative practices of inspectors are not enough for they do not respond to the teachers' professional development needs. The stakeholders have a stake in the activities that take place in the Ministry of Education and Training but not much is done that can guarantee complete collaboration to support TPD.

3.2 Sub-theme 2: Shared vision

All the participants except the inspectors could not point to what inspectors do to ensure they have a common goal and a shared vision with the stakeholders in education. The other participants pleaded ignorance on who actually collaborates with the inspectors. Similarly, Inspector 1 seemed to hold no positive view on the matter and stated as follows:

I wouldn't say our collaboration is at a level where I'm very much satisfied because I don't think that really there is a platform where we do ensure our vision becomes clear or our vision becomes clear to every one of us that this is our vision. I think the people or organisations only come or we only invite them for certain things which are not even occurrences that I could say are regular. Maybe it's a once off thing during the year where they are invited because the results have been published.

Contrary to that, Inspector 4 indicated that the shared vision is communicated during meetings where they plan activities of the whole year:

Every year there is planning that is done together where all schools have a meeting and then such goals or objectives for the year plan being shared together and then for assignments given to each and every school to go and put into practice such or develop visions, objectives and the rest out of such objectives for the whole district. The plan is even displayed on the wall of the education office.

Mr. Green said the inspectors' involvement in monitoring the plans shows the shared vision and confirmed their visits:

The inspectors came to my school to monitor the year plan we made.

The collage-making activity revealed in the presentation of the opinions of Green focus group that there is no shared vision that they know about. This contradicts their principal's views. The group asked this question:

How do they even think we should tell them our needs when they do not involve us in their visits or plans?

On the other hand, reading through the documents indicated that all selected schools have their year plans. The inspectors indicated that the schools in the district have their school plans which are informed by the district year plan drawn by the district inspectorate team. In this way, the inspectors demonstrate that they involve the schools in setting their goals so that they go in the same direction as a district. Furthermore, the district plan even has the objective “Professional development” in which schools have to show what activities they plan to engage in to develop teachers. This suggests that the stakeholders have a similar vision and work together as leaders to communicate their objectives for enhancing the quality of instruction at their various institutions.

Data shows that teachers do not seem to have a working knowledge of the plans being made in the district by the principals and the inspectors. While collaboration calls for all stakeholders to have a common understanding, in this case it does not seem to be manifested. This thus portrays lack of communication in schools among the principals and their teachers which actually questions the real existence of the collaborative leadership practices of the inspectors.

If there was a clear indication of collaboration between the inspectors and the other stakeholders, the principals, HODs and teachers would immediately provide details of such. Where there is collaboration, shared vision is already implied.

3.3 Sub-theme 3: Delegation of duties

Some of the participants in the selected schools said the inspectors do not delegate duties to anyone in their schools while others indicated that to their knowledge, the inspectors delegate duties to the principals as well as to the teachers who are members of the district subject associations. For instance, Mr. Grey, the principal of School D said during principals’ meetings, they are given some information to convey to the teachers which, according to him, indicates delegation of duties.

However, Mr. Check, the principal of School B, said the inspectors do not seem to have any activity in which they delegate duties to anyone. He responded:

In our school, we are normally left alone. There is no delegation by inspectors. Maybe that is how the system works when it comes to private schools.

However, some principals do not have positive opinions on the delegation of duties. For example, Mr. Grey of School D harshly said:

No, not to my knowledge! Delegation! I don't think they delegate anything. When they come, they don't delegate. And these other people from ECOL, they never mention inspectors when they come here.

HOD 1 in School D has feelings that concur with those of his principal Mr. Grey:

As heads of department, we meet sometimes to talk about ourselves, our school, but we have never talked about or heard of inspectors delegating somebody in our school for anything.

Mr. Check, as the principal of a private school, seems to have lost all hope for his school to get any support from the inspectors so much that he even thinks that is how the system works. In his words, one could sense desperation and lack of trust on the inspectors' collaborative leadership practices.

HOD 1 in School C argued that there is no one she knows who has ever been delegated any duty by the inspectors in her school. Similarly, in the teachers' focus groups, all teachers corroborated that they did not know of anyone the inspectors delegated any duties to, and through their facial expressions, one could observe frowns constant looks at one another in amazement. From what they said, they never imagined they could be close to the inspectors, let alone have duties delegated to them by those inspectors.

On the contrary, all inspectors said there is some delegation of duties done by them, whereby they have subject associations in the district which are managed by the teachers who are delegated such roles. This shows the disparity between the information the teachers and HODs provided in contrast to what the inspectors said. In situations where the participants provide differing information, it is difficult to understand how meaningful collaboration occurs. The contradictions do not engender trust and confidence in the processes meant to develop teachers professionally.

Also, all inspectors argue that there are external markers who are given the mandate to help train other different subject teachers on how marking is done in the national marking exercise with the

purpose of ensuring that other teachers are empowered in their duties. To illustrate this, HOD 2 in School A explained:

The district office of the Ministry of Education has arranged some district associations, where there are delegated people in every subject to represent all the school subjects. So, whenever there is a problem with a certain school, they usually talk in their groups for help.

Additionally, Inspector 1 said:

When we went around with our inspections, we picked that there were teachers who were achieving 100% pass rates. We spotted them and then requested their principals to allow them to share a platform where they share their journey with other teachers, so that other teachers are able to see that it is actually possible to come up with 100% pass.

There were no documents that were found to evidence delegation of duties in all the schools, but at the education office, there was a schedule of the different principals who have duties of overseeing the district subject associations. This thus shows there is some level of collaboration happening in the sense that the principal, as a school leader, communicates with the inspectors on the delegation of duties to teachers. That exchange of information is what makes the whole process run smoothly.

3.4 Sub-theme 4: Follow-ups and feedback

The findings reveal that most of the participants said the inspectors make follow-ups in their schools on whatever had to happen. The follow-ups open opportunities for feedback from the teachers on the collaboration of different people and organisations. Inspector 3 said as follows:

At the end of each activity that we plan for the teachers, we normally give them a chance to tell us how it was by pointing out to the success and also the weakness of the activity so

that for the coming ones, we are able to improve on whatever that was not done well. Also, following the workshops, we are able to get feedback from the schools during the inspections on how the workshops are benefiting the schools. We're able to learn if indeed the teachers who had been invited to the workshops have been able to pass the information that they got to their fellow teachers.

HOD 2 in School A added:

Whenever there is a training, at the end, there is always a follow-up that inspectors make on what has been done. And our HODs, myself included, always give them feedback, positive or negative. Or if there is something else that's still lacking, we indicate.

Sharing the same sentiments, Mr. Grey, the principal of School D said the inspectors make follow-ups in order to get feedback:

Sometimes if they had asked me to rectify my mistakes, when they come to my school, they ask how I have dealt with such cases. I give them feedback.

Mr. Navy agreed:

They came quite a number of times following up on each and every activity that was being done. I think probably with that one, it's because the subject was being launched, so there were regular visits and inspection setups where teachers had to go to class and be inspected on how the teaching and learning was conducted and then feedback given and then follow-up made. Unfortunately, with the other subjects, follow-ups and feedback have not happened at all.

Contrary to that, Mr. Green said:

Actually, there are no follow-ups. They never come back at us.

HOD 1 in School C added:

I've never been in contact with the inspectors. They get the feedback about the school, if ever they get one, maybe from the principal. I don't know.

The findings above suggest that there is some collaboration amongst the inspectors and the selected schools although there seems to be more follow-ups in the public schools as a result of the local curriculum that those schools offer. The private schools on the other hand are not visited often and even the follow-ups made are very minimal if they are being made. The results are at odds with Munoz Chereau and Ehren's (2021) account of how inspection models support school improvement by establishing expectations and demonstrating how the actions of school stakeholders and the use of performance feedback enhance teaching and learning outcomes.

Whenever there is collaboration among people or organizations, feedback is key. This is because the feedback, whether positive or negative, paves the way forward which leads to the improvement of whatever is being done. In the same manner, whenever certain things are not going according to plan, feedback also opens ways for corrections that rectify the mistakes.

3.5 Sub-theme 5: Subject Associations

Most of the participants mention the role that inspectors play as ensuring that there are subject associations in the district whose purpose is to make sure teachers of different subjects collaborate with the intention to improve teaching and learning. However, there are comments from some of the participants which show that the inspectors are not coordinating the different subject associations in a way that would guarantee complete and satisfactory collaborative practices. Inspector 1 said:

We have the subject associations within our district which we formed with the help of principals and in those associations, we invite teachers who happen to be external markers. We invite teachers who happen to be the best for them to empower others. We even help them set up meetings and sometimes allow them to use the education office hall for their meetings.

HOD in School A added in agreement, although he brings out the negative point of the inspectors leaving the teachers to go on without their guidance:

With the establishment of the subject association committee, you know, inspectors are the conveners for the committee to have a first sitting. They liaise with school principals to make a clarion call for subject teachers in schools. And then when they are gathered there, they are instructed to formulate committees, have terms of reference and so on and so forth and decide on the activities that they are going to carry out throughout the year. Yeah. So that is how they are involved. But when we embark on the activities themselves, it is the teachers who see to it that they see themselves through.

In Navy focus group, there was an indication by one teacher that the inspectors have set up associations whose purpose is to offer in-service training to teachers. The teachers expressed it as follows:

During the meetings of the teachers in the associations, the inspectors do not attend. Even when the teachers have challenges, they mostly do not help them.

Agreeing with this opinion of a teacher, HOD 2 in School C said:

But when those committees encounter problems, you can't see anybody, not any one of the inspectors in the centre trying to come resolve them.

Data shows that the education inspectors have created a platform where the teachers can share experiences in relation to the different subjects with the purpose of empowering them. The inspectors' contribution in the planning of activities to be carried out makes their involvement in the associations crucial hence collaborative practices. Mohale (2022) noted that sharing knowledge is a valuable learning activity among teachers that positively contributes to individual and collective development. This ultimately enhances students' learning outcomes and school effectiveness.

Data further reveals that their collaborative practices do not fully meet the required standard. Although the teachers have those associations, the inspectors do not seem to be putting much of their efforts into supporting the teachers fully when challenges arise.

Theme 4: Benefits of district-based education Inspectors' collaboration with different stakeholders in supporting Teacher Professional Development.

From the generated data, there emerged the following themes: improvement in teaching and learning, motivation, government policy implementation are the accompanying sub-themes that emerged.

4.1 Sub-theme 1: Improvement in teaching and learning

All inspectors seemed to have the same perceptions with regards to the impact that their collaboration with the other stakeholders has on teacher professional development in schools. They said the collaboration of inspectors with stakeholders contributes to improvements in teaching and learning. Inspector 1 expressed it thus:

Through collaboration with different organizations, we are able to actually use the expertise which is unavailable within our district office. So, by inviting these other organizations, we are able to actually maximize the success of our teachers because what we do lack at district level, we are able to fill through these external organizations.

In this way, the inspector put emphasis on the tapping of knowledge from elsewhere which, in a way, makes a remarkable change in the way the teachers see and do things in their schools. However, HOD 1 in School C said with uncertainty:

One of the benefits that I can talk about even though I haven't come into contact with inspectors is that maybe they try to help schools to strive for the best in the teaching and learning activities if they may be involved. I say maybe.

In the Green focus group, a teacher said:

The fact that when they come to our school, the HODs ask for our professional books, I can say they help us improve teaching and learning.

The analysis of the log book document, to some extent, showed that the inspectors support teachers in teaching and learning. This record showed that the inspectors went to the schools that offer the local curriculum to monitor the newly introduced subject, Life skills.

On the other hand, the teachers for whom this collaboration is intended, have a completely different perception. In most of their focus groups, teachers do not believe that the inspectors are helping them enhance teaching and learning in their schools in the right manner. Instead, they see no collaboration since they have no idea who the inspectors actually collaborate with.

In addition, the teachers view inspectors as ‘terrorists’ who go to their schools not to help but to threaten them. If that is the case, improvement of teaching and learning, which is in the teachers’ hands, is compromised since they are the ones who deal directly with learners. And if teachers do not feel supported, who can argue and say they are being supported?

4.2 Sub-theme 2: Motivation

Most of the participants think inspectors contribute towards some positive change in the schools in that they are a form of motivation for the teachers. This helps them to perform their duties according to the requirements of the Ministry of Education and Training. Inspector 4 stated:

Collaboration is a form of motivation since it helps avoid duplication of efforts because if we don't collaborate, we find that we do the same activity at different times by different people. Yet it could have been done once by people who have come together. Coming together ensures that we are able to sing the same song together without having a situation of whereby the teachers can be able to hide behind the fact that we don't collaborate.

In Navy focus group in School C, one least experienced teacher said:

They help us as teachers to commit ourselves into our work. So, knowing that they will come again, we won't rest.

HOD 1 in School B said positively:

The only one time I heard that the inspectors were at my school, I got motivated since I was told they were looking at the format of our lesson plan and they were satisfied with the format, that it has all the relevant information.

Contrary to the opinions above, teachers in Grey focus group complained that the inspectors do not motivate them for doing their work, instead, they demotivate them. One teacher said:

They scare us. Their coming makes us feel as if we normally don't do work here at school while in fact we do our work. It's just that sometimes we panic when they come to our school.

This suggests there is some positive impact that the inspectors are making. As a result, the teachers display more readiness to prepare their professional records because if they relax and abdicate their responsibilities, the learners would be disadvantaged.

4.3 Sub-theme 3: Education policy implementation

Data reveals that most of the participants consider the inspectors to be doing a good job of implementing the policies of the Ministry of Education and Training in the selected schools. The principals said they benefit from the activities that inspectors organise because they help them run schools properly. Mr. Check, the principal of School B expressed his views as follows:

The benefits that one may talk about would be very few. With regard to subjects, we seldom benefit. Also, where sometimes the ministry's policies are rolled out, we are invited and we benefit to a certain extent. Otherwise, there is not much that our school benefits from the inspectors.

Similarly, Mr. Green, the principal of School A said in the collage presentation:

As administrators, we find ourselves asking questions as to which direction to take. Mostly because we are just a private school, we have to focus on different things, not the same as other schools, the public schools per se. And you will find that yes, we can conclude that the support, the collaboration with the inspectors is there but it is minimal.

One teacher in Green focus group said:

We know they say they carry out their work of making sure that we abide by the laws of the ministry; but they should not terrorise us.

Additionally, a teacher in Green focus group indicated that the inspectors help them observe the policy of treating learners with care and equality:

To an extent, their participation in our work has helped us to understand even more why we have to handle certain students with care, particularly the vulnerable.

The documents that show that the inspectors support schools by implementing the policies are the inspectors' inspection reports and log books in the selected schools. The public schools seem to be visited frequently compared to private schools for policy implementation. The documentation in the education office had evidence of the inspectorate team that showed that each inspector reports to the team on the findings they get in schools. In the same report, the way forward following inspection is specified. However, the findings indicate that there was no specific intervention in the form of workshops that was arranged for the selected schools as a way of supporting them. Figure 5 shows the inspector's report on School C which proves the visit as a form of support to the school.

Figure 7. Inspector’s report on School C

Last inspection type: Spot check Date:

Purpose of this visit; Checking the professional records as well as the roles of the Heads of Departments

Findings

Teaching was in progress but in almost all departments, there were no lesson plans that were prepared. The schemes and record of work for all departments were there but there was no evidence of the checking by the HODs. The record of work done was not updated in all departments. All departments did not have the minute books hence the reason there was no record of the deliberations in the departments. There were no departmental inventory books. There were no departmental year plans in all of them. The HODs did not have financial records.

Actions taken (challenges and solutions)

Held a meeting with the HODs training them on their roles as well as looking at the professional record books in the presence of the principal and deputy principal. This was done with the purpose of making them identify their mistakes and then come up with their way forward for improvements in future.

Way Forward

The principal and deputy should monitor HODs and teachers in the preparation of professional record books. HODs should perform their responsibilities as required.

This shows that the monitoring of the ministry’s policies is benefitting the selected schools although not all of them benefit the same way. The benefits differ in terms of school type as the private schools are not monitored in the same frequency and level as the public schools. The findings show that to some extent, the inspectors are performing their duties as Part IV, 18, (4) of the Basic Education Act 2010 as amended in 2021, illustrates that the functions of an inspector are

to inspect the work of schools each year and report on trends, achievements, and on the general implementation of policies.

Theme 5: Challenges affecting the collaboration of inspectors and other stakeholders in supporting teacher professional development

The data indicates that a number of challenges have a negative impact on the different ways in which the district-based education inspectors try to pave a way for collaboration with stakeholders. The following sub-themes emerged: lack of resources, work overload, fear of / inspectors' intimidating approach, lack of feedback, lack of support for private schools, lack of exposure to a variety of teacher professional development activities, no tapping of available knowledge, lack of exposure to advanced technology, unavailability of inspectors, and dilemma.

5.1 Sub-themes 1: Lack of resources

Generated data revealed that all inspectors said they face the challenge of lack of resources to carry out their duties of inspecting schools as regularly as they would need as Inspector 1 pointed out:

The fact that the district education office has very limited resources, for example they lack vehicles, means even if we wish to visit schools, the fact that we have limited resources means we are unable to visit schools as often as we would want.

Another point that Inspector 2 illustrated is that some of the schools are very remote, which makes it difficult to conduct regular inspections. This means if the district office, through the inspectors, is not able to visit or inspect the schools as regularly as possible, then collaboration becomes a problem. Inspector 4 offered this perspective:

Some schools do not have electricity, thus, cannot access the internet and it means some things that could be done through the use of the internet cannot be accessed. Fuel for the car is also a problem, so we meet them once after a long time. It means continuous support is not possible.

Mr. Navy (principal) said:

Not satisfied at all because one of their [inspectors] job specifications, I think, is coming to schools, observing, ensuring that teachers work, even making recommendations on how best teaching and learning can take place. Even the school visits, like I said, I don't know whether it's due to lack of resources or what, but the number of times they visit schools or the amount of time they spend in the schools, I don't think it's enough. So, in short, it's not satisfactory.

The data shows that there is lack of resources for the district-based inspectors to support teachers in their different schools. These findings concur with those from the Philippines where some of the barriers to teacher professional development were mainly the results of financial and time constraints, lack of teacher motivation and logistical support (Chin, 2022).

5.2 Sub-theme 2: Work overload

Data reveals a heavy work load as one of the inspection challenges since inspectors serve both primary and high schools. This means more work for inspectors and could result in some schools not being visited. The district has 83 primary schools and 27 high schools that need the inspectors' support, yet there are only four inspectors in the entire district. Further to this, there were indications that some schools were last inspected ages ago. Inspector 1 explained:

If we already have eighty-three primary schools, then together with twenty-seven high schools with only four inspectors working at district level, it becomes a challenge to actually be able to do regular inspections in schools.

