

The Effect of Service Training on English Teachers' Beliefs and Attitudes

Muath Almohammadi¹ & Anas Almuhammadi¹

¹ English Language Institute, King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, KSA

Correspondence: Anas Almuhammadi, English Language Institute, King Abdul Aziz University, Jeddah, KSA.

Received: March 20, 2024 Accepted: May 10, 2024 Online Published: July 16, 2024

doi:10.5539/ijel.v14n4p104 URL: <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v14n4p104>

Abstract

In-service training (IST), deemed vital for faculty growth, primarily aims to aid instructors in enhancing their teaching skills, with the expectation that their participation will subsequently enhance classroom performance, resulting in improved educational outcomes for students. This study investigates the impact of service training on the beliefs and attitudes of English teachers. To achieve this objective, semi-structured interviews were conducted via Zoom to explore the instructors' perspectives regarding the perceived service training and its effects on the teaching and learning process. The study delves into the experiences and perceptions of the instructors regarding the service training they received. Through in-depth interviews, participants shared insights into the effects of such training on their instructional methodologies, classroom practices, and overall professional development. Additionally, their perspectives on the perceived benefits, challenges, and effectiveness of the service training were examined. The findings shed light on the multifaceted impact of service training on English teachers, offering valuable insights into its influence on the teaching and learning process. This research contributes to a deeper understanding of the dynamics between professional development initiatives and educators' beliefs and attitudes, providing implications for the design and implementation of future training programs aimed at enhancing EFL instruction. Findings emphasize the importance of aligning IST with teachers' needs and fostering participatory involvement in its design.

Keywords: EFL, English teachers, in-service training, beliefs, attitudes, inclusive learning environment

1. Introduction

In the realm of English language education, the significance of in-service training initiatives for educators cannot be overstated. This study embarks on a critical exploration of the consequential relationship between service training and English teachers' beliefs and attitudes at the university level, thus addressing a crucial gap in educational research. By delving into this intersection, the investigation holds paramount importance due to its potential to enrich teacher education programs and inform educational policy and practice.

Scholarly inquiries have consistently underscored the pivotal role of in-service training in shaping educators' pedagogical beliefs and practices (Flores et al., 2019). Building upon this foundation, our study seeks to offer nuanced insights into how service training specifically impacts English teachers' perceptions and instructional approaches. Furthermore, by examining the effect of service training on teachers' beliefs and attitudes, our research aims to provide actionable recommendations for educational policymakers and administrators, informed by empirical evidence.

Moreover, this study aligns with the broader discourse surrounding teacher professionalism and identity, contributing to a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in the teaching profession (Darling-Hammond, 2017). Insights gleaned from this study can potentially foster a more supportive and effective learning environment, ultimately contributing to student success.

1.1 Significance of the Study

This study delves into the consequential relationship between service training and English teachers' beliefs and attitudes at the university level, bridging a crucial gap in educational research. The investigation holds paramount importance due to its potential to enrich teacher education programs and inform educational policy and practice. Moreover, insights gleaned from this study can potentially foster a more supportive and effective learning environment, as emphasized by research such as that conducted by Hargreaves and Fullan (2012) on the impact of

teacher beliefs on student achievement. By understanding how service training influences teachers' beliefs and attitudes, educators and educational stakeholders can collaboratively work towards creating an environment conducive to student success.

In summary, this study holds significance for both theoretical advancement and practical application within the field of English language education. By drawing upon existing research and contributing new empirical evidence, it aims to inform the ongoing efforts aimed at enhancing the quality of teacher education and English language instruction at the university level.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The primary objective of this study is to investigate the impact of service teacher training on the teaching and learning process within the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instruction at the university level. Additionally, the study aims to explore EFL instructors' perspectives regarding the perceived effectiveness of service training initiatives.

1.3 Research Questions

- 1) What are the effects of service teacher training on the teaching and learning process?
- 2) What are EFL instructors' perspectives regarding the perceived service training?

Overall, through addressing these main research questions, this study endeavors to contribute to the existing body of knowledge on teacher in-service training and its implications for EFL education. By examining both the objective effects and subjective perspectives associated with service training, the study aims to offer valuable insights for educators, educational policymakers, and stakeholders striving to enhance the quality and effectiveness of EFL instruction at the university level.

2. Literature Review

Teachers are expected to handle a wide range of responsibilities, including teaching students, putting instructional materials into practice, attending to students' educational requirements, and maintaining an understanding of educational standards and principles. Teachers need to stay current with the rapidly evolving academic field through in-service training activities, even with the diversity of their roles and requirements (Little, 2012). A variety of activities aimed at providing people with the skills, experiences, and information necessary to advance in their line of work constitute in-service training (Mizell, 2010). According to Bubb (2004), effective and targeted components are necessary for in-service training, with an emphasis on raising participants' productivity and knowledge levels while also meeting the demands of educational institutions for efficiency.