Mr. Grey, the principal of School D said:

We struggle because the inspectors say they work under pressure as a result of the office work and many schools that need inspections. The inspectors take too long to come. Maybe it's because they are few in number or like they always say, they have challenges of transport. But the only challenge that I am experiencing these days or currently is that they do not come as many times as one would want.

HOD 2 in School A stated:

The number of visits is not enough, so the inspectors are not able to reach us as much as we would need. We are told they have a lot of work to do.

An analysis was made of a document at the education office which provides the information on the number of schools in the district. There are eighty-three primary schools and twenty-seven high schools in Botha Bothe district.

The above findings show that the inspectors are not able to provide support as effectively as they are expected to as a result of high workloads. This tallies with Alneyadi (2021) who indicates that more challenges stem from lack of contextual relevance, and the time duration involved, high workloads and school support.

5.3 Sub-theme 3: Fear of inspectors' intimidating approach

In the generated data, all inspectors indicated that the manner in which they approach schools is friendly. They said they communicate with principals and other staff members warmly which allows clear flow of ideas amongst them. The principals in all the schools have not indicated any hostility in their dealings with inspectors in the way they approach them. On the contrary, the findings in the in-person interviews that were organised with the HODs revealed that the inspectors' approach is not a friendly one in most cases. Findings from the focus groups show that all the teachers seemed not to be satisfied with the inspectors' approach when they visit their schools. The teachers' facial expressions in all the four schools were revealing and showed people who were hateful and also, the laughter of mockery would be heard from amongst them. Inspector 3 indicated:

We always try to be as calm and gentle as possible when getting to schools in order to allow the teachers to be in a relaxed atmosphere. However, sometimes the teachers can be so annoying particularly when they appear negligent in their duties.

Teachers on the other hand argue that the inspectors do not leave room for open discussions on matters relating to teaching and learning, instead, they always impose whatever they want the teachers to do. A teacher in Navy focus group postulated:

We don't know what to do. Even if you tell the HOD about your concern, it ends there. You are told it is imposed by inspectors. It has to be like that.

In agreement, a teacher in Grey focus group in School D teachers said:

What we know is that they scare us when they come. We feel like we have a bad day because if they are our coworkers, they should treat us as such. We can say they are terrorists. When you see the car written Ministry of Education and Training, you get confused.

Usage of the word 'terrorist' is an extreme demonstration of deeply-felt emotions about the kind of relationship teachers have with inspectors. One wonders whether feelings of this nature suggest a totally broken working relationship between teachers and inspectors or whether future collaborative engagements are still possible. One would hope the latter prevails.

HOD 1 from School A, talking about the hostility that the inspectors show when teachers voice their opinions, has this to say:

If you possess a better qualification than your boss, you are in trouble. When you ask a question, it's because when you try to make a suggestion, that suggestion is going to be looked at from the point of view of the fact that you think you are better. While in actual fact, sometimes you talk from your skill, from the know-how you have acquired. You are trying to make a suggestion or you are trying to ask a question to open up a door to say this is how this thing could be done. Sometimes they speak from their authority when there is need for some discussion, dialogue, agreement, or consensus. Then you say, nay, it will never be that way. So, you see that we keep quiet because but we are still not convinced.

A teacher in Navy focus group added:

Inspectors are not coming to us to let us be open enough to tell them what our needs and challenges are. So, we are stuck back there with challenges that we can't even know how to solve.

Similarly, a teacher in Green focus group bitterly said:

It's like they come here for evil deeds. Sometimes they even shout at us. They are unprofessional in their approach in some cases and that is not good at all.

Teachers in Grey focus group collage presentation angrily said:

We cannot say there is collaboration when we don't even know who collaborates with whom. That is the problem. We are never involved in things in the ministry. We just see the car arriving.

From the collage-making activity, teachers in the Grey focus group stated:

*Immediately we see the education car, everyone is running around and they embarrass us because as we teach, we are fetched by the HODs from classes and the kids laugh at us. What kind of collaboration is that? (**Angry facial expressions shown**) They embarrass us, sorry to say but we hate the inspectors. How do you collaborate with someone who does not tell you when she comes? They make us look foolish (**Laughter among group members**).*

The above findings indicate that almost all participants except inspectors and principals seem to be annoyed with the way in which inspectors approach them. This is seen in their actions and behaviour. The inspectors' authoritative way of addressing issues seems to closing doors for effective collaboration. This has a negative impact on the collaborative leadership practices that are meant to support TPD in schools. Words like 'terrorist' and 'evil deeds' suggest some very strong emotions yet the expectation was that teachers and inspectors would forge harmonious working relationships to enable their collaborations to thrive and create successful teaching and learning environments.

5.4 Sub-theme 4: Lack of feedback or follow-ups

Most teachers in their focus groups concurred that in most cases there is no direct feedback from the district-based inspectors for them to know where they need to improve their work. Even the principals still argue that the inspectors do not visit often to give them feedback or make follow-ups.

Mr. Grey, the principal of School D, said:

We struggle because there is usually no feedback. The inspectors take too long to come... Maybe it's because they are few in number or like they always say, they have challenges of transport. But the only challenge that I am experiencing these days or currently is that they do not come as many times as one would want.

HOD 1 in School C said:

I have never got any feedback from the inspectors. Maybe the principal gets it. I haven't met any inspectors myself.

The above findings show that the inspectors do not seem to be making provisions for the feedback so that the teachers know where they need to make improvements. This hampers progress and collaborations since the effectiveness of teaching and learning lies in the quality of feedback provided and subsequent attempts to use the feedback to improve.

5.5 Sub-theme 5: Lack of support for private schools

Participants in the private schools (principals, HODs and teachers) indicated that they were not sure why the inspectors do not support them in terms of their curriculum. They even suspected that the reason they are not supported in their Cambridge and Pearson curricula is because the inspectors lack knowledge of both curriculums. HOD 1 in School A stated:

They do support our school to some extent. That is the role they play by visiting and checking, particularly the local part of what we offer in this school, because we offer local and international curriculum, but they only concentrate on the local curriculum. So, there is still a challenge on the side of international curriculum. So, their role is to some extent not fully played for our whole package that we have in terms of curriculum.

Mr. Check, the principal of School B, said:

So far there has not been any involvement of inspectors in our Cambridge curriculum. Therefore, we have not gained from their expertise. I would say probably because we are

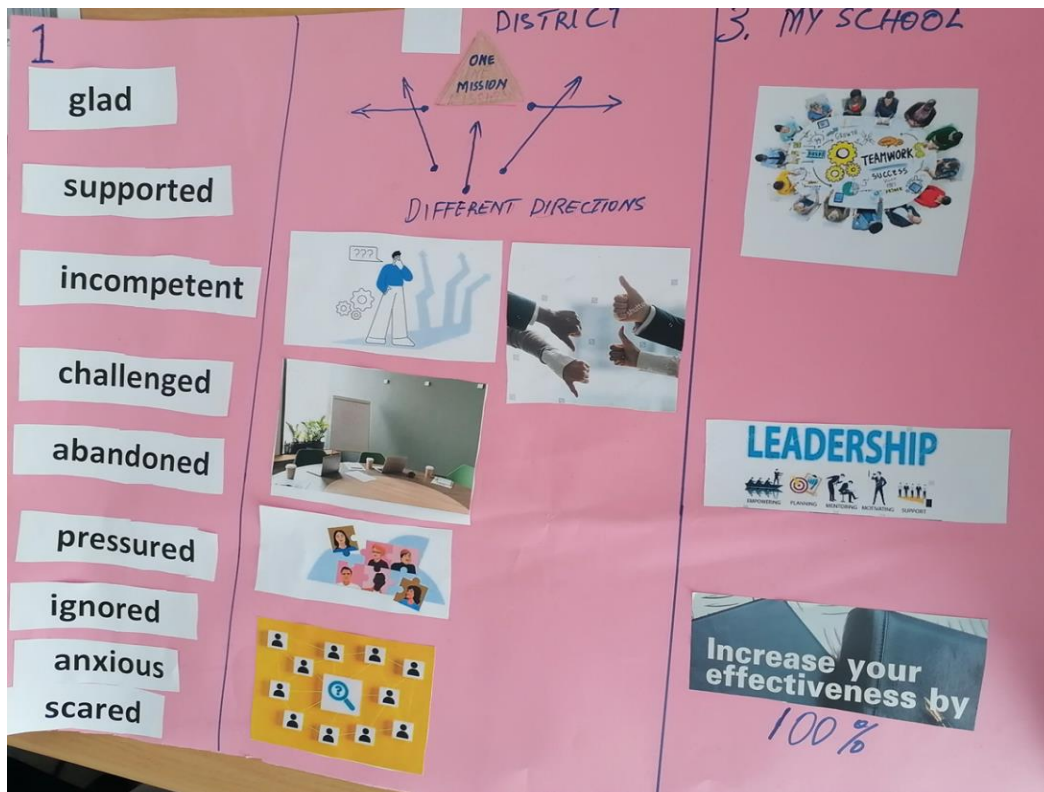
an independent school, but I believe the inspectors could contribute a lot, and I would embrace such contributions because their support is highly needed and very important.

In the face-to-face interviews, Mr. Green in School A expressed his dissatisfaction thus:

The inspectors' support in our school seems to be inclined to certain subjects, not all subjects. For instance, in my school there is French. There is no specialist from the inspectorate at district level who can assist our teachers in French.

Figure 6 shows the collage made by Mr. Green, the principal of School A on the collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors.

Figure 8. A principal's collage



On this collage presentation, as presented in Figure 6 above, Mr. Green stated with a very low mood:

We feel **challenged** because of the pressure of work, particularly in this kind of school whereby we are offering two curriculums; local and international curriculums and inspectors come to help only on the local curriculum not the international curriculum. So, to perform to our best in both curriculums, we feel very challenged and at some point, **abandoned** because inspectors can't actually help us in that area. The pressure we have in fulfilling what they have set for us as inspectors, because there will be some goals, objectives set for the whole district, it too much. At the same time, we have to focus on our curricula we feel the **pressure** in that case and at some point, feel **ignored** if we have to actually work on the international curriculum without any support. (The bold highlights the key expressions on the collage).

In line with these opinions, Inspector 2 confessed as follows in her collage presentation:

*I have also put the word **tormented**. This is to show that to another extent, we are not doing enough to help the teachers since there are still some schools that we do not reach. Not only that, but we are also not able to give the teachers other professional development activities that help them in their international curriculum.*

The above findings show that the inspectors do not seem to be playing a clear and satisfactory role in supporting the privately owned schools fully due to the kind of curricula that they offer. It is argued by the participants in both School A and School B that the inspectors have no contribution even in the professional records let alone the content in the different subjects offered.

This evidence shows that the type of school and the curriculum offered seemed to determine the role that the inspectors play in schools since the inspectors seem to be involved more in the public schools and less in the independent ones. This is as a result of the international syllabus that the district-based inspectors are not conversant with. So, it must be a huge challenge for the inspectors to support the schools under such circumstances.

Data further reveals that the inspectors admitted that they do not support the private schools with their international curriculum since they do not know its contents and pedagogical requirements. Therefore, the findings go against the School Supervision and Management Regulations 1988. Part (b) of the regulations states that the inspectors have to visit schools for inspections on the organization and teaching of each subject in the school.

5.6 Sub-theme 6: Lack of exposure to a variety of teacher professional development activities

Most of the participants consider district-based education inspectors not to be doing their best to expose teachers to diverse teacher networks. Furthermore, the kind of learners who are in schools nowadays are exposed to far advanced ways of doing things and they require teachers who are empowered. HOD 2 in School B stated:

Inspectors do not bring out different activities in our schools. Students nowadays learn differently compared to students in the past and also as an initiative in our school where we use flipped learning, we use blended and flipped learning. Blended in the sense that we use both technology and the traditional method of learning. Flipped in the sense that the work that used to be done at home is now being done at school.

HOD 1 in School A added similar sentiments:

If they are only arranging workshops, it is highly possible that they will not change in the near future. There are many professional activities, why only workshops?

Additionally, most of the teachers in their different focus groups seemed to concur that there is a lot that the inspectors lack in terms of the TPD activities. They even showed a mocking attitude by laughing and saying the inspectors seemingly only know workshops and no other activities. Data shows lack of exposure to diverse TPD activities for teachers and this creates a knowledge and skills deficit for them as there is a lot of information on the skills, content (subject matter) as well as the pedagogy that they are unable to access.

Although the findings show that the workshops are the most common TPD activities among all participants in the selected schools as well as from the inspectors, literature shows that there are a variety of activities that are meant to develop teachers professionally. According to Singha and Sikdar (2018), more formal professional development activities usually involve attending a conference, seminar, workshop, or college or university course. They can also involve collaborative learning among team members at work. Non-formal settings such conversations

among coworkers, solitary reading and research, peer or expert coaching observations, or any learning from coaching can also facilitate TPD (Mizell, 2010; Kampen, 2019).

Apart from that, inspectors seem not to be creating enough platforms for teachers to interact. One therefore wonders how the teachers are expected to improve learners' performance while they, themselves, are not empowered. This is a big challenge.

5.7 Sub-theme 7: No tapping on available knowledge

All participants stated that the district-based inspectors are not creating platforms to harness the already available knowledge from the teachers who have academically advanced to the higher levels yet such teachers are present in many schools in the districts. This is a major weakness since there are many teachers who have acquired various skills in different fields whose knowledge is not being utilized. Mr. Grey, the School D principal, expressed his views as follows:

No, not to my knowledge. Really? I have never seen them making use of such teachers.

HOD 1 in School B adds:

There's quite a couple, not a few who hold Masters, but they are treated like the other teachers, they are not in any way used to empower other teachers.

Mr. Check, the principal of School B:

And the schools definitely can make use of such sources. But most of the time, we are not aware. We don't know who in our community of teachers can be a useful resource.

Inspectors are even agreeable to the fact that they fail to make use of the available teachers to empower others as Inspector 1 admitted:

I don't think we do encourage or give teachers who have special skills acquired through further education, e.g., PHD and Masters, the recognition because I know that we have many teachers who have written books, but I don't remember where I have actually used their knowledge to empower other teachers. I think we have just been concentrating on the

subjects not empowering them professionally. So that talent is not able to actually benefit the whole community of teachers.

In a similar manner, HOD 1 of School A stressed the importance of making use of the more qualified staff members:

We have those very highly qualified teachers amongst our teachers around here but nobody cares to use them to make use of the knowledge, to harness that knowledge. They end up being bitter people. You know, sometimes you see a teacher becoming a drug addict, a very intelligent gentleman who has very big qualifications but because they are redundant, nobody is interested in their skills.

All teachers in the focus groups agreed that the inspectors are not using the teachers who have advanced qualifications to empower or support their fellow colleagues.

These findings portray the inspectors' lack of support in empowering teachers with the already available resources. Sometimes this ends up dampening the motivation to those highly qualified teachers. This has a very undesirable impact on teaching and learning since the teachers need to be motivated for them to feel empowered. Unfortunately, the loss of such teachers is the greatest loss in the teaching profession which would impact teaching and learning negatively.

5.8 Sub-theme 8: Lack of exposure to advanced technology

Most of the participants, especially among the principals, HODs and teachers, indicated that the inspectors do not seem to be engaging in the digital world. They added that the reason inspectors do not open the communication routes to develop teachers professionally is because the inspectors lack interest in using multimedia platforms. HOD 1 in School put it thus:

They are still using their paper. So, if they are still using their paper, you understand that it's going to be very difficult for them to even think of a situation where a class can be conducted using any digital platforms. That one is not a district but a country problem. As a country, we have a long way with digital presence, a very long way to go.

HOD 1 School B even showed that the inspectors have failed to expose teachers to the online training while her school is able to cater for the professional development needs of its teachers. She said:

Three years ago, we also had a French workshop. We always hold French workshops in Maseru. Sometimes some teachers also go to France, maybe for two weeks or for a month. They learn more about the new developments in teaching using online ways.

This demonstrates that the inspectors' continued failure to use cutting-edge technology to expose instructors to cutting-edge TPD is worrisome as it means they miss out on the latest instructional approaches. Research indicates that the shift to remote instruction and learning has highlighted educators' openness to implementing novel approaches or modifying their current methods (Damşa et al., 2021; Núñez-Canal et al., 2022). The results, however, indicate that the inspectors do not appear to be aware of the necessity of advanced online instruction.

5.9 Sub-theme 9: Unavailability of inspectors

In the data, most of the principals and HODs pointed to the problem of the unavailability of inspectors in their offices although the inspectors said their office doors are always open for consultations by all schools. Inspector 1 said:

Our offices are always open and that is what we tell the teachers and the principals so that whenever they need any kind of help, they consult us. They also know the office telephone numbers for easy access to us. It is true we are few in the district but we try to help.

Contrary to that, in his collage-making activity, Mr. Green pasted the picture of an empty office. He stated thus in his presentation of the collage:

Even when we visit their offices, inspectors, possibly because of the pressure of their work, we don't normally find them in offices.

An angry voice by HOD 1 in School A added:

Why don't they actually train and capacitate teachers from schools? Do they even have benchmarks, so that they may use some of the people from different schools to help them attend certain things, engage teachers into debates on how schemes and record of work must be done according to book on how we should handle lesson planning? Why should it necessarily be them who have to be on the ground so that they would have to complain of their small number all the time?

A teacher in the Check focus group complained:

The challenge is that they can't follow up on us, help us and guide us. They are not there for us.

In the presentation of their collage, the Check focus group emphasised:

We have to say, the inspectors don't know what we do, simply because they are never there.

There was a common point made by all teachers of the four selected schools that they have not had access to inspectors on one-on-one basis and that they cannot meet them. They said the inspectors cannot know their needs because meeting opportunities between them are difficult as inspectors do not avail themselves to the teachers. The above findings suggest that the inspectors are not present in their offices and during times when they are needed by the teachers. This is a problem since the teachers who need their support do not get it and the expected collaboration cannot be achieved.

5.10 Lack of induction of new teachers

Data shows some dissatisfaction among the principals, HODs and teachers in their responses that the inspectors are not seen doing anything to help and support new teachers who have just joined the profession. HOD 1 in School A said:

Sometimes we have a young crop of teachers in our school, and therefore, there must be somebody who can come to say, yes, this is what is done. Or to assist the teachers in capacitating them with the appropriate content, even the methodologies of handling that particular content.

Mr. Check remarked that the district-based inspectors had never gone to his school with the aim to support novice teachers. He said it may probably be because his school is privately owned.

The inspectors have not helped us with beginning teachers, probably they are involved in the public schools (Mr. Check, principal).

HOD 2 in School A pointed out:

I have a very low encounter with inspectors. So, for them knowing what we are doing or arranging activities here at school for the beginning teachers, I haven't seen their input.

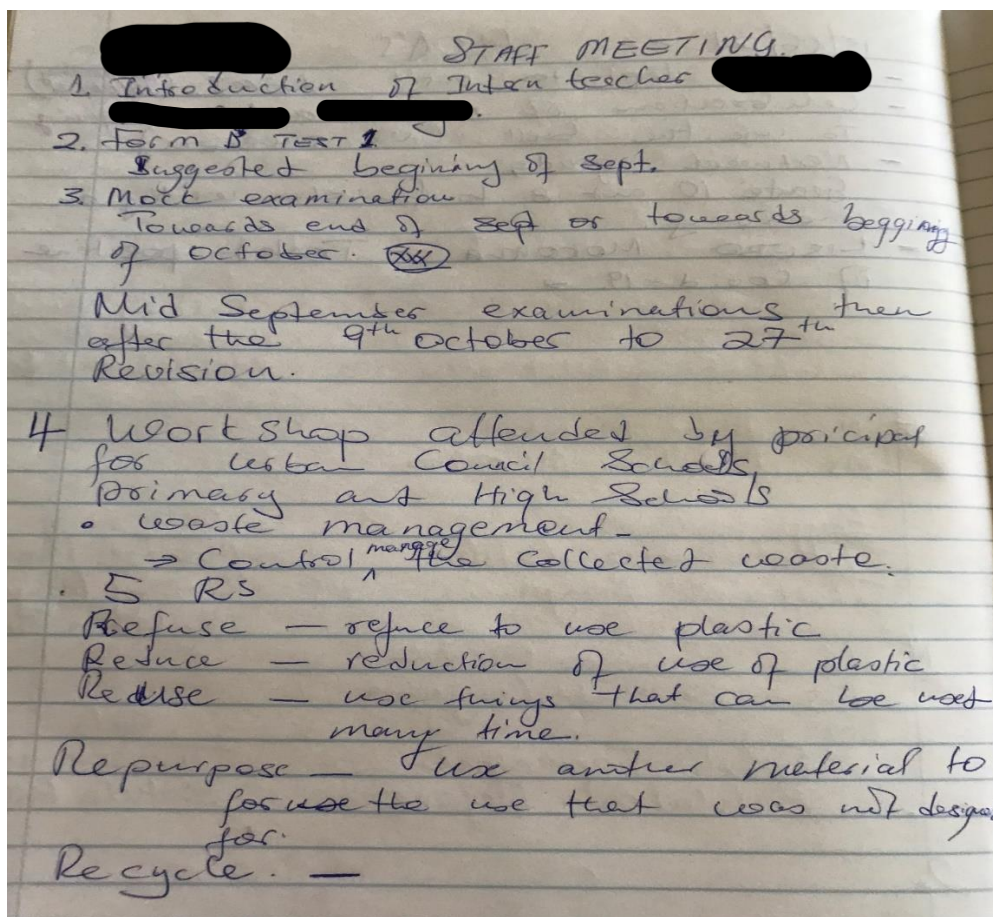
In the Grey focus group, a beginning teacher said:

I am new in this profession and it's my first time to hear about inspectors.

In the collage-making activity, most of the participants did not mention the induction of new teachers amongst the activities they engage in. However, in the presentation of their work, Green focus group indicated that another activity they engage in is the induction of beginning teachers that is organised by their school and emphasised that the inspectors do not take part in it.

In all the four selected schools, no documentation shows that the inspectors have supported the novice teachers. Figure 7 below shows part of a record of staff minutes in School D.

Figure 9. Sample of staff minutes in School D



The minutes show that there was nothing discussed regarding the district-based education inspectors' support of the new teachers as part of TPD.

The data presented above suggests that during their inspections, education inspectors do not look for all possible ways of trying to determine the professional needs of the beginning teachers so that

they can organise with the relevant stakeholders for such training to be offered to the teachers in those schools. These findings go against the Basic Education Act 2010 (Amendment 2021) g) that says the inspectors should identify in-service development priorities and monitor efficiency of related training. This says that if they identify the professional needs of teachers, they would be aware that there are beginning teachers and would ensure they support them through inductions.

One other point to make is that all the selected schools organise their own professional development in the form of inductions whose purpose is to train the beginning teachers on the expectations of the teaching profession as well as the policies that govern them. Huang (2021) goes on to say that educators require support in order to consider their vulnerability and potential limitations on their profession. Regretfully, the inspectors are not operating in this manner.

5.11 Sub-theme 11: Uncertainty and dilemma

The general picture that all the participants excluding inspectors have is the state of confusion where they seem to be in a dilemma of not knowing what roles the inspectors should play. They portrayed the picture of people who do not know what to do in order to have clear collaborative paths with the district-based education inspectors. For instance, a teacher in Check focus group revealed as follows while also asking some important questions on the way forward:

The Ministry of Education should be doing more than it's doing because education is supposed to be the backbone of everything. We are at this school, yet we don't even know that there's supposed to be an inspector. The only thing you can remember is that someone is going to just check your lesson plan. It's like a ghost hunt, it's nothing good. We always can't face that person, an inspector. I would rather run instead of having a normal conversation with her. How do we move forward? What are we supposed to be doing? And why are we even doing what we are doing?

This shows that the teachers are clueless and cannot even propose strategies that could be used to improve the whole situation. A teacher in Navy focus group added:

I for one have challenges in my work, but how do I approach people who are so highly feared even by the principals? What should we do? Because now we're also scared.

HOD 2 in School C displayed signs of desperation:

But I don't know why they are not coming to us. Maybe they feel we are already doing our work. I don't know why they are not coming. I don't know why.

The aforementioned data indicates that the lack of comprehensive participation may be attributed to the participants' numerous unresolved questions about the inspectors and their extreme anxiety and confusion about how to establish effective channels of communication and cooperation. It is expected of them to attempt to enhance instruction and learning in their various schools amidst the chaos. How on earth they can manage without help, is the question.

Theme 6: Education Inspectors' perceived role for improving collaboration of stakeholders in supporting teacher professional development

The information gathered suggests many recommendations aimed at enhancing the cooperative methods district-based education inspectors use to assist teacher professional development. These recommendations consist of, but are not limited to, exposure to more sophisticated TPD activities, planned school inspections, departmental assistance, and transparent communication.

6.1 Sub-theme 1: Exposure to other advanced diverse TPD activities

There is evidence in the data that reveals that the inspectors as well as the other participants suggested that the inspectors should expose teachers to diverse TPD activities for improved and more advanced ways of teaching and learning. Mr. Navy proposed the following measures:

Support can be given through online training as well as tours or excursions where teachers are brought together and then take an excursion to learn quite a number of things, whether they are subject orientated or work environment related.

Inspector 3 further suggested:

And then also if there could be access to the internet or access to other forms of communication whereby principals could be able to engage more in discussions with our office.

The data suggests that there is need to improve the way in which the inspectors support the schools by engaging the teachers in different TPD activities rather than concentrating on only one activity. Research confirms that the increased emphasis on online teacher professional development might be related to the economy since it is accessible, adaptable, and offers new opportunities for remote cooperation (Lay et al., 2020).

6.2 Sub-theme 2: Scheduled school inspections

The findings from the data show that the inspectors should take scheduled visits to schools and not to arrive unannounced. For instance, HOD 2 of School A said the inspectors should have a calendar of events so that they can visit the schools and meet with teachers quarterly or at any time scheduled.

All the participants, with the exception of the inspectors, contended that scheduled visits would address the issue of inspectors consistently finding them unprepared. They argued that this causes more disputes between principals, heads of department, and teachers since the disputes impact regular instruction in the schools and throughout the district. For instance, a teacher in Grey focus group indicated:

In our action plan, we should know that at a particular time, inspections will be happening and we will be knowing that they are coming. This will reduce conflicts.

In agreement, all the other participants in the Grey focus group held this view:

The inspectors should tell us prior to their coming, maybe seven days before coming to our school or we should know at least when they will be coming quarterly. It should be clear because we are not enemies. We have to be collaborating.

A teacher in the Green focus group said:

They must remove that attitude of making the teachers feel out of place and they have to come to our school with the aim of supporting us and not that one of terrorising us by arriving unexpectedly. Why not tell us when they come?

The findings show that the participants are not happy with the unannounced inspections that they are subjected to. They think proper support is where they are notified in advance about upcoming inspections.

6.3 Sub-theme 3: Departmental support

Most of the HODs lamented lack of support for them in their departments by the inspectors and as a result, came up with some suggestions on what should be done to improve collaborative practices of the inspectors and their schools as well as the district at large. HOD 2 in School A suggested:

I think the inspectors should help us with the implementation of our departmental budget through empowering the principals to help us cater for the TPD that helps teachers in our departments.

HOD 1 in School C added:

The officer in charge of inspectors has to ensure that the inspectors do their work properly by monitoring them. We as HODs are not supported at all. How do we do this difficult job of running departments? We cannot teach them their job, but they should be dedicated in doing it.

HOD 1 in School B suggested that the inspectors should create a forum where they can communicate with the heads of department to let them know what they are targeting in each school or what they would like to see happen in the school or in each department. In that way, HODs would be more alert to their roles and what is expected of them.

The above findings show that HODs in all the selected schools need the support of inspectors in order to perform their duties well. If they are supported, the benefits will eventually extend to the teachers, and finally, the learners.

6.4 Sub-theme 4: Open communication amongst stakeholders

Most of the participants pointed out that for collaboration to be successful, there should be improvements made in communication amongst the stakeholders with the purpose of sharing information and paving the way forward for a shared vision in the provision of TPD activities. On this issue, Mr. Navy suggests as follows:

That collaboration in terms of information and skills acquisition coupled with communication, you never say it is enough. I think even if there can be doors open for more organizations and for more institutions to come in, I think it can even be more proper because like it's normally said that knowledge is power, more people coming brings more different skills and more different activities.

HOD 2 in School B added:

Inspectors should have open communication with us, tell us what they do and what is expected of us. I think that's where we should start and then from there have that regular encounter where we do things together.

Mr. Check's perception during the face-to-face interview was thus:

The communication of the ministry's plans about the changes that are supposed to be brought to schools is key. Regular communication with the teachers can definitely keep the teachers informed of plans, development projects, and the views of the ministry. With regular monitoring done by the district inspectors, teachers would be more organised. We can keep them in the profession in a better way.

HOD 1 of School B said:

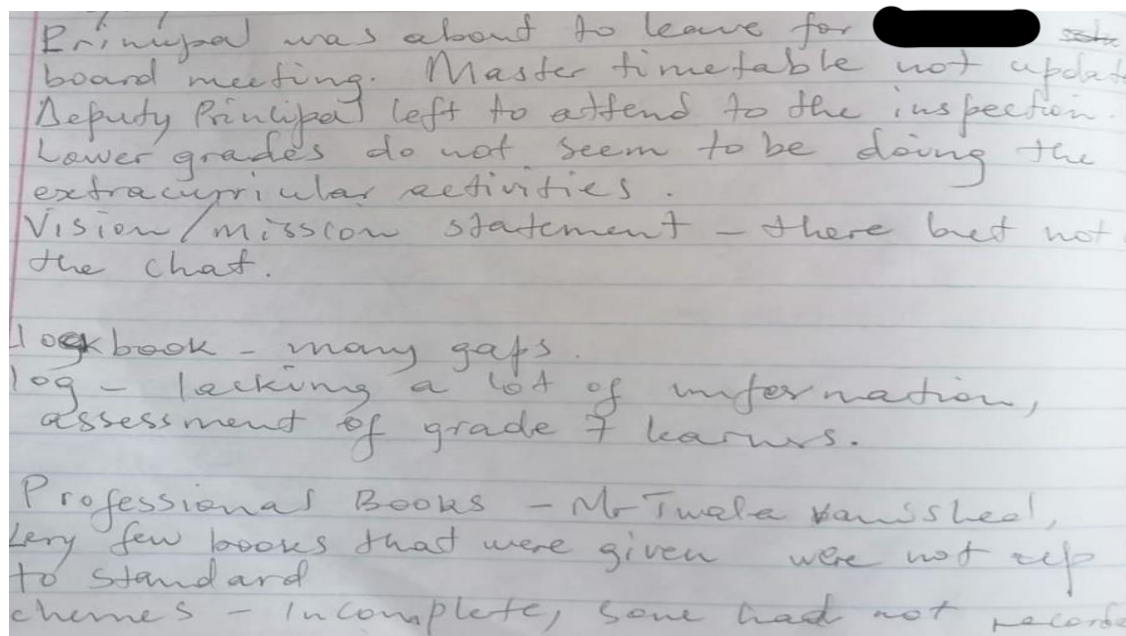
So, a forum or a way of communication between the inspectors and the heads of department in the schools would be very helpful.

HOD 1 in School D added that the inspectors need to sometimes address the teachers on the same issues that HODs sometimes raise in order for the teachers to realise that there is collaboration. In addition, teachers in Green focus group pointed out as follows in relation to their collage:

We are not satisfied at all. We do not even directly talk to the inspectors ourselves in most cases, so how do they support us while they do not even mingle with us? How do they even think we should tell them our needs when they do not involve us in their visits?

The minutes of the Ministry of Education and Training office however, indicated that the district-based education inspectors collaborate with school principals and in their absence work with deputy principals during the inspections. The minutes suggest closer and more organised collaboration yet the teachers raise the opposite. Figure 8 shows the minutes of the meeting of the district-based education inspectors where they report their findings.

Figure 10. Inspectors' minutes



Principal was about to leave for [redacted] state board meeting. Master timetable not update
Deputy Principal left to attend to the inspection.
Lower grades do not seem to be doing the extracurricular activities.
Vision/Mission statement - there but not on the chart.
Logbook - many gaps.
log - lacking a lot of information, assessment of grade 7 learners.
Professional Books - Mr Twala Kausheal, very few books that were given were not up to standard
chemes - incomplete, some had not recorded

The results demonstrate the need for communication in the workplace in order for any TPD initiatives to effectively address teachers' needs. According to Saw and Preudhikulpradab (2021),

several recommendations are made, such as enhancing networking activities and fostering collaboration, boosting communication to clear up member misunderstandings, controlling perception by fostering a sense of ownership, and co-creating the alumni network.

6.5 Sub-theme 5: Accessibility of inspectors

Most participants suggested that the inspectors should be available for all the schools whenever they are needed for more TPD support. They came up with different ways in which the district-based inspectors can be accessed. Mr. Grey made a proposition:

But I would say maybe if they can be available all the time, even if they have a problem of transport, maybe the schools which can manage to transport them can be allowed to do that so that they can be available at all times whenever we need them.

A teacher in Green focus group complained:

To me, inspectors don't exist. At least they should try to be there for us than fight with us. They should be cooperative and understand that we need their support not for them to look down upon us.

Inspector 4 suggested ways in which improvements could be made:

If we could access the internet everywhere, and if all schools had access to the internet, then it would mean there is possibility of continuous support from us. We would actually be there for almost all schools.

This shows that there are a number of suggested ways in which the inspectors could be accessible for the schools so that they can support teacher professional development. All parties appear eager to see changes and improvements and this augurs well for the future.

6.6 Sub-theme 6: Improved collaboration at all levels

From the data, inspectors indicated that all stakeholders starting with the national office down to the teachers should be ready to collaborate whenever there is a need. Inspector 4 said the following:

The national office should actually be the one that starts to promote collaboration more, then it would be simpler for collaboration to be functioning at district level. If we could start with providing proper support to the principals, then they would better assist teachers, then collaboration would be possible.

HOD 1 in School A added:

I believe the Education Ministry is an academic ministry wherein officers actually substantiate their arguments with scholarly work so that people are not going to make just hollow arguments and end up dealing with things emotionally. They have to ensure that they follow through models for proper collaboration in helping teachers professionally.

In stressing the recommendation for improved collaboration, HOD 2 in School C angrily advised:

They have already brought principals next to them and now is it necessary that they should always be complaining about the absence of the ministry's vehicle to ferry them to different schools or to different places? Why should they not ask for one of the school vans from those schools, to go around to just negotiate with principals? Should we say there is collaboration?

The information reveals the many ways in which respondents feel inspectors should become experts in working together with individuals and groups at all levels. According to Garces-Bacsal et al. (2022), in order to ensure that learning initiatives meet the demands of many stakeholders, a more unified and centralised framework is needed to structure the execution of professional development.

6.7 Sub-theme 7: Recognition of best performance

Data revealed that back in 2010/2011, there used to be awards in the district that were given by the inspectors. The education office would engage the business community, source funds, get accolades, awards, trophies, or certificates. Then there would be a day designated as a district awards day.

HOD 2 in School D said:

The district award day should be brought back because teachers were also given awards for best performance in different subjects.

Teachers in Grey focus group advised:

There was something like awards day in the past but it died a natural death. Inspectors should bring it back. Let them recognise our strength.

The general picture in the above findings is that the participants believe that for collaboration to be effective, there should be motivation for the best performing teachers who should be recognised and reinforced for improved teaching and learning.

Summary of the chapter

The data was presented and examined in this chapter with reference to the themes and sub-themes that arose. The participants' exact quotes were used to further enhance the presentation by illuminating their points of view. This was done to show how the participants felt about the district-based education inspectors' collaborative leadership approaches to assisting with teacher professional development. Four techniques of data generation were used to create the analysed data. These were document analysis, focus groups, in-person interviews, and collage. At the end of every sub-theme, there are some brief discussions of the findings that show the general picture shown by the data. The next chapter covers the discussions of the major findings on the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development. This will be followed by recommendations, reflections on the research journey and conclusions.

CHAPTER SIX

Discussion of the findings

6.1 Introduction

In the preceding chapter, information on the collaborative leadership methods used by district-based education inspectors to assist teachers' professional growth was provided and analysed by identifying themes that emerged from the data. The conclusions from the previous chapter are covered in this chapter. The discussion is informed by the theoretical framework consisting of the two theories; Chrislip and Larson's Collaborative Leadership Theory and Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Cycle. This is so that the findings on collaborative leadership practices are explored in line with Collaborative leadership theory and teacher professional development is explored in line with Eight stage teacher cycle. The chapter unfolds through six major findings with sub-themes under them. After introducing the major findings, the discussion will be made in such a way that the relevant literature will be used to substantiate the arguments made in each case where applicable. Then the sub-themes that emerged under them will be discussed.

All these will be done in responding to the following research questions that served as the guide to the study. The research questions are highlighted with the purpose of elaborating on their significance in the findings and to ensure that the study has responded to the questions as it set out to from the onset.

Primary research question

How do collaborative leadership practices of district-based educational inspectors support teacher professional development in Lesotho?

Secondary research questions

1. What is the nature of teacher professional development in the selected schools?
2. How do collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors benefit the TPD activities in the selected schools?
3. What collaborative leadership challenges do district-based education inspectors and other stakeholders encounter in supporting teacher professional development?

4. What recommendations can be made about district-based education inspectors' collaborative leadership practices in supporting teacher professional development?

The following major findings emerged:

1. The nature of Teacher Professional Development (TPD) in schools.
2. Collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development.
3. Collaboration of district-based inspectors with stakeholders in supporting teacher professional development.
4. Benefits of district-based education inspectors' collaboration with stakeholders in supporting Teacher Professional Development.
5. Challenges affecting the collaboration of the inspectors with stakeholders in supporting teacher professional development.
6. Education inspectors' perceived role for improving collaboration of stakeholders in supporting teacher professional development.

6.2 The nature of Teacher Professional Development (TPD) in the selected schools

In OECD member nations, 94% of teachers are estimated to routinely participate in professional development, according to a recent survey by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (2019) (West & Bautista, 2022). This is because teacher professional development is essential. A lag in educational training means numerous students lack the knowledge or skills to effectively lead within a global setting since their teachers would not have imparted the knowledge to them, (Hill et al., 2023). It is essential for teachers to be provided with continued teacher professional development due to the potential impact this could have on school performance and general administration of a school. In this study, the findings revealed that the TPD activities that are provided for the teachers are mainly workshops in the selected schools.

They are planned and facilitated as either school-based or district-based workshops. On this note, I discuss 'workshops as supporting activities' and 'planning and facilitation of teacher professional activities' under this finding.

6.2.1 Workshops as supporting activities

The findings revealed that workshops are the major activities that the teachers were exposed to in the improvement of their performance in their teaching profession. Some of the workshops were school-initiated while others were district/education office-initiated. The district-initiated workshops were arranged by the inspectors after carrying out their inspections in schools. The district-initiated workshops were planned for groups of teachers in the district. However, schools seem to be proactive in the provision of support for their teachers in that where they saw a need, and did not wait for the Ministry of Education and Training to intervene but initiated planning the TPD activities for their teachers at school level.

This makes the inspectors' collaborative leadership practices questionable in that ideally, in the school-organised workshops, they were expected to liaise with the school principals with the intention to support the teachers. In opposition to these findings, the results of a study conducted in South Africa by Jama and Buka in 2021 show that the workshops run by the Department of Basic Education (DBE) typically follow a top-down methodology in which DBE service providers ascertain the needs of teachers and then tailor the workshop's main focus to meet those needs. In comparison with the South African context, this study shows that although the collaborative leadership practices of district-based inspectors are not up to the required standard according to some participants, to some extent, the inspectors do not assume what needs to be done but are informed by the inspections to give support to the teachers in the selected schools.

From the findings, School A and B, which are private schools, exposed the teachers to international workshops thereby creating the atmosphere of learning through workshops outside the teachers' country. This opens doors for the teachers to get external expertise that in turn, would help improve the manner in which they impart the knowledge to the learners as well as adding to their own knowledge which would improve their job satisfaction. This concurs with Fessler's 8 stage teacher model in that teachers who have job satisfaction are not likely to exit (quit) the profession. According to West et al. (2022), two participants in the study on individual teachers' perspectives

on TPD in Indonesia indicated that they had been teaching for more than 20 years, indicating that they both understood the significance of Teacher Professional Development in helping teachers gain new knowledge and enhance their professionalism over the course of their careers. Through participating in workshops, reading extensively, and connecting with the English community, one may learn about the advantages of technology and English language instruction through subject-focused learning. This demonstrates how significantly TPD exposure may benefit instructors.

In relation to the findings, Fessler's 8 stage teacher career cycle model shows that teachers experience different stages in their profession and the third stage is called Competency Building. This is where teachers have been socialised in the system and become extremely motivated to take part in the professional development programmes, (Fessler & Christensen, 1992). In those schools, there were teachers who had reached this stage and their getting TPD would mean they were likely to enjoy and excel in their work, thereby improving teaching and learning. All they needed was exposure to TPD and if they cannot get enough of it, they may become demotivated and lose interest in their work. Inspectors do not appear to create enough platforms for the teachers to get exposure to TPD through collaborating with stakeholders, and teachers are negatively affected by this.

In the other schools (C, D) which are public schools, teachers had limited exposure to TPD since they only got exposure to locally organised workshops within Lesotho. The teachers, who may be in Fessler's Competency Building stage, were likely to be demotivated as a result of not getting enough exposure from the international workshops. In such a case, the district-based inspectors did not seem to intervene in any way in trying to offer support to the schools by sourcing some expertise or connecting the local teachers with their counterpart's teachers globally. This means that these were some of the learning opportunities that most of the teacher's miss. Such opportunities would give the teachers enough competence to produce learners who would be in a position to tackle every activity that they may face.

Further to this, workshops are said to have the benefit of being conducted regularly during a school year (Schneider & Blumenfeld, 2005; Sparks, 2004). Education inspectors seem not to be fully supporting schools since one would expect that they also liaise with schools in the school-initiated workshops since their presence or any kind of support would still give schools some

encouragement. Singha and Sikdar, (2018) state that in addition to a number of other TPD activities, teacher network participation is the best way in which teachers can get support in different areas of teaching. Taking part in teacher networks is considered a form of professional development in which teachers can get exposure to new skills and knowledge. This is true because workshops enable teachers to create some networks in which they share skills.

In addition to this, Njenga and Maina (2018) argue in their study on continued TPD in Kenya that the teachers' understanding of TPD is limited to workshops or better still, induction programmes that are given at the beginning of their careers. These findings are not different from those in this study which also show that, to some extent, the district-based inspectors provided support to the schools by arranging district-based workshops though their support does not fully solve some of the challenges facing the schools.

To illustrate this, the findings in School A showed that they ensure they provide induction to the new teachers. Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Cycle Model states that the second stage of teacher cycle is called the Induction Stage which he explains as the first few years of service in which one has a lot to learn in the teaching profession. Because of this, research suggests that the professional development of early career teachers is still a major worry for the entire world. Recently, it was shown that a startlingly high percentage of teachers have quit their jobs just a few years after completing a teacher education programme (Huang, 2021). Apart from that, the inspectors have admitted to not holding induction workshops for the new teachers, hence the concern.

In connection with this, Fessler (1995) asserts in his Eight-stage Teacher Cycle that as teachers advance in their careers, they encounter new issues. Some of these issues are caused by modifications to the work environment, while others are the consequence of changes to their own needs and circumstances. Changes in the workplace may possibly be caused by lack of exposure to teacher professional development. That is why even the new teachers need the TPD so that they cannot resort to quitting teaching as a result of challenges that could be solved through the induction programmes which inspectors would coordinate. Scholarly views conclude that the absence of induction and mentorship programmes had a detrimental effect on new teachers' professional growth (Makafane, 2022). This is supported by Kratka (2022), who demonstrates how

the firsthand experience of more seasoned educators may support new instructors' ongoing self-evaluation during those frustrating periods.

This means that in those workshops, experienced teachers would be able to empower the new teachers. It is worrying however, to realise that the inspectors did not collaborate with schools to provide that support. According to the findings of West and Bautista's (2022) study, *Global Perspectives on Teacher Professional Development*, teacher workshop participation was most common in Austria (92%), Estonia (93%), Lithuania (96%) and Mexico (94%) and much less common in Italy (66%), Turkey (62%) and, specifically, the Slovak Republic (50%). However, these findings are contrary to the context in Lesotho since the findings show that not all teachers are exposed to the workshop attendance as a result of lack of collaborative leadership practices of the inspectors. To ascertain workshop percentage attendance among Lesotho teachers, future studies may do larger surveys to determine this percentage to be able to draw more accurate comparisons with these other countries.

According to published research, the South African Council for Educators is tasked with overseeing the Continuing Professional Teacher Development and its operations in South Africa. This includes approving relevant and high-quality programmes and activities, bestowing PD points upon them, and judging the calibre and reliability of PD providers. Teachers who consciously choose not to take part in CTPD will eventually face consequences under the Code of Professional Ethics. This shows that contrary to what is happening in Lesotho, some countries have certain structures where TPD is managed while in Lesotho there is no follow-up on TPD attendance and provision of TPD by inspectors.

6.2.2 Planning and facilitation of teacher professional activities

Planning is a function of management, and as such, the findings show that the inspectors perform one of the duties of the district-based inspectors, which is to plan and facilitate workshops meant to support and empower teachers in TPD. The results are consistent with the Basic Education Act of 2010, as revised in 2021, which specifies that an inspector must determine the goals for in-service development and oversee the efficacy of associated training. The findings show that the inspectors stated they decide what to plan for teachers after contacting them to establish their

needs. This means the planning of the workshops is informed by their findings from their field work of carrying out inspections in schools.

However, there seem to be diverse views from the participants. All teachers from the private and public schools, with their different years of service in the teaching profession, mentioned the same response that inspectors do not meet them during the inspections in their schools to know their needs. The principals and the HODs whom the teachers say the inspectors usually meet during their inspections, are still teachers. This is confirmed by the School Supervision and Management Regulations 1988, which state that the principals and the HODs are indeed teachers since they have administrative positions on top of their teaching responsibilities.

However, regarding the district-initiated workshops that inspectors plan, the findings show that they plan the activities based on the information they collect during inspections. The question remains as to why they are unable to support school-initiated workshops if they get the opportunity to visit schools for inspections as part of their job description. It could mean the inspectors lack the will to fully engage with the schools and address challenges or they simply lack the requisite competence to do their job. The results of this study are consistent with the previously referenced study by Makafane (2022) on the induction of new teachers in Lesotho, which suggests that while some efforts were made at the school level to provide novice teachers with the necessary teaching and learning skills, the majority of teacher professional development activities were still not provided. He also shows that there is a wide range of activities that teachers should be exposed to, which they did not get access to. This means the schools may not do much for the teachers, hence they need the support from the district-based education inspectors. This shows that the collaborative practices of the inspectors still do not prove efficient in supporting TPD fully.

Additionally, there seems to be no common understanding between the teachers and inspectors. For instance, from the teachers' perspectives, the inspectors should be present in their workshops to fully be engaged in the facilitation while the inspectors simply feel that their presence in the workshops is actually the support. This thus, prompts questions about other TPD activities that would improve the performance of teachers and learners in schools. The teachers' limited exposure to TPD activities restricts them in terms of knowledge and teaching skills. Apart from that, most of the schools do not mingle academically with their fellow international colleagues. The inspectors are not creating pathways through linking the teachers with their colleagues globally.

In the literature analysis of professional development programmes in South Africa, research shows that teachers work better in professional development programmes which they are part of during the design (Luneta, 2012). This shows that in the cases of the selected schools, the inspectors do not involve teachers in the design of their TPD activities. This makes it challenging in that the teachers have no choice but to be part of the activities that they may not even feel like attending since they are not consulted on their TPD needs. These results run counter to Chrislip and Larson's (1994) collaborative leadership theory, which is based on the idea that leaders who have the power to establish forums where the appropriate individuals can develop ideas and find solutions to issues are the most successful in tackling public concerns. This shows that the district-based education inspectors may not fully solve the teachers' challenges if they do not consult them in the design of TPD since the inspectors may leave out some of the most pertinent challenges that teachers may be facing.

The inspectors do not seem to be bringing together the concerned people who are affected by the situation (in this case teachers) so that they plan a way forward that would solve the problems that teachers have as a result of lack of support for TPD. In the Independent Review of Teachers' Professional Development in schools in South Africa, teachers also emphasised that TPD becomes more tailored and relevant, especially when they can collaborate and exchange experiences with other teachers working with the same age groups or phases. However, there seems to be a trend in South African schools towards providing more in-person training by external experts. Furthermore, literature from Australia highlights the design of professional development policies to underscore the significant responsibilities of teachers. One such policy is the professional teaching standards, grounded in the belief that they will ensure teachers meet the standards of quality and effective teaching. However, this study's findings do not indicate any policies ensuring teachers' exposure to TPD activities, which negatively impacts teachers' planning and performance in TPD.

Additionally, in a review of CPD policies, methods, and implementation strategies in improving teacher competencies in the Southern African Development Community (SADC) region, it was found that many countries lack clear CPD policies, while others are in the process of developing them. However, the findings of this study do not highlight how the Ministry of Education and Training has formulated policies guiding teachers in terms of TPD.

Moreover, in South Africa, teachers are actively engaged in professional development, and PD is not done to them but with them. This indicates that teachers are actively involved in planning their professional development activities, starting with identifying areas for development and addressing those gaps through various means available.

It seems that in South Africa, there is a clear policy on how TPD should be conducted, exemplified by the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (2011-2025), which emphasises enhanced teacher education and development opportunities to improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools. However, the findings of this study do not reveal the Lesotho government's efforts in terms of policy frameworks supporting TPD through collaborative means initiated by inspectors. This suggests that while inspectors may plan TPD activities, there is no clear evidence of complete collaboration with stakeholders, as indicated by the study findings.

Furthermore, literature highlights events like the Teacher Development Summit in South Africa, which brought together stakeholders across the teacher education and development sector to address challenges affecting teacher development. Additionally, the Department of Basic Education (DBE) collaborates with UNESCO in the SADC region to develop regional Professional Teaching Standards. However, there is no indication of similar opportunities being created by the Ministry of Education and Training in Lesotho. This aligns with Chrislip's Collaborative Leadership Theory, which advocates for collaborative leadership styles involving all stakeholders in decision-making processes, providing an open and credible collaborative environment where participants feel assured that their views will be considered. However, in Lesotho, there seems to be a lack of organization of such summits or initiatives aimed at fostering discussions on teacher professional development among different stakeholders, indicating a deviation from this aspect of the theory.

6.3 District-based education inspectors' collaborative leadership practices of supporting TPD

Over the past 25 years, there have been some significant changes in the professional development requirements for teachers (Pernnerman & Connery, 2022). According to the results of this study, district-based inspectors have certain responsibilities that they carry out in order to assist instructors in enhancing teaching and learning in their environments. The following sub-themes

are going to be discussed: supporting curriculum implementation, keeping an eye on school operations, and conducting school inspections.

6.3.1 School inspections as support

The results indicate that, in accordance with Ministry of Education and Training policy, inspectors should visit various schools when conducting school inspections. To shed light on this, Part IV, Section 18, (4) of the Basic Education Act 2010 as revised in 2021 shows that an inspector's duties include yearly school work inspections and reports on accomplishments, trends, and the overall application of regulations. Such inspections involve a certain amount of cooperation. According to Munoz Chereau and Ehren (2021), the utilization of performance feedback and activities of the school's stakeholders improves the results in teaching and learning, and inspection models support school growth through mechanisms of opportunity setting. This is relevant since the inspectors collaborate with the stakeholders in schools when they go for inspections.

However, the findings show that in doing so, more attention seems to be given to the public schools compared to the private schools. The private schools hence remain with challenges they are not able to solve yet the inspectors are available in the district to help. These findings contradict Part XII, 74 of the regulations (School Supervision and Management Regulations 1988), which says a primary, secondary and high school shall be subject to a full-scale inspection. That means all of them deserve to be inspected. The findings also deviate from the Basic Education Act 2010 (as amended in 2021,) which says all schools are subject to inspections irrespective of their types. This does not seem to be the case according to the findings from the four cases of the selected schools. From the theoretical framework, Stoner (2017) argues that people look forward to seeing their organizations being successful, and when given a chance to participate in decisions affecting them, they engage their best thinking and contribute completely. This means that even these schools that get less support are right to express their dissatisfaction on the lack of support. Offering schools equal support would be a way of creating the conducive environment for all schools to feel that they have a stake in the activities in the Ministry of Education and Training.

Literature shows that findings in one study on learners' academic performance indicated that participants (at different levels of leadership) blame low learner academic performance on lack of involvement of all parties in the planning and implementation of TPD activities (Schlebusch, 2020). This indicates the likelihood of such in this study context because if teachers are not included in the collaborative activities that involve their work, teaching and learning will be negatively affected.

However, the findings show that there is collaboration, to some degree, between the inspectors and the principals, as well as the HODs. This happens in cases where the inspectors would be making comments on the overall performance of teachers in schools regarding different areas of the teachers' work. Involvement of teachers in the discussions of their work would yield them the best results since they would have opportunities to show the inspectors, principals and HODs what their professional needs are and implement the suggested interventions to improve their performance.

Although some scholars argue that teachers should be the ones who initiate their professional development activities, other researches also indicate that some factors may have a negative impact on teachers' attitude and capacity to initiate their CPD activities (Tyagi & Misra, 2021). In view of this, there seems to be a need for teachers to be supported for proper handling of their lessons as well as all other activities related to their work. Even though the teachers expressed their dissatisfaction more negatively in this study, saying the principals disseminate the inspectors' feedback to them, it still points to the collaborative leadership practices that the inspectors have with the principals. If the inspectors are able to delegate the duty of informing teachers about their expectations to the principals, it says they are following the required line of command in as far as the dissemination of information is concerned.

Just as indicated in the theoretical framework, collaborative leadership theory stresses the important aspect of involving all stakeholders in decision making, and provides a credible, reliable and flexible collaborative process that gives participants the assurance that their viewpoints will be heard to prevent a top-down approach in decision making (Chrislip & Larson, 1994). The findings of this study go against this theory since there is some dissatisfaction amongst the participants on the collaboration of the inspectors with teachers as the people who need support in TPD. Similarly, in view of Fessler and Christensen eight-stage teacher cycle, career frustration and the dissatisfaction that the teachers show about the lack of involvement that they get from the

inspectors, are likely to make them feel less valued which may lead to some of them leaving the profession.

6.3.2 Monitoring school functionality

It was found that district-based education inspectors support schools by monitoring their functionality. For instance, inspectors carry out the inspections in order to monitor the schools by assessing the different record books that should be kept by principals, HODs, and teachers. Such books are schemes and record of work, lesson plan books and registers and other school administration record books. The findings revealed that in cases where some challenges emerge in the records, the inspectors offer support by showing the concerned people the right things to do. The principals and the HODs collaborate with the inspectors in monitoring the records keeping. This is one of the collaborative leadership practices that empowers all stakeholders since records keeping is a way of ensuring that the necessary information needed for the normal functioning of the school is up-to-date. Thus, the argument holds that continuing professional development is important because it helps teacher educators become more proficient in both their professional and teaching practices (Tyagi & Misra, 2021).

6.4 Collaboration of district-based inspectors with internal and external stakeholders in supporting teacher professional development

The collaboration of the inspectors with the internal stakeholders entails their joint efforts with the stakeholders within the Ministry of Education and Training who may be in different departments in the Ministry. On the contrary, the external stakeholders pertain to all external stakeholders that function outside the MOET but have a part to play in education. Lack of knowledge of the role of the district-based education inspectors was manifested in the findings. The findings revealed that the roles of the district-based education inspectors are to be discussed on the basis of collaboration with internal and external stakeholders, participants' perspectives, shared vision, knowledge of the inspectors' roles in supporting teachers, delegation of duties, follow-ups and feedback.

6.4.1 Collaboration with stakeholders

The findings in this study revealed that, to a certain degree, there is collaboration with internal and external stakeholders. To be precise, the indication that the inspectors collaborate with the Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL) after the publication of the learners' results shows that there is collaboration. This relates to the requirements of the examinations as well as the examiners' expectations. This collaboration leads to identifying experts in the different subjects who then end up being linked with the different subject coordinators so that they help teachers where there is need. This is the foundation for the literature's assertion that meaningful logical, social, and emotional engagement with ideas, resources, and colleagues both within and outside of the classroom — is provided by professional development (Singha & Sikdar, 2018; Huang et al., 2019).

The National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC) is another body which is revealed as collaborating with the district-based education inspectors since it has a very big stake in the activities that take place in the Ministry of Education and Training. NCDC is responsible for curriculum design and implementation. However, not much is done by the inspectors that can guarantee complete collaboration with both ECOL and NCDC although the inspectors mentioned them as the stakeholders, they collaborate with to support TPD according to the findings. Collaborative leadership is vital in promoting inclusion, transparency, and progressiveness in the workplace (Mäkitalo, 2022). But it is worrying if there is not enough collaboration among the stakeholders because teachers still do not feel included in the whole provision of PD support for them. Unfortunately, there is no guaranteed progress in the teachers' workplaces under the circumstances. Thus, this presents a barrier since collaborative leadership entails significant empowering of all school stakeholders through a common goal, participation, and empowerment provided by collaborative leadership methods (Arthur & Souza, 2023). The Lesotho Education Sector Plan 2016–2026 states that the various Teacher Formations, Proprietors, Non-Governmental Organisations, Institute of Development Management, and Subject Associations also participate in the professional development of teachers. Despite the lack of evidence, the Ministry of Education and Training is not silent on collaborative leadership practices. All these organizations provide instructors with in-service training in the form of seminars and quick courses.

The fundamental tenet of collaborative leadership, according to the theory of collaborative leadership, is that an organization can only be as powerful as the combined strength of all its members (Chrislip and Larson, 1994). This means that if inspectors are strong enough to be cooperative, then the Ministry of Education and Training through schools will be successful. However, the findings do not show any of the qualities that enable collaboration being there between the inspectors and the other stakeholders from outside the MOET. This thus, puts a lot of pressure on the teachers who are to be equipped with skills that would in turn improve their job satisfaction. Hence, the fear that if they are not fully supported, it compromises their job satisfaction as Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Model states that teachers exit the profession if they are not satisfied. A review of literature found that collaboration in leadership benefits students, teachers, and the school, (Lerang et al., 2021). For that reason, the inspectors' collaboration with stakeholders can enhance the learners' performance in schools.

The Teacher Development Summit in South Africa, as highlighted in the Review of Teacher Professional Findings (2023), resulted in the establishment of the Integrated Strategic Planning Framework for Teacher Education and Development (ISPFTED). This framework, characterised by continuous and flexible planning, relies on input from all stakeholders involved in teacher education and development. Through this collaborative approach, the quality of teacher education and development is expected to improve over time. However, the study did not indicate any initiatives in Lesotho to support and monitor such frameworks, particularly through the involvement of inspectors.

Similarly, in England, the Independent Review of Teachers' Professional Development in Schools Phase 1 findings (2023) revealed that the Department of Education has engaged 11 lead providers to facilitate training and professional development. These providers coordinate efforts through national delivery partners like teaching school hubs, universities, and multi-academy trusts, demonstrating collaboration among stakeholders and paving the way for enhanced teacher professional development (TPD).

In a study examining circuit managers' perspectives on education quality provision in South Africa (Ndou, 2022), it was emphasised that strategic planning is crucial for delivering quality education to all citizens. Collaborative agreements among education stakeholders, including circuit managers, on defining criteria for quality education are essential. However, this study did not find

evidence of district-based education inspectors in Lesotho actively participating in such planning efforts initiated by the Ministry regarding TPD.

6.4.2 Principles of collaborative leadership practices

The findings in this study revealed that some of the principles of collaborative leadership emerged as some of the ingredients that the inspectors seemed to be using in their attempts to support TPD in the selected schools. Delegation of duties, follow-ups and feedback are some of the ways in which inspectors collaborate with schools.

The findings came with diverse views from the participants. Some in the selected schools said the inspectors delegate duties to the principals as well as to the teachers who are members of the district subject associations with the purpose of supporting TPD. Contrarily, other participants stated that the inspectors do not delegate duties to anyone in their schools. These findings show that there is some level of collaboration that is happening in the sense that the principal, as a school leader, communicates with the inspectors on the delegation of duties to teachers. That exchange of information is what makes the whole process run smoothly. Furthermore, literature advises employers to empower their employees by allowing them to reach their full potential by giving them more responsibility and adapting to changes in practice and the workplace (Herrity, 2023). This delegation of duties eventually, is aimed at ensuring full participation and collaboration of the stakeholders in supporting TPD. This is in line with Chrislip's Collaborative Leadership Theory which indicates that collaborative leaders delegate tasks according to team members' skills and experiences.

Follow-ups are very important in collaborative work contexts. The findings suggest that there seems to be more follow-ups in the public schools as a result of the local curriculum that those schools offer. This is inconsistent with Munoz Chereau and Ehren (2021) who describe how inspection models lead to school improvement of performance feedback. In those cases, the likelihood is that the teachers are likely to feel empowered and they are also possibly likely to have job satisfaction. On the other hand, the findings show that the private schools are not visited often and even the follow-ups made are very minimal, thus suggesting the teachers get very little exposure to TPD.

The findings showed that there are cases where feedback was given by inspectors to the principals but not directly to teachers. In the same manner, whenever certain things do not go according to plan, feedback also opens ways for corrections that rectify the mistakes. Montesinos et al. (2023) argue that teacher professional development has an impact on student development and may be affected by individual and social factors. The teachers should have it within themselves that they are willing to change in order to accommodate whatever is provided to them by the people or organisations that would be helping them develop professionally. Similarly, TPD can also be provided through social means that would be created for the interaction of the teachers in social settings. In such instances, follow-ups and feedback would easily be passed amongst the people engaged.

6.4.3 Subject Associations as in-service training platforms

The results demonstrate that the district-based education inspectors established a forum for teachers to exchange experiences related to various disciplines in order to assist them with professional development. Witt and Weber (1998) demonstrate the importance of collaborative leadership by noting that traditional leadership approaches are insufficient or unsuitable for meeting the needs of the entire community when significant and complex issues affect a community made up of diverse groups with varying but overlapping interests. Therefore, a cooperative strategy was required to identify a solution, whereby instructors assist one another as peers or invite specialists through topic association forums to enhance professional development activities.

In this case, the inspectors' creation of the platform where the teachers can come together and devise some means where they can share ideas, skills and also support one another is a good initiative that the inspectors have developed as a form of collaboration. The inspectors' contribution in the planning of activities to be carried out makes their involvement in the associations crucial hence collaborative practices. Mohale (2022) noted that sharing knowledge is a vital as an activity for learning among teachers that leads to individual and collective development which in turn contributes to effective students' learning outcomes and school effectiveness.

However, the findings to some degree further reveal that the inspectors' collaborative practices do not fully meet the required standard since although the teachers have those associations, the inspectors did not seem put much effort into supporting the teachers fully when challenges arise. The teachers who are supported in their associations are likely to feel more empowered in their duties. However, the findings do not tally with the Lesotho Education Sector Plan 2016-2026 where it states that under normal circumstance, Teacher Training Institutions (TTIs) should also be in a position to provide in-service training and Continuing Professional Development for teachers.

6.4.4 Benefits of district-based education inspectors' collaboration with different stakeholders in supporting Teacher Professional Development

The findings revealed that among the benefits of the district-based education inspectors, focus will be on the improvement in teaching and learning through motivation and government policy implementation.

6.4.5 Improvement in teaching and learning through motivation

The findings indicate that inspectors play a crucial role in enhancing teaching and learning by providing support to teachers. Research by West and Bautista (2022) confirms that educational stakeholders agree on the importance of offering high-quality professional development opportunities to in-service teachers for educational success. This fosters a positive attitude towards teacher professional development (TPD) and motivates teachers to perform effectively. Considering teaching as a complex profession, standards with non-cognitive skills can aid in improving student outcomes (Teng & Alonzo, 2022). Exposure to TPD contributes to enhancing learning levels and supportive relationships among teachers, transitioning them from traditional approaches to inspiration, interaction, skill development, and achievement (Mohamed et al., 2022). Furthermore, effective teaching practice is associated with high levels of professional competence, leading to enhanced student learning (Christoforidou & Kyriakides, 2021).

Regarding motivation, the study reveals that collaborative leadership practices of district-based inspectors have a positive impact. Participants acknowledge the inspectors' contribution to positive changes in schools, serving as a form of motivation for teachers. Research supports this by linking

higher levels of job satisfaction among teachers to exposure to professional development, fostering motivation (Toropova et al., 2021). Collaborative leadership is increasingly recognised as crucial for achieving desired performance outcomes, while its absence can lead to conflicts and decreased motivation (Njenga & Maina, 2018). Fessler's 8-stage teacher model also aligns with this perspective, highlighting collaboration, particularly among education inspectors, as integral to job satisfaction and achieving goals in academic settings. TPD serves as a tool to enhance teachers' professional abilities and attitudes, improve schools, and ultimately enhance student success through motivation (Carney et al., 2019; Haug & Mork, 2021). Additionally, a study in Turkey emphasises the importance of addressing teacher motivation within PD frameworks; a factor relevant even in the context of Lesotho (Arslan et al., 2021).

6.4.6 Government policy implementation

Policies have been developed with the aim of supporting teachers and defining teaching effectiveness, with one such policy being the Professional Teaching Standards. According to Khairutdinov et al. (2019), these standards are underpinned by a strong philosophical understanding to ensure that teachers meet the requirements of quality and effective teaching. The curriculum for basic teacher education is aligned with these standards, with in-service teacher professional development (PD) programmes in many educational institutions focusing on enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills as outlined in the standards (Teng & Alonzo, 2023).

Although the findings of this study indicate that most participants perceive inspectors to be effectively implementing the Ministry of Education and Training's policies in selected schools, it is noted that Lesotho lacks a specific Teacher Professional Development Policy as outlined in the Education Sector Plan 2016 to 2026. Despite this, other MOET policies contribute to enhancing the performance of teachers and learners. Collaborative leadership, defined as a cooperative process among team members aimed at achieving the success of activities and ensuring equality in roles and tasks allocation, fosters trust among team members (Mohamed et al., 2022). However, the monitoring of ministry policies appears to benefit selected schools differently, with private schools receiving less frequent and intensive monitoring compared to public schools, which raises questions about equity in policy implementation.

Participants in the study were unable to provide examples of specific policies being implemented by inspectors, which contrasts with the situation in England. In England, policies such as providing teachers with 35 hours of high-quality continuing professional development (CPD) annually and extending the induction period for early career teachers over two school years have been implemented to improve pupil attainment, address retention issues, and support teacher development (Teaching and Leadership Report, July 15, 2021; Department of Education, 2022). This highlights the contrast between the clear policies supporting TPD in England and the absence of similar policies in Lesotho.

In England, Stones and Glazzard (2020) outline a comprehensive induction programme for early career teachers, including training, mentorship, non-contact time, progress reviews, and formal assessments, all supported and funded by accredited providers (Department of Education, 2022). While there are similarities between the induction programmes in England and private schools in Lesotho, the funding and leadership structures differ significantly, with England's programme being centrally coordinated and led by accredited providers, whereas Lesotho's relies on schools' own resources and initiatives (Department of Education, 2022).

6.5 Collaborative leadership challenges that district-based education inspectors encounter in supporting teacher professional development

Even though the process of ensuring all teachers get PD can be challenging, supplying the workforce with high-quality training has been associated with improving pupils' outcomes, (Fletcher-Wood & Zuccollo, 2020.) The findings in this study indicated that a number of challenges have a negative impact on the different ways in which the district-based education inspectors try to pave a way for collaboration in supporting TPD. Literature shows that the findings in recent studies indicate that teacher professional development is still lacking in schools (Tafai, 2021). As a result, the findings have amongst them, the following challenges: lack of resources, work overload, fear of inspectors' intimidating approach, uncertainty and dilemma, lack of feedback, lack of support for private schools, lack of exposure to a variety of teacher professional development activities including advanced technology, no tapping of available knowledge, and unavailability of inspectors.

6.5.1 Lack of resources and work overload

Lekhetho (2021) argues that the education system in Lesotho is largely ineffective, evident from high failure rates in school-leaving examinations. This situation is attributed to poor teacher quality, inadequate school management, and lack of resources, which adversely affect secondary education. Similarly, other literature highlights the lack of resources as a significant barrier to implementing inquiry-based teaching (Fitzgerald et al., 2019). Consequently, it is crucial to equip teachers with the necessary skills to fulfill their duties despite these challenges.

This study revealed a lack of resources for district-based inspectors to support teachers in their respective schools. Consequently, this hampers the implementation of district-based education inspectors' plans for teacher professional development (TPD). These findings parallel those from the Philippines where barriers to teacher professional development included financial and time constraints, lack of teacher motivation, and logistical support (Chin, 2022). Matete (2009) also discovered in a study conducted in Lesotho that school inspectors faced poor working conditions, lacking means of transport and field allowances to facilitate their school visits effectively.

In addition, results reveal the issue of inspectors having very high workloads since they serve both primary and high schools at the same time. Further to this, there are some schools that were last inspected a very long time ago. In a study on professional development intervention in the teaching of English, Mofolo (2017) states that one of the reasons stated for teachers' unsatisfactory engagement in professional development engagement is lack of time to engage in some activities because of a heavy workload. The challenge of excess work overload leads to the inspectors' negative perception of teachers especially when they have to meet and have discussions, (Bongomin, 2019; Alneyadi 2021).

6.5.2 Fear of inspectors' intimidating approach, uncertainty and dilemma

In accordance with the findings, all inspectors said they communicate warmly with principals and other staff members which allows clear flow of ideas amongst them. Contrarily, the participants in all schools indicated some hostility in their dealings with inspectors in the way they approach

them. The inspectors' authoritative way of addressing issues seemed to close doors for effective collaboration with stakeholders in supporting TPD.

The findings show that there is no significant collaboration because the participants have a number of unanswered questions regarding the inspectors and they are fearful and filled with uncertainty regarding what to do to open ways for proper communication and collaboration. In the midst of the confusion, the expectation is that they should try and work towards improving teaching and learning in their different schools. The question is, how do they do it without the support of the people who are entrusted with the responsibilities of overseeing all activities happening in schools? Knowing the roles of inspectors would enable everyone to know what steps to take in trying to create the opportunities of allowing collaboration between teachers and inspectors to thrive. The findings brought out the fact that the word, 'inspector' seemed foreign to most of the new teachers and even to some of the experienced teachers to the extent that it created an atmosphere where it became almost impossible for them to even try and understand what role the inspectors play in supporting TPD.

The most interesting finding was to discover that the participants were beset with so many challenges. Lack of resources and work overload are the most common when it comes to collaborative leadership practices of inspectors. One challenge that fueled a lot of anger in the participants particularly teachers, HODs and a few principals was the fear of inspectors and their intimidating approach when they arrive at schools. This was shocking because their expression of dissatisfaction and hatred of the inspectors was revealed. This was a clear indication of the reason why there was so much reluctance to mention the benefits of the collaborative leadership practices of the inspectors. That was because they already had a negative attitude towards the inspectors and could not find anything positive that they could mention about them.

The findings also revealed that the teachers felt they were not being supported directly by the inspectors. They said the inspectors have not at all had any meeting with them in their respective schools to allow them to table their challenges and needs. This makes one to question the collaborative leadership practices of the inspectors.

6.5.3 Lack of shared vision as a principle of collaborative leadership

According to Njenga and Maina (2018), collaborative leadership involves organising team activities and making decisions on the vision and implementation techniques. Therefore, the results imply that the stakeholders in favour of TPD do not have the same vision. The inspectors held a different perception and said there is a shared vision in their operations with the other stakeholders. However, the findings revealed a totally different perspective where teachers do not seem to have a working knowledge of the plans being drawn in the district by the principals and the inspectors. This means that the understanding of the process of developing the action plans that are meant to help improve the running of schools is not handled collaboratively by the district-based inspectors. There appears to be no alignment between the action plans drawn by inspectors and principals on one hand and what the teachers know on the other. According to Wullschleger et al. (2023), cooperation is the process of forming social bonds between two or more members of a school's social network with the common objective of coming up with fresh concepts for academic advancement.

The action plans have the part which covers TPD in them. Under normal conditions, the inspectors should monitor the process of developing action plans. The findings thus portray lack of communication in schools among the stakeholders regarding their vision which actually questions the real existence of the collaborative leadership practices of the inspectors. There seems to be lack of monitoring of the plans by inspectors in the selected schools since if they were monitoring the plans, the teachers would know the roles of inspectors and would also feel supported. Therefore, leaders need to pay more attention on the collaborative process of defining shared values within their community (Urick et al., 2021). This will make it easier to make everyone understand the goals that need to be met to support TPD.

Where there is collaboration, there is shared vision. These findings show that the very people who should be collaborating with inspectors do not include themselves as the people who collaborate with the inspectors. The teachers' reactions indicated people who were bewildered, shocked, and amazed. In the theoretical framework, according to scholarly sources, collaborative leadership is distinguished by a common vision and set of principles, mutual respect, interdependence and

shared accountability, lack of ambiguity, effective communication, and synergy (Lawrence, 2017; Ang'an & Kilika, 2022).

It appears there are very few indications of cooperation among the study's stakeholders, suggesting absence of a common goal. According to Stoner (2017), a team or group may effectively function as a unifying factor and glue when there is a shared vision or purpose that benefits all parties involved, eliminating the need for control. How, therefore, could the inspectors and the teachers achieve greater heights in TPD if there is no sharing of the purpose and the vision that should guide them together? Vidovic (2022) views collaborative leadership as an approach that ditches the hierarchical organisation model and aims to bring managers and employees to work together in achieving common goals. The findings of this study give the impression that the inspectors and the teachers do not demonstrate sharing common goals because of the way in which they relate. Gaikhorst et al., (2017) substantiates this with the argument that teachers, in their various work places, should create platforms where they can communicate about the issues that are of concern to them with regard to teacher professional development. The findings of a study on leadership conducted by Prenger et al. (2021) show that the right leadership, the perception of a shared goal, collaboration and facilitation and support appear to influence outcomes. That is why it is pertinent that the leadership practices of inspectors should show a shared vision.

6.5.4 Lack of feedback or follow-ups

Most teachers and principals concurred that in most cases, there is no direct feedback and follow-ups from the district-based inspectors for them to know where they need to improve their work. In a case study on inclusive education in Lesotho, teachers also felt they were obliged to carry out inclusive education while on the other hand their opinions were not considered (Shelile & Dipane, 2014). Even in this case, many challenges are caused by lack of feedback and follow-ups. If the teachers do not see the inspectors consulting them to follow-up on the changes that have to be implemented for their work to be improved, the teachers feel abandoned and left to deal with their problems any way they may find appropriate. Since feedback is crucial to the efficiency of teaching and learning, this hinders growth and cooperation. Munoz Chereau and Ehren (2021) provided an explanation of how inspection models support school development by establishing expectations and demonstrating how the involvement of stakeholders and the use of performance feedback

improve teaching and learning results. The absence of feedback prevents the inspectors from knowing the needs as well as the challenges that teachers have in as far as TPD is concerned.

6.5.5 Lack of support for private schools

The findings show that the type of school and the curriculum offered seemed to determine the role that the inspectors play in supporting schools with TPD. Inspectors do not seem to play a clear and satisfactory role in supporting the privately owned schools fully. This is a consequence of the kind of curricula offered in those schools which, it is argued, inspectors are unfamiliar with. The results of this study are at variance with those of a study that assessed teachers' responses regarding differentiation practices in government and private high school classrooms in Lesotho. That study found that, among other things, public school teachers faced challenges related to a shortage of resources and the disproportionate learner-teacher ratio, while private school teachers were more likely to be exposed to TPD due to their greater financial power (Leballo et al., 2021). Participants in the private schools suspected that the reason they are not supported in their Cambridge and Pearson curricula is because the inspectors' lack knowledge of both curricula.

The findings reveal that the inspectors admitted they do not support the private schools because they do not know the contents of their curriculum and its pedagogical requirements. Therefore, the findings go against the School Supervision and Management Regulations 1988, which, according to Part (b), state that the inspectors have to visit schools for inspections on the organization and teaching of each subject in the school. This means that all schools deserve support in curriculum implementation through the intervention of the district-based education inspectors.

6.5.6 Lack of exposure to a variety of teacher professional development activities including advanced technology

The findings indicate that district-based education inspectors in Lesotho do not adequately facilitate exposure of teachers to diverse teacher networks. This observation aligns with literature indicating a general challenge of limited understanding of professional development among teachers and schools in Lesotho (Setungoane, 2010). Moreover, contemporary learners are accustomed to advanced technological environments, necessitating technologically empowered

teachers. This poses a challenge for teachers who struggle to access information on necessary skills, content, and pedagogy.

There has been a shift in recent times towards online teaching and learning, showcasing teachers' readiness to adopt new teaching methods (Damşa et al., 2021; Núñez-Canal et al., 2022). The literature presents a variety of activities for professional development, including formal processes like conferences, seminars, workshops, and collaborative learning, as well as informal settings like discussions among colleagues, independent research, and observations (Singha & Sikdar, 2018; Mizell, 2010; Kampen, 2019). However, the focus on workshops by those responsible for supporting teachers neglects other valuable activities.

Professional development can occur in various settings, including informal ones like discussions among colleagues, independent research, and coaching (Mizell, 2010; Kampen, 2019; TALIS, 2009; Bouchillon, 2021). Scholars emphasise a range of activities for exposing teachers to professional development, from one-shot workshops to embedded, job-specific development within teachers' everyday working environments (Zarrow, 2020). This highlights a discrepancy between the findings of this study and the wider literature, which underscores the importance of diversifying professional development activities supported by inspectors.

In addition, scholars note the importance of leveraging advanced technology for professional development, as it enables more flexible and tailored approaches to learning (Javier Portillo et al., 2021). However, the reluctance of inspectors to engage with multimedia platforms impedes teachers' exposure to digital tools for professional development. Studies show that teachers value online professional development opportunities and collaboration, indicating untapped potential if inspectors embrace advanced technology (Mukhtar et al., 2020). Therefore, it is essential for inspectors to broaden their support beyond workshops and embrace a variety of activities, including those facilitated by digital platforms, to effectively enhance teacher development in Lesotho.

Apart from that, inspectors seem not to be creating enough platforms for teachers to interact. One therefore wonders how the teachers are expected to improve learners' performance while they, themselves, are not empowered in their different schools. This is a big challenge. All these

problems stem from lack of exposure to teacher professional development which would grant teachers the necessary skills to develop their teaching (Lekhetho, 2021).

Furthermore, the findings revealed that inspectors show a lack of engagement in the digital realm due to their disinterest in utilizing multimedia platforms. Despite their familiarity with local educational perspectives, inspectors must also contend with global challenges (Javier Portillo et al., 2021). This is particularly relevant in cases where global calamities disrupt normal operations, underscoring the advantages of virtual settings in overcoming distance barriers and facilitating collaboration among diverse groups for teacher professional development (TPD).

The study conducted by Mukhtar et al, (2020) demonstrated that participants in TPD programmes routinely enjoyed online sessions and highly valued the opportunity to collaborate as a team. If inspectors were to expose teachers to online TPD, Lesotho educators could probably provide similar feedback, indicating a missed opportunity for utilizing advanced technology to enhance teaching and learning. Literature also supports the readiness of teachers to adapt to online teaching and learning methods (Damşa et al., 2021; Núñez-Canal et al., 2022), suggesting that Lesotho should follow these trends and immerse itself in the digital sphere.

First results from TALIS, OECD (2009) indicate that a significant proportion of teachers express a strong need for Information and Communication Technology (ICT) teaching skills and support with student discipline and behaviour. This underscores the serious desire among teachers for advanced technology in teaching. However, inspectors appear to be neglecting opportunities to expose teachers to advanced technology in TPD, despite its evident importance to educators. As a result, the findings concur with Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Cycle since the teachers in any stage of their profession, may end up leaving the teaching profession if they do not feel empowered technologically through the support of TPD.

6.5.7 No tapping of available knowledge

All participants stated that the district-based inspectors are not creating platforms to make use of the already available knowledge from teachers who have academically advanced to the higher levels (Masters and PhD). This is a major weakness since there are many teachers who have

acquired various skills in different fields whose knowledge is not being utilized yet they are present daily as part of school personnel.

These findings portray the inspectors' lack of support in empowering teachers with the already available resources. A further downside is that these highly qualified teachers may end up demotivated if their knowledge and skills are not put to use. This demonstrates lack of foresight if schools are unable to harness human resources based right on their doorsteps. This thus, leads to further compromise in performance of duties (Lekhetho, 2021). Some of these higher degree holders may end up leaving the profession which would mark a significant loss and negatively impact teaching and learning.

6.5.8 Unavailability of inspectors

In the findings, most of the principals and HODs pointed to the unavailability of inspectors in their offices although the inspectors said their office doors were always open for consultations by all schools. This thus is a problem since the teachers who need their support do not get it and the collaboration needed to support TPD cannot be achieved in such a case. Although the inspectors are said to be unavailable to support TPD, it is also important that the teachers also take initiatives and request help in areas where they need to be assisted. In support of this, Blandford (2000) claims that efficient administration of professional development depends on people who are willing to take initiative and are ready to come up with answers for their own professional demands rather than on coercion.

6.6 Suggestions for improved collaboration of stakeholders in supporting teacher professional development (Perceived roles)

The findings indicate that there are some roles which inspectors could play (as perceived by the other participants) to help improve collaboration and support TPD. Such roles/ suggestions include: exposure to more advanced TPD activities, scheduled school inspections, departmental support, and open communication.

6.6.1 Exposure to more other advanced diverse TPD activities

The findings suggest that both inspectors and the other participants advocate for exposing teachers to diverse Teacher Professional Development (TPD) activities to enhance teaching and learning.

Tafai (2021) stresses the importance of recurrent training sessions provided by the Ministry of Education and Training (MOET), along with follow-up activities and monitoring in schools after teachers' training. Additionally, Njenga and Maina (2018) highlight the significance of continuous training for practitioners, given the rapid developments in expertise that integrate into daily life.

Moreover, there is a call to improve inspector support for schools by engaging teachers in various TPD activities. Literature supports the increased focus on online teacher professional development due to its accessibility, flexibility, and opportunities for distance collaboration (Lay et al., 2020). Singha and Sikdar (2018) stress the intellectual, social, and emotional engagement that professional development offers teachers through interactions with ideas, materials, and colleagues.

Furthermore, a wide array of professional development activities, including conferences, workshops, lesson studies, coaching, peer observation, and professional learning communities, are globally embraced by teachers (West & Bautista, 2022). Zhang (2023) highlights the transformative potential of online education in overcoming traditional education constraints and addressing unequal distribution of educational resources. Additionally, OECD (2009) underscores the urgent need for teachers to acquire Information and Communication Technology (ICT) teaching skills and support with student discipline and behaviour.

Training to support teachers to handle trauma and control emotions is deemed essential to ensure they are equipped to address challenging situations at school (Roberts & Murray, 2023). Continuous professional training, including induction and ongoing education, is crucial for providing teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to fulfill their professional roles (Singha and Sikdar, 2018). Moreover, there is a recommendation for the Ministry of Education and Training, through inspectors, to focus on research and policy efforts aimed at integrating 21st-century skills into standardized assessments, evaluating their implementation in classrooms, and enhancing pedagogical practices to support their inclusion (Kennedy & Sundberg, 2020).

6.6.2 Accessibility of inspectors through scheduled school inspections and departmental support

Most participants suggested that the inspectors should be available for all the schools whenever they are needed for more support in TPD. They came up with different ways in which the district-

based inspectors can be accessed. The findings show that the inspectors should have scheduled visits to schools and not arrive unannounced. To the other participants, it seems like the inspectors are targeting to find them unprepared.

Furthermore, the results indicated that departmental assistance can play a role in facilitating teamwork. The findings by Njenga and Maina (2018) suggest that Lesotho schools should pay greater attention to teacher professional development and the ways in which collaborative leadership may impact it. When all parties involved are able to fully participate in the process of defining teacher professional development, they will then search for every avenue to seek help from inspectors and other stakeholders in order to enhance instruction and student learning.

The findings of this study show that HODs in all the selected schools need the support of the inspectors in order to perform their duties well. If they are supported, the benefits will extend to the teachers, and finally, to the learners. This is substantiated by Dönmez et al. (2021) who state that when assessed in terms of teachers' professional learning, mentoring is very vital because it depicts continuity and focuses on the needs at school considering a particular subject which can make remarkable contributions to the professional development of teachers.

6.6.3. Open communication amongst stakeholders as a principle of collaborative leadership

According to literature, collaborative leaders recognise the importance of creating networks to facilitate the free flow of information (Stoner, 2017). This aligns with the findings indicating that participants stress the need for improved communication among stakeholders to share information and work towards a shared vision in providing Teacher Professional Development (TPD) activities. Specifically, Holstein et al. (2021) note that certain professional development programmes offer teachers opportunities to learn about innovative practices and teaching tools based on recent research, which can be shared effectively through platforms initiated by inspectors, thus enabling teachers to benefit from resource persons arranged by the inspectors.

The findings underline the critical role of communication in ensuring that TPD activities meet teachers' needs effectively in the workplace. Saw and Preudhikulpradab (2021) propose recommendations such as enhancing collaboration, improving network activities, increasing communication to prevent misunderstandings among stakeholders, fostering a sense of ownership,

and co-creating alumni networks. Gaikhorst et al. (2017) support this argument by highlighting the importance of teachers creating platforms to communicate about professional development issues in their respective workplaces.

6.6.4 Improved collaboration at all levels

O'Dowd and Dooly (2022) observed that Teacher Professional Development (TPD) offers teachers opportunities to forge new professional partnerships and collaborative academic initiatives. It also enables them to enhance their online collaboration skills and devise innovative approaches to their teaching practice. Consequently, the findings reveal that inspectors stressed the importance of collaboration among all stakeholders, from the national office to teachers, whenever the need arises. Effective collaboration would facilitate the incorporation of novice teachers into TPD programmes, recognising their particular need for training and exposure.

In a study examining the effects of mentorship on immigrant teachers' professional development in Australia, Yan (2021) found that during the 'initiation' phase, Ian was introduced to a new school where he underwent an induction programme lasting less than six months. He was assigned a subject-specific mentor to assist with curriculum planning and the development of pedagogical strategies. The Australian example demonstrates the type of induction which involves close mentorship and ensures new teachers settle into the culture and rhythm of their new environment. Perhaps Lesotho could adopt a similar approach specifically tailored to the needs and capabilities of the local context with the aim of turning the induction of new teachers into success stories of professional integration and development.

Makafane (2022) in a study on novice teachers highlighted the importance of collaboration and support from the Ministry of Education and Training down to the school level and within a close-knit community of teachers. Initiatives such as peer communication, work sharing, collaboration, feedback, and evaluation contribute to teachers' self-confidence and motivation when they feel part of a network (Portillo & Lopez de la Serna, 2021).

Furthermore, participants believe that collaboration between inspectors and stakeholders at all levels should be mastered in various ways. Garces-Bacsal et al. (2022) argue for the need for a cohesive and centralised framework to structure the implementation of professional development

initiatives, ensuring they are responsive to stakeholders' needs. Additionally, teachers need to comprehend TPD processes and the conditions that foster professional growth before designing PD courses (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Korthagen, 2017; Komba & Mwakabenga, 2019).

6.6.5 Recognition of best performance

It was suggested in the preceding sections that the Ministry of Education and Training should engage the business community, source funds, get accolades, awards, trophies, and certificates with the aim of hosting a district awards day in the various districts

For collaboration to be effective, the best performing teachers must be recognised to motivate them to maintain their performance. Lesotho could benefit from such initiatives. In contrast, teachers in America received a certificate of completion for a workshop from Joni Scandola, Managing Director for Resources, Office of Policy, Planning, and Resources, Public Diplomacy and Public Affairs. Teachers can use this certificate to earn professional development credits in order to renew their teaching licenses with their state departments of education (Urbom, 2022). This action served as motivation to the teachers in that it encourages teachers to engage in TPD activities knowing that their involvement would be rewarded. In the context of the five cases used in this study, the findings do not show any policy that the inspectors are monitoring which has anything to do with teacher rewards in TPD engagement. This shows that Lesotho still lags behind in terms of motivation in conducting TPD.

6.6.6 Exposure to more advanced TPD activities, scheduled school inspections, departmental support, and open communication

Exposure to more advanced TPD activities is a response to a challenge that came out and this is viewed as a route that could possibly open communication channels amongst teachers globally. The most interesting suggestion is one in which most of the participants said inspectors should provide schedules of their inspections in schools so that the visits are known beforehand. As already cited in Blandford (2000), efficient PD depends on people who are willing to take initiative and are enthusiastic about their work rather than being forced to do so. Where PD works efficiently, it is up to the teachers to strive to improve their performance by developing positive attitudes and improving their competence.

This multiple case study explored the collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors. It is imperative then to have, among other things, the strategies whose purpose is to curb even the most complicated occurrences in the education system. Collaborative leadership, according to Stoner (2017), is the most efficient approach for people to advance together towards a bright future. The positive future is one which teachers may have if they get full support from the education inspectors in collaboration with the other stakeholders. This shows how imperative it is to support ongoing professional development initiatives that provide teachers with guidance, supervision, and training. In that way they can incorporate new ideas into their courses on a daily basis and avoid facing new obstacles when they return to the classroom (Tafai & Tsakeni, 2022). This is essential because professional development is thought to be the main tool that educational institutions may employ to support teachers in their ongoing efforts to learn new things and advance their careers (Bernadine, 2019). And in such a situation, schools require assistance from the Ministry of Education and Training, which comes from stakeholders outside the educational system as well as through the district-based inspectors.

Summary of the chapter

The chapter discussed the findings that emerged from the previous chapter on the basis of the theoretical framework consisting of the two theories: Chrislip and Larson's Collaborative Leadership Theory and Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Cycle. To corroborate or dispute the findings from the data, scholarly views from the literature review were used. The next chapter covers the summary of chapters, recommendations, reflection on my research journey and conclusion of the study.

CHAPTER 7

Summary, conclusion and recommendations

7.1 Introduction

The preceding chapter discussed the findings that emerged from the data. This chapter summarises the previous chapters of the study, offers the conclusion and the way in which the study contributes to knowledge. It further covers the reflections on my research journey and the recommendations for improved collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development.

7.2 Summary of the chapters

This part focuses on the summary of the chapters that are covered in this study. This study is presented in seven chapters.

7.2.1 Chapter One

The first chapter included the backdrop and introduction of the study, highlighting its conception. The chapter also explored the theoretical framework supporting the study. The framework was drawn from Ralph Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Career Cycle Model (1995) and Collaborative Leadership Theory (David D. Chrislip and Carl E. Larson, 1994). The study's justification, problem statement, research questions, goals, and objectives were also covered. Additionally, the research design and methodology, research paradigm, research approach, data generation, participant selection, data analysis, the value of research, ethical considerations, reliability, chapter summaries, and chapter layout were all covered.

7.2.2 Chapter Two

The study's theoretical foundation was covered in Chapter 2 and included Ralph Fessler's 1995 Eight-Stage Teacher Career Cycle Model and David Chrislip and Carl Larson's Collaborative Leadership Theory from 1994. The first of the theoretical framework's three goals was meant to offer more pertinent, in-depth understanding of the important facets of the ideas generated in the two theories. The second was to investigate their explanatory research by aligning it to the situations in which it may be used. The final goal was to discuss the benefits and drawbacks of the theories for comprehending teacher professional development and collaborative leadership.

7.2.3 Chapter Three

In the third chapter, a study of the related literature was conducted with respect to the ideas on collaborative leadership and teacher professional development. It examined how district-based education inspectors assist teacher professional development via collaborative leadership approaches from both a national and international standpoint. The conceptual framework was covered in the first section of the chapter. Next, it discussed the nature of teacher professional development in schools, and the activities related to teacher professional development as seen by many academics. It also included a discussion on the value of professional development for educators, the difficulties associated with providing it, and the actions that stakeholders in teacher professional development should take to enhance educators' professional growth.

7.2.4 Chapter Four

Chapter Four discussed the research design and methodology for this qualitative multiple case study. The sections covered were the research paradigm, research approach, research design, data generation methods, selection of research participants, sample size, and data analysis. In addition, measures of trustworthiness, the value of the research and ethical considerations were the other primary components of this chapter.

7.2.5 Chapter Five

Chapter Five presented the data. This was done by including the verbatim quotes of the participants' words. The chief participants comprised inspectors (drawn from the education office in Botha Bothe district), principals, HODs and teachers from the selected schools in the district.

7.2.6 Chapter Six

Chapter Six discussed the findings. The discussions were based on the findings in relation to the literature as well as the theoretical framework drawn from the two theories: Chrislip and Larson's Collaborative Leadership Theory and Fessler's Eight-Stage Teacher Cycle. The discussion happened in line with the research questions that guided this study.

7.2.7 Chapter Seven

This chapter covers the summary of the previous chapters in this study, offers the conclusion and the way the study contributes to knowledge. The reflections on my research journey and the recommendations for the improved collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development are presented in the chapter.

7.3 Reflections on my research journey

The concept of collaborative leadership practices generated tremendous research interest in me as one aspect of leadership that requires significant attention due to its recursive nature in education. The urge I had to base my study on the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors was also prompted by the observation that there is a serious need to support teacher professional development in schools. This observation was guided by my experiences as a former teacher where I had no idea how I would go about improving the professional know-how that I had and also having platforms where I could share fears, shortcomings, knowledge and skills. However, having joined the Ministry of Education and Training as an inspector, I felt the need to explore the collaborative leadership practices of inspectors in supporting TPD as a way of paving my way to finding solutions to the challenges that teachers face. Part IV, 18, (4) (g) of the Basic

Education Act 2010, as amended in 2021, illustrates that one of the functions of an inspector is to identify in-service development priorities and monitoring of effectiveness of related training. That is why I was curious to explore the experiences of the district-based education inspectors, principals, HODs and teachers in helping respond to the research questions that guided this study.

I therefore embarked on a journey to explore the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development. There seemed to be a common understanding on the principles of collaborative leadership which are a shared vision, feedback, communication and delegation of duties. With regard to these principles, one should state that the situation in Lesotho, specifically in Botha Bothe District where the study was undertaken, is such that the district education office through the district-based inspectors, organises itself in a manner that they feel is suitable for the needs of the schools in the district.

However, there were some challenges that I encountered in carrying out this study. During the data generation process, I experienced a lot of negative comments as a result of one of the data generation methods I used; the collage. According to the initial plan, the collage-making activity was supposed to take place before the interviews for all the participants. This led to the participants complaining that the collage was taking much of their time as it interfered with their schedules. Most complaints came from the principals and HODs since they argued they had a lot of administrative work to do. It took enormous effort on my part to convince them to allow the process to go ahead as planned. As a result of the complaints, I had to set separate appointments with the principals for the document analysis to be carried out. Additionally, with regard to the focus groups, the challenge in some contexts was that some of the teachers were passive and would not participate. However, I had to apply my skills of randomly picking on some of them to enhance full participation of all of them.

With the focus groups I had originally planned to have eight teachers in each group for all the four cases in the schools. However, during the process of setting up appointments for data generation, I encountered problems with the availability of the participants. A number of times in the four schools, I had to cancel appointments because the number of teachers could not add up to what I had anticipated. Eventually, I had to make changes on the number of teachers to take part in focus groups and settle for five instead of eight. The reason for making it five was that in all cases, the number of teachers available was five. This did not have any negative impact on the overall data

collected as the five teachers were still enough to provide very rich data that allowed me to continue with the study without any complications.

The data generation process coincided with the school holidays in Lesotho and since data was to be collected in schools, that process had to be postponed to the reopening of the schools. This is because even with the participants that would still be available, that was the time when they were very busy marking the June Examinations and it was not possible to disrupt that exercise. It was not even possible to collect data from the principals and HODs as in Lesotho, those office-bearers have classes that they teach and they also had some marking to do. So, I had to wait for the schools to reopen in order to access all the participants.

After the reopening of schools, the second term in Lesotho is the time during which external students are beginning their practical final examinations and it is the busiest time for teachers. As a result, it was not easy to arrange appointments with some teachers on account of their busy schedules with their learners making touch-ups for the final examinations. This led to a number of appointments being cancelled as a result of participants' inaccessibility. One more challenge was in relation to teachers' negative attitudes towards me which led to some participants' refusing to take part in the study. I therefore did not force them to be part of the study.

A particularly striking finding is that there seems to be a misunderstanding of the roles that teachers expect the inspectors to perform (conflict between expectations and reality). The teachers' expectation has been that the inspectors have to get into the classrooms with them and provide support in all their subjects' content and delivery of lessons whereas the inspectors' understanding of their roles is that their guidance and support ends with the checking of the teachers' professional records and making recommendations for improvement. Future studies could focus on this misunderstanding of roles as it appears to be an interesting aspect that could help clarify the relationship between inspectors and pedagogic school practices.

To conclude this section, an important part of reflecting on my research journey has to do with the level of academic and professional growth I gained from this study. The haziness accompanying the start of the journey gradually grew into realisation of the deeper-lying issues in the field of teacher professional development. Intense engagement with both the literature and data opened

my eyes in ways I could not have imagined when this journey was first conceptualised and eventually grew into this huge melting pot of ideas, opinions and debates.

7.4 Reflections on the research questions

This section reflects on the research questions that guided the study, reviewing them in order to assess the extent to which the generated data responded to them.

Primary research question

The study set out to respond to this primary question: *How do collaborative leadership practices of district-based educational inspectors support teacher professional development in Lesotho?*

This research question is anchored on the major purpose of this study, which is to explore the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development. This question has been responded to while also revealing something shocking about the findings because most of the participants showed lack of knowledge on the role of the district-based education inspectors. Most of the roles that emerged came from the inspectors themselves and they went on explaining what they do in different instances in the schools in Botha Bothe district. However, in all the roles that they mentioned, the inspectors showed how they were involved in collaborative leadership practices in the district.

Another shocking revelation was the inspectors lack knowledge of the international curricula, particularly Pearson and Cambridge. That is why the participants in the private schools indicated that they felt left out and thus could not even place any trust in the inspectors for support. It was even more worrying because the inspectors expressed embarrassment in their incompetence in the international curricula. This demonstrates that work still needs to be done to capacitate inspectors with other curriculum trends so that they can cope with any inspection demands in their respective districts.

Despite the shocking discoveries depicted above, the study found that the collaborative practices of inspectors assisted teacher development in some of the following ways:

- Paying inspection visits to schools even though the small number of inspectors versus the huge number of schools makes this difficult to do more effectively;

- Communicating with principals on some of the TPD issues even though the teachers claimed not to be informed about some of these expectations;
- Conducting district-initiated workshops to support TPD;
- Monitoring the functionality of schools by assessing school record books.

The inspectors were still able to do their work despite lacking key resources such as vehicles. The Ministry of Education and Training needs to do a lot more to ensure inspectors perform their duties without any excuses.

Secondary research questions

1. *What is the nature of teacher professional development in the selected schools?*

This research question was answered although the findings showed a negative outcome. The nature of teacher professional development activities in the selected schools in Botha Bothe district has been found to be in such a way that the PD activities availed for the teachers are mainly workshops. There is limited exposure to TPD among the teachers. This points to district-based inspectors' inefficiency in supporting TPD since they do not seem to be creating diverse opportunities for teachers to be empowered professionally. This question was answered in Chapters 3, 5, and 6.

2. *How do collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors benefit the TPD activities in the selected schools?*

Regarding this research question, unfortunately, there were few benefits that the participants were able to highlight. It was much easier for the inspectors to mention them but the other participants struggled to bring them up. This raised a concern that there could be very limited benefits that stakeholders are aware of because they could not see that collaboration in the first place. This suggests that the area of collaboration among the stakeholders requires strengthening.

3. *What collaborative leadership challenges do district-based education inspectors and other stakeholders encounter in supporting teacher professional development?*

This question was answered and the interesting factor is that the data revealed many challenges that the participants said they encountered. These include misunderstanding of roles between inspectors and teachers and lack of resources to carry out inspections efficiently. This demonstrates

the hurdles the Ministry of Education and Training faces in making the inspection exercise raise professional standards in schools.

4. *What recommendations can be made about district-based education inspectors' collaborative leadership practices in supporting teacher professional development?*

In response to this question, these were some of the recommendations raised:

- The need for exposure to more advanced TPD activities;
- Scheduled school inspections as opposed to unannounced visits;
- Departmental support;
- Open communication between and among the stakeholders.

This research question afforded the participants an opportunity to map the way forward with regard to improving their professional relationships and raising the standard of collaboration among them. Acknowledging the existing fault lines and weaknesses in the relationships between the inspectors and the school-based personnel (principals, HODs and teachers) could be the first important step towards creating better collaboration and improving professional standards in schools.

7.5 Emerging issues from the findings

This study was about collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors in supporting TPD. The collaborative leadership practices that the findings revealed are a shared vision, feedback, communication, follow-ups and delegation of duties. A number of key issues emerged from the findings and these are highlighted below.

- Good timing and a clear need are essential for successful collaboration, as are strong stakeholder groups that are well-organised and able to speak or act on behalf of those they represent.
- Broad participation from a variety of sectors is also necessary, as are credibility and transparency in the process, high-level commitment or involvement from visible leaders,

support from established authorities, the capacity to overcome mistrust, and strong process leadership.

- Communication among partners must be strengthened.

The findings in the study show the district-based education inspectors did not share the vision of the Ministry of Education and Training with some stakeholders. They also did not delegate duties to all the people they were supposed to work with. Moreover, there were some cases when they did not provide feedback to everyone who deserved it. Communication is not always effective between the district-based education inspectors and the people they serve. The principle of stakeholder involvement is not fully exhausted in that strong stakeholder groups are not created by the inspectors since the only active group is the subject association group.

7.6. Conclusion of the study

This study explored the collaborative leadership roles of district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development. The research methodology used helped in extracting data from the participants in a way that answered the research questions. In addition, the generated data was analysed using the thematic data analysis strategy which helped present data, interpret it and also discuss the findings. This therefore makes me conclude that collaborative leadership practices are a solution for the growing challenges that take place in schools which, in one way or the other, affect the overall performance of all stakeholders in schools.

The conclusion that can be drawn is that the district-based inspectors' collaborative leadership practices are not fully effective since the findings have shown that there are some persistent challenges that schools experience. This suggests that the district-based education inspectors do not have all the appropriate principles of collaborative leadership. In order to address this situation, a number of strategies need to be implemented to mitigate these challenges which deny teachers access to activities that could enlighten them and provide new perspectives to improve teaching and learning.

The study also concludes that there seems to be few benefits in the collaboration between the district-based education inspectors and the other stakeholders. This indicates that there is not much

that the inspectors do to bring a positive impact in the schools where the expectation is that they should support TPD.

This study thus concludes that the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors require the inspectors to work towards creating collaborative leadership paths with the other stakeholders. This would help in equipping teachers with professional development skills that would eventually address the challenges they may have in their schools. In addition, it can be concluded that the key challenges revealed by this study are: lack of resources, work overload, fear of inspectors' intimidating approach, lack of feedback, lack of support for private schools, lack of exposure to a variety of teacher professional development activities, no tapping of available knowledge, lack of exposure to advanced technology, unavailability of inspectors, and dilemma. These challenges make it difficult for inspectors to support teacher professional development.

One finding that shocked me is that most of the participants seem to lack knowledge of other useful TPD activities since they are mostly familiar with workshops. Even the district-based education inspectors seem not to be aware that there are numerous TPD activities apart from those they are used to. This suggests that inspectors have limited tools at their disposal to turn school inspections into professionally rewarding exercises.

The literature demonstrates a greater variety of TPD-related activities, which runs counter to the study's conclusions. In order to demonstrate this, academics suggest that TPD may also happen in less formal settings including conversations among coworkers, individual reading and research, watching colleagues at work, or any learning via coaching (either peer or expert coaching). (Kampen, 2019; TALIS 2009; Miegel, 2010). The findings also show a certain level of support that the district-based inspectors give to the schools in the form of district-based workshops though this happens rather sparingly. Schools on the other hand initiate school-based workshops for their teachers for professional growth and to initiate novice teachers.

Lastly, the perceived roles of the district-based education inspectors' collaborative leadership practices in supporting TPD were highlighted and signaled as an area requiring improvement. These included exposure to more advanced TPD activities, scheduled school inspections, departmental support, and open communication.

7.7 Contribution to knowledge

This study has contributed to knowledge in three ways. The contribution is apparent in the findings methodologically, theoretically and contextually as shown in the sub-sections below.

7.7.1 Contribution to knowledge methodologically

This study has advanced methodological expertise as it is a multiple case study that makes use of various data gathering techniques. For example, in-person interviews, focus groups, document analysis, and collage were employed. Regarding this, I could not locate any research that examined the collaborative leadership of district-based education inspectors in assisting with teacher professional development using all four data gathering techniques. The key idea that was investigated was collaborative leadership practices mixed with teacher professional development, and the use of collage as an art-based data collecting approach fits right within that setting. The collage gave the teachers an added instrument to share their opinions hence provided an extra methodological approach for this study.

The focus groups not only contributed to knowledge in this study, but they also ensured there was collaboration and joint effort by different teachers in their open discussions during data generation. It allowed even the most passive teachers to participate in the interviews, thus enabling maximum harvesting of ideas and opinions from the participants.

The collages the participants made will serve as reference in the different cases where the study was conducted, for instance, at the education office and in the four selected schools. This is because the collages were photographed with the participants' permission and they were left with the hard copies of their collages for future reference. That is likely to raise awareness in those different places so that any other people or colleagues of the participants who were not part of the study will take note of the issues relating to collaborative practices of the inspectors as well as the support related to teacher professional development.

Furthermore, the study has contributed to knowledge in that there are different groups of participants in it. For example, data has been collected from the district-based education inspectors,

principals, HODs and teachers. This has allowed me to get rich data from multiple perspectives which added strength to the findings and could generate interest from researchers.

7.7.2 Contribution to knowledge contextually

This study has added to knowledge contextually since it explores the collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development in the context of Lesotho. As I indicated in Chapter One, I found no similar studies in Lesotho. The current study therefore adds knowledge contextually. It has revealed that there is no teacher professional development policy in Lesotho while some countries globally have such policies that specifically deal with issues relating to the in-service training of teachers. The absence of the policy limits the exposure of teachers to TPD activities since even the motivation of teachers does not seem to be taken into consideration.

One more positive aspect that is very interesting and unique in the Lesotho context is that the inspectors have devised a way in which they monitor and support TPD in the participating district through collaboration with the schools without having to go directly to the schools. The inspectors in Botha Bothe have facilitated the formation of district subject coordination teams or associations whose chairpersons are the school principals who are mainly tasked to facilitate all activities that need to happen in different subjects. The principals report to the inspectors but can also liaise with their fellow principal colleagues in matters that require their inputs. This allows the inspectors to know of the challenges and needs of the teachers, and then attempt to find ways to design intervention strategies suited to the challenge at hand. This seems to be in line with the principles of collaborative leadership (shared vision, delegation, feedback, communication). However, the only problem is that the teams seem not to be well coordinated, leading to the challenges discussed in Chapter 5 and 6.

7.7.3 Contribution to knowledge theoretically

The thematic data analysis resulted in identifying several themes and sub-themes in this study. The findings also depicted the real situations happening in the different participants' contexts. When applying collaborative leadership theory to diverse situations where the district-based education inspectors' goal was to reach the teachers and other stakeholders, interesting and critical aspects

of teacher professional development come to the foreground, hence the relationship between the collaborative leadership theory and Fessler's eight-stage teacher cycle model. These theories have therefore contributed to some knowledge especially because the combination of the two is new, especially used in the context of district-based education inspectors in Lesotho

This study has contributed theoretically to the theory of Chrislip with the addition of the principle of autonomy. This principle shows that in cases where the leader does not seem to be coordinating the activities for the general good of all, those in a difficult situation should devise their own means of solving their problems without having to wait for the leader to come up with solutions. Such autonomy should be made in consideration of the shared vision and the collective good of all the people concerned. This was revealed in the findings where the district-based inspectors did not support schools with regard to school-based workshops. The schools planned and facilitated such workshops themselves. It means this study has contributed theoretically to Chrislip's theory.

7.7.4 Contribution to knowledge on the findings

There are specific collaborative leadership practices that were revealed by the generated data. These contribute to knowledge as explained in the sub-sections below.

7.7.4.1 School inspections as support

The findings revealed that the district-based education inspectors supported schools by carrying out inspections as one of their duties. They work with the principals and the HODs when they visit schools. However, there was a concern that the schools did not get equal support. The public schools seemed to be given more support compared to the private schools; a situation which raised some dissatisfaction among the private schools.

7.7.4.2 Monitoring the school functionality

Another collaborative leadership practice that the findings revealed was that the inspectors monitor school functionality through checking the professional records of the teachers (such as lesson plans, scheme and record of work, registers). They also check administration records in schools.

7.7.4.3 Collaboration with the stakeholders

According to the findings, the inspectors collaborate with the principals, HODs, Examinations Council of Lesotho (ECOL) and National Curriculum Development Centre (NCDC).

7.7.4.4 Principles of collaborative leadership

The data revealed that certain principles of collaborative leadership emerged as some of the ingredients that the district-based education inspectors seemed to be using in their attempts to support TPD in the selected schools, for instance, delegation of duties, follow-ups and feedback. They delegate duties to the principals, HODs as well as to the teachers who are members of the district subject associations with the purpose of supporting TPD. The findings further suggest that there seems to be more follow-ups in the public schools as a result of the local curriculum that those schools offer compared to the private schools.

7.7.4.5 Subject associations as support

The findings show that the inspectors created a platform where the teachers can share experiences in relation to the different subjects with the purpose of supporting them through professional development.

7.8 Limitations of this study

As a researcher, I understand that limitations are part of research studies of this nature. I will discuss these limitations in terms of the number of participants in my study, data generation methods (collage and focus groups), time, and accessibility of participants.

7.8.1 Limitation of the qualitative case study

Four high schools and one departmental office in the Botha Bothe area of Lesotho served as the population used in this qualitative multiple case study. This is not a large sample. The study adopted a multiple case study, hence extrapolating the results to a broader population was never the intention. Nonetheless, the goal of this study was to further knowledge by providing a thorough understanding of the collaborative leadership strategies used by district-based education inspectors

to assist TPD. Nonetheless, I made sure to include thorough explanations and descriptions when presenting the data and findings so that readers may decide for themselves how much of the study's conclusions would be applicable in other situations. This limitation was curbed through confirmability, in which data was collected in a way that ensured as much information as possible was collected through the questions that guided the study. This enabled the inspectors, principals, HODs and teachers to share their experiences which helped in achieving the aim of this study. Apart from that, the study was carried out in one district, Botha Bothe, and as such, the findings cannot be generalised as representing all the districts in Lesotho.

7.9 Recommendations

This section provides the recommendations that are meant to propose some changes in the way things are done as reported in this study. The findings have highlighted some of the areas that need to be improved for efficiency in the collaborative leadership practices meant to support TPD. The following recommendations are suggested:

1. There is no TPD policy in Lesotho hence government should ensure that teacher professional development policies are formulated in order to support teachers in their work.
2. The planning of TPD activities should involve the teachers so that the planned activities respond directly to their needs.
3. Structures which support district-based inspectors must be established. Stakeholders drawn from different but relevant departments should be in those structures to ensure plurality of perspectives.
4. Inspectors should expose teachers to international workshops because mingling with the outside world opens some communication paths for sharing skills and getting exposure to new and advanced teaching methods which in turn would be passed on to the learners.
5. The literature frequently emphasises the need of creativity and innovation, and one of the most important 21st-century recommendations is to get district-based education inspectors and students ready for the digital age. Eventually, this will provide the nation with instructors who are proficient in technology and district-based education inspectors who will digitize the whole ministry.

6. In order to facilitate the professional development and application of these models by instructors worldwide, future academics should strive to design models that are more activity- and practice-oriented. Similarly, researchers can create and test a new model or strategy to meet the requirements of educators and researchers in the areas of teacher professional development and collaborative leadership practices. For instance, a model that could be used to address collaborative leadership problems should be based on the Transformational Leadership Model. The significance of encouraging and inspiring followers to realise their greatest potential is emphasised by this model. The ability to see the future and motivate people to strive towards it characterises transformational leaders. Additionally, such leaders have the capacity to assist their followers grow in confidence and in their own abilities.
7. Another gap is that TPD research has been seen to be particularly focused on teaching while the collaborative leadership practices of the district-based education inspectors have been overlooked. Therefore, future research should be done on the collaborative leadership practices particularly of the other stakeholders in the education system to understand their contexts and perspectives.
8. Forums should be created where holders of higher education degrees can network and offer support to teachers for professional development.
9. The district-based education inspectors should be empowered by the ministry and receive training on the different curricula offered in the country. This will place them in a position to provide some support and interventions when needed.
10. For teachers to have access and exposure to meaningful TPD activities, there is need for collaboration with different people and organizations. These professional partnerships and joint ventures must be encouraged and strengthened.
11. The findings suggest that for collaborative leadership to be successful, there is need for delegation of duties so that the collaborative enterprise will be seen to be inclusive and making use of all available resources and expertise. Duties should therefore be delegated across the collaborative network to ensure that inspectors do not carry heavier workloads.
12. Adequate resources must be allocated to teacher professional development activities to improve efficiency of inspections and collaborations.

13. For collaboration to be effective, there is need for regular feedback from the people tasked with the responsibility of overseeing activities and processes throughout the hierarchy. Roles and responsibilities must also be clarified to avoid confusion and duplication of duties.
14. The Ministry of Education and Training should invest in continuous skills acquisition for all relevant stakeholders with the aim to keep everyone updated and adequately empowered to face new and emerging challenges.
15. To widen their knowledge on in-service training of teachers, education inspectors should read and apply the existing official plans and policies such as the Education Sector Plan 2016-2026, Curriculum and Assessment Policy and the Inclusive Education Policy.

In conclusion, the inspection of schools is one of the quality assurance mechanisms that the Ministry of Education and Training has put in place despite the shortcomings in the current practices and processes as revealed in this study. Constant reference to the different stakeholders (such as inspectors, principals, HODs and teachers) demonstrates the need to strengthen collaboration between and among these and other stakeholders. It is only through deepening the collaborative networks that more can be achieved in teacher professional development.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: TITLE REGISTRATION



19 September 2022

APPLICATION FOR TITLE REGISTRATION

Applicant: Nei, MF
Student Number: 2020737348
Discipline: Education Management and Leadership
Study Code: Doctoral (EDML9100)

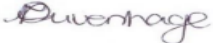
Dear Mrs Nei

Your registered title is as follows: "Collaborative leadership practices of district-based education inspectors in supporting teacher professional development"

All of the best with your studies.

Yours sincerely,


Prof Patrick Mafora
Chair: CTR committee


Ms CS Duvenhage
Secretary: CTR committee

205 Nelson Mandela Drive | Park West, Bloemfontein 9301 | South Africa
P.O. Box 339 | Bloemfontein 9300 | South Africa | www.ufs.ac.za



APPENDIX B: ETHICAL CLEARANCE



GENERAL/HUMAN RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (GHREC)

02-Mar-2023

Dear Makutloano Nei

Application Approved

Research Project Title:

Collaborative Leadership practices of District-Based Education Inspectors In Supporting Teacher Professional Development.

Ethical Clearance number:

UFS-HSD2022/1783/23

We are pleased to inform you that your application for ethical clearance has been approved. Your ethical clearance is valid for twelve (12) months from the date of issue. We request that any changes that may take place during the course of your study/research project be submitted to the ethics office to ensure ethical transparency. Furthermore, you are requested to submit the final report of your study/research project to the ethics office. Should you require more time to complete this research, please apply for an extension. Thank you for submitting your proposal for ethical clearance; we wish you the best of luck and success with your research.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adri Du Plessis

Chairperson: General/Human Research Ethics Committee

205 Nelson Mandela Drive P.O. Box 339
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www.ufs.ac.za



APPENDIX C: PERMISSION LETTER TO THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Baroeng
P.O. Box 6
Botha Bothe 400

09 October 2022

The District Education Manager

Botha Bothe

Lesotho

Dear Madam

A REQUEST FOR DATA GENERATION PERMISSION

I wish to make a request for a data generation in your office as well as in four High Schools in Botha Bothe District.

I am currently a PHD student in The University of Free State, Qwaqwa Campus. My area of specialization is Education Management and Leadership. My study is entitled; **Collaborative leadership Practices of District- Based Education Inspectors in supporting Teacher professional development.** The participants in the study are the district -based education inspectors, principals, Heads of Departments and teachers.

After the completion of the study, it will serve as reference for use in the improvement of collaborative practices among the stakeholders in the ministry of education and training. It will also improve teacher professional development which in turn, will impact learners' performance positively.

I hope your good office will consider my request favourably.

Yours Sincerely

‘Makutloano ‘Nei

APPENDIX D: PERMISSION LETTER TO SCHOOLS

Baroeng
P.O. Box 6
Botha Bothe 400

09 October 2022

The Principal

.....

Botha Bothe

Lesotho

Dear Sir/ Madam

A REQUEST FOR DATA COLLECTION PERMISSION

I wish to make a request for a data collection in your school.

I am currently a PHD student in The University of Free State, Qwaqwa Campus. My area of specialization is Education Management and Leadership. My study is entitled; **Collaborative leadership Practices of District- Based Education Inspectors in supporting Teacher professional development**. The participants in the study are the district -based education inspectors, principals, Heads of Departments and teachers.

After the completion of the study, it will serve as reference for use in the improvement of collaborative practices among the stakeholders in the Ministry of Education and Training. It will also improve teacher professional development which in turn, will impact learners' performance positively.

I hope your good office will consider my request favourably.

Yours Faithfully

'Makutloano 'Nei

APPENDIX E: DATA GENERATION APPROVAL LETTER



12 October 2022

'Makutloano 'Nei
Baroeng, P.O Box 6
Botha-Bothe 400

Dear Madam

Request for Permission to Conduct Research

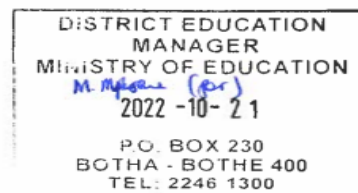
Your request to conduct a research study in four Secondary Schools and MOET Office is granted, nonetheless, should not interfere with the school and office work.

You also rightfully, indicated that the study has the potential to contribute towards improving teachers' professional development, which in turn is anticipated to impact positively on learners' performance. It is based on this background, that you are humbly requested to share the findings of the study with the office of the District Education Manager, Botha-Bothe.

Always relying on your usual cooperation

Warm regards

Manana Ratau (Ms)
District Education Manager (Botha-Bothe)
Telephone: +266 22461300 (landline)
Mobile: +266 63033320/59318843
Email Address: rataumanana@ymail.com



APPENDIX F: CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THE STUDY



Consent to participate in this study.

I, the undersigned,

_____ (participant's full names to be included), (the "Participant")

confirm that I voluntarily agree to participate in the research study referred to as the

_____ (the "Study") in relation to

_____ and which Study is being conducted by:

_____ (insert the name of the researcher), (the "Researcher").

I, the undersigned Participant, further confirm that-

1. the Researcher has explained the nature, procedure, potential benefits, and anticipated inconvenience of my participation in the Study.
2. I have read (or had explained to me) and understood the Study as explained in the attached information sheet.
3. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions and am prepared to participate in the Study.
4. I understand that my participation in the Study is entirely voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without penalty (if applicable).
5. I voluntarily provide the UFS and the Researcher with my personal information and consent to the UFS and the Researcher collecting, disclosing, and processing my personal information in order to conduct the Study and any related activities in relation thereto.
6. I hereby acknowledge and confirm that I understand the purpose for which the UFS and the Researcher may collect, store, use, delete, destroy, outsource, transfer or otherwise process, as the context and circumstances may require and as contemplated in terms of POPIA, my personal information as set out herein.
7. I am aware that the findings of the Study will be anonymously processed into a research report, journal publications and/or conference proceedings and that my personal information will be aggregated and deidentified at such stage.
8. I also give the UFS permission to share, without notification, the collected data with other researchers at the UFS or other Higher Education Institutions. This permission is dependent on the same principles of ethical research practices, anonymity/confidentiality, safekeeping of information, and other issues listed above applying.

I, the Participant, agree to the recording of the <insert specific data collection method>.

Full Name of Participant: _____

Signature of Participant: _____ Date: _____

Full Name(s) of Researcher(s): _____

Signature of Researcher: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX G: TURNITIN CERTIFICATE

COLLABORATIVE LEADERSHIP PRACTICES OF THE DISTRICT
BASED EDUCATION INSPECTORS IN SUPPORTING TEACHER
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT MAKUTLOANO NEI
2020737348

ORIGINALITY REPORT

8%

SIMILARITY INDEX

5%

INTERNET SOURCES

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4

So-Oabeb, Josef H. S.. "School Leadership
Competencies for Teacher Professional
Development: A Namibian Case Study",
University of Pretoria (South Africa), 2023

Publication

<1%

APPENDIX H: LANGUAGE EDITING CERTIFICATE

THE NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF LESOTHO



P.O. Roma 180
Lesotho
Southern Africa

Telephone: +266 22340601
 +266 52213632
 +266 52213639
Fax : +266 22340000
Website: <http://www.nul.ls>

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

28 April 2024

The Supervisor
Faculty of Education
University of the Free State

Dear Supervisor

Re: proof of language editing

This letter proves that I read and edited 'Makutloano 'Nei's thesis titled:
Collaborative Leadership Practices of District-based Education Inspectors in Supporting Teacher Professional Development.

Sincerely,

Mahao Mahao (PhD)
Department of Language and Social Education
Faculty of Education,
National University of Lesotho

APPENDIX I: INTERVIEW SCHEDULES

Topic; Collaborative Leadership Practices of District-based Education Inspectors in Supporting Teacher Professional Development.

‘MAKUTLOANO ‘NEI: 2020737348 (Ph.D. candidate)

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREESTATE.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT, POLICY AND COMPARATIVE EDUCATION.

Email: makutloano@gmail.com

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Background details for all participants

- Age
- Gender
- Experience in the current position
- Highest qualification

EDUCATION INSPECTORS’ QUESTIONS

1. What teacher professional development activities are availed for the teachers in the district?
2. How do you find out which activities to arrange for teachers in the district?
3. What roles do you play in supporting teacher professional development in the district?
4. What do you do to ensure that the teacher professional development activities arranged for teachers are successful?

What do you do in cases where they are not successful?

5. How do you get the feedback on the professional development activities availed for the teachers?

What do you do with the feedback?

6. Which people or organisations do you collaborate with in supporting teacher professional development?

What do you do to you ensure that the people or organizations have a shared/ common vision on the provision of teacher professional development?

7. How do you handle the delegation of some duties among the people or organisations to ensure efficiency in supporting teachers?

How do the education inspectors make follow-ups on the teacher professional development needs and challenges that the teachers have after delegation?

8. What benefits are brought by the collaboration of the different people or organisations in supporting Teacher Professional Development?
9. What challenges do you encounter in collaborating with the other people and organisations in supporting teacher professional development?

How do you solve those challenges?

10. What suggestions can you make for improved collaboration of people and organisations in supporting teacher professional development in the district?

Topic; Collaborative Leadership Practices of District-based Education Inspectors in Supporting Teacher Professional Development.

‘MAKUTLOANO ‘NEI: 2020737348 (Ph.D. candidate)

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREESTATE.

**DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT, POLICY AND COMPARATIVE
EDUCATION.**

Email: makutloano@gmail.com

PRINCIPALS’ QUESTIONS

1. What professional development activities are availed for teachers in your school?

Who arranges such teacher professional activities?

2. How do inspectors find out which activities to arrange for teachers in your school?
3. What role do inspectors play in availing teacher professional development in your school?
4. What do the district-based inspectors do to ensure that the teacher professional development activities arranged for teachers are successful?
5. How do you give feedback to the inspectors about teacher professional development activities in your school?

what do they do with the feedback?

6. Which people or organisations do the inspectors collaborate with in supporting teacher professional development?

What do the district -based education inspectors do to ensure that the people or organizations have a shared/ common vision on the provision of teacher professional development?

7. How do the inspectors handle the delegation of some duties among the stakeholders to ensure efficiency in supporting teachers?

How do the education inspectors make follow-ups on the teacher professional development needs and challenges that the teachers have after the delegation of duties?

8. What benefits are brought by the collaboration of the different people or organisations in supporting Teacher Professional Development?
9. What challenges do you encounter in collaborating with the inspectors, other people and organisations in supporting teacher professional development?

How do you solve those challenges?

10. What suggestions can you make for improved collaboration of people and organisations in supporting teacher professional development in the district?

Topic; Collaborative Leadership Practices of District-based Education Inspectors in Supporting Teacher Professional Development.

‘MAKUTLOANO ‘NEI: 2020737348 (Ph.D. candidate)

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREESTATE.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT, POLICY AND COMPARATIVE EDUCATION.

Email: makutloano@gmail.com

HEADS OF DEPARTMENTS’ QUESTIONS

1. What professional development activities are arranged for teachers in your department?
2. How do the inspectors find out which activities to arrange for teachers in the district?
3. What roles do inspectors play in supporting teacher professional development in the district?
4. What do the district- based inspectors do to ensure that the teacher professional development activities are successful?
5. How do the inspectors get feedback in relation to teacher professional development?

What do they do with the feedback?

6. Which people or organisations do the inspectors collaborate with in supporting teacher professional development?

What do the district -based education inspectors do to ensure that the people or organizations have a shared/ common vision on the provision of teacher professional development?

7. How do the inspectors handle the delegation of some duties among the people and organisations to ensure efficiency in supporting teachers?

How do the education inspectors make follow-ups on the teacher professional development needs and challenges that the teachers have after delegation of duties?

8. What benefits are brought by the collaboration of the different people or organisations in supporting Teacher Professional Development?
9. What challenges do you encounter in collaborating with the inspectors, other people and organisations in supporting teacher professional development?

How do you solve those challenges?

10. What suggestions can you make for improved collaboration of people and organisations in supporting teacher professional development in the district?

Topic; Collaborative Leadership Practices of District-based Education Inspectors in Supporting Teacher Professional Development.

‘MAKUTLOANO ‘NEI: 2020737348 (Ph.D. candidate)

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREESTATE.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT, POLICY AND COMPARATIVE EDUCATION.

Email: makutloano@gmail.com

FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. What teacher professional development activities are availed to you in your school?
2. How do the inspectors find out which activities to arrange for you?
3. What roles do the district-based education inspectors play in supporting teacher professional development in your school?
4. What do the inspectors do to ensure that teacher professional development activities provided are successful?
5. How do you give feedback to the inspectors about teacher professional development activities in your school?

what do the inspectors do with the feedback?

6. Which people or organisations do the inspectors collaborate with in supporting teacher professional development?

What do the district -based education inspectors do to ensure that the people or organizations have a shared/ common vision on the provision of teacher professional development?

7. How do the inspectors handle the delegation of some duties among the people and organisations to ensure efficiency in supporting teachers professionally?

How do the education inspectors make follow-ups on the teacher professional development needs and challenges that the teachers have after delegation?

8. What benefits are brought by the collaboration of the different people or organisations in supporting Teacher Professional Development?
9. What challenges do you encounter in collaborating with the inspectors, other people and organisations in accessing teacher professional development activities?

How do you solve those challenges?

10. What suggestions can you make for improved collaboration of people and organisations in supporting teacher professional development in the district?

APPENDIX J: COLLAGE GUIDE

Topic; Collaborative Leadership Practices of District-based Education Inspectors in Supporting Teacher Professional Development.

‘MAKUTLOANO ‘NEI: 2020737348 (Ph.D. candidate)

UNIVERSITY OF THE FREESTATE.

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION MANAGEMENT, POLICY AND COMPARATIVE EDUCATION.

Email: makutloano@gmail.com

COLLAGE GUIDE

DURATION OF COLLAGE MAKING; 60 MINUTES

GENERAL DETAILS

The Following will be done;

- Collage making will start before the interviews
- Participants allowed to chat while working on their collages,
- Note taking will be done while participants are still making their collages
- Time will be given to participants to explain their collages
- Photographing of the collages will be done once complete
- Identifying themes as they emerge
- Reference to the collages will be made during the interviews

STAGES OF CARRYING OUT A COLLAGE PROCESS

STAGE 1: Explanation of a collage and how it is going to be done

There will be an explanation of the word collage for participants to understand what they are going to be dealing with, stopping to let the participants ask for clarity where needed.

STAGE 2: Getting ready

There will be some assurance of;

- anonymity
- right to withdraw any time
- freedom of participation
- freedom of speech
- indication that the whole process will be photographed, audio and video recorded but all will be kept safely in confidence
- then handing out of consent forms and signing

The group of teachers in a focus group is expected to collaborate and prepare the collage that will be jointly made. so, in all, there will be 4 groups from 4 schools.

Regarding the individual interviews, this activity will be done before the interviews.

Materials to use will already be accessible to the group members as each school will have the focus groups at their schools. e.g.

Materials to use; collage box containing the pictures, magazines, newspaper articles and words (which will be based on the themes and sub themes explored in the study), glue stick, pencils, voice recorder, camera for photographing, coloured markers pens, erasers.

STAGE 3: Collage creation

The collage making will be guided by the instructions in which participants will be asked to;

1. select and paste on the chart, different pictures showing their different emotions/ feelings about the collaboration of the inspectors, other people and organisations in supporting the teachers in their schools in relation to teacher professional development.

2. identify and paste on the chart, the different teacher professional development activities that are available for teachers in their schools.
3. select and paste on the chart, leadership practices that best describe the situations in their schools from the pictures provided.

Participants will be encouraged to feel free to select any number of pictures without any limit as long as they represent their voices

Then they will be asked to choose one person who will write the interpretation of their collage in relation to the three instructions given, clarifying the message that their collage conveys.

STAGE 4: Discussions of the participants' collage.

There will be open discussions of their collage with everyone being asked to fully participate, with the major themes being highlighted;

Each participant will be encouraged to participate in the discussions in which comments, questions, suggestions as well as additions will be highly welcome.

Their feelings or opinions with clarity on the district-based inspectors' support on teacher professional development

STAGE 5: Reflecting on the collage process

All participants will be asked to verbally reflect on the whole process of data generation, highlighting whether they found it appropriate to help them voice their opinions or not, the atmosphere will be a very relaxed one for everyone to be free to voice their opinions.

At the end, participants will be given a chance to decide whether they leave their collages with the researcher or keep them in their school for future reference.