In-service training is a crucial concept in the educational context that enhances learning for students, improves teachers' instructional abilities, and increases teachers' Confidence (Kennedy, 2016). These positive changes include improving student learning and educational institutions.

2.1 The Importance of in-Service Training

Quality in-service training activities are viewed as essential for faculty growth and are critical in fulfilling the educational institution's mission. One key focus of in-service training is to assist instructors in enhancing their teaching skills. By participating in in-service training activities, instructors are expected to improve their classroom performance, leading to better educational outcomes for students. According to Mizell (2010), well-planned in-service training initiatives offer various benefits for all members of the educational community. These opportunities underscore the significance of continual in-service training and contribute to the establishment of a conducive learning environment for both educators and students. Engaging in in-service training equips teachers with the necessary knowledge to support student achievement and helps them identify barriers to students' academic progress. This increased awareness improves the educational experience for both teachers and students, ultimately leading to better student outcomes.

According to Mizell (2010), new graduate instructors often lack the necessary knowledge and skills to excel in their teaching roles, as colleges and universities typically do not offer comprehensive practical training. As a result, new instructors who do not engage in ongoing in-service training opportunities do not have the chance to improve their expertise, which can impact their students' learning outcomes negatively. Therefore, in-service training experiences are deemed essential in the field of education. Numerous studies have highlighted the importance of well-designed in-service training programs that provide teachers with relevant content to enhance their subject knowledge and teaching performance, ultimately benefiting their students' educational achievements (Ross & Bruce, 2007) also emphasized the significance of in-service training in equipping instructors with the necessary knowledge and expertise to make necessary adjustments in their teaching practices.

Garet et al. (2001) identified the essential characteristics of effective in-service training experiences. These include providing a diverse range of content-related educational knowledge that is relevant to teachers' roles and responsibilities, offering hands-on and practical training opportunities that allow instructors to put their learning into practice, and facilitating a collaborative form of in-service training that encourages knowledge exchange, interaction, and performance improvement among educators who share common goals and values. These key features ensure that in-service training opportunities are aligned with the needs of educators and lead to meaningful and sustained improvements in teaching practice and student outcomes.

A recent study highlighted the importance of in-service training programs that focus on enhancing instructors' pedagogical knowledge base and overall teaching practice. The study found that such programs can significantly improve the quality and academic competencies of educators, ultimately leading to increased confidence in their instructional abilities (Avalos, 2011). Additionally, Harris et al. (2011) explained that in-service training is instrumental in helping teachers experience positive changes and serves as a crucial steppingstone for their professional growth. As instructors deepen their understanding of curriculum knowledge through in-service training activities, they become more confident in their performance and are better equipped to meet the needs of their students effectively.

2.2 Status of the in-Service Training Program at the ELI

The Educational Leadership Institute (ELI) is dedicated to fostering continuous in-service training among faculty members, aimed at cultivating, and delivering a high-quality educational experience for both students and educators. To effectively achieve this objective, it is imperative to provide faculty members with robust in-service training opportunities. This section of the paper delves into several studies conducted to investigate the in-service training provided by the In-service training at the ELI. These studies seek to offer a comprehensive understanding of the unit's role and impact.

Roy, Rahim, and Khojah (2018) conducted a study focusing on the in-service training experiences of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) instructors at the ELI, specifically examining their engagement in on-campus activities. The primary objective was to evaluate instructors' perceptions of the Train the Trainer course offered by Cambridge University Press. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach involving surveys and semi-structured interviews, the study concluded that the course positively influenced participants by imparting contemporary skills and knowledge in the EFL domain, thus serving as a constructive in-service training opportunity.

Regarding the use of classroom observation as a method for in-service training at the ELI, Shukri (2014) conducted studies to gain deeper insights into EFL instructors' experiences with classroom observation and its potential as an evaluative tool for in-service training. These studies highlighted the beneficial role of classroom observation in providing relevant feedback to instructors, enhancing the teaching, and learning process, and boosting instructors' confidence. Recommendations were made to improve the observation process, including additional training for observers in delivering constructive criticism.

Khojah and Asif (2020) investigated teachers' insights into the mentoring program at the ELI. The research emphasized the importance of the mentoring program as a form of service training and suggested several adjustments to uplevel the teachers' experience with the mentoring program. A comparable study by Shukri and Leil (2017) investigated how teachers felt about the official mentorship program at the ELI. This program is a crucial part of the ELI's service training programs and offers encouragement to novice EFL instructors by providing them with the skills they need to succeed in the classroom. The study emphasized the value of the mentorship program as a suitable tool for professional growth and offered suggestions for how to make it better.

Regarding the female section of the ELI, Almuhammadi (2020) Conducted a study to investigate female EFL teachers' perceptions of the impact of the service training program given by (ELI) on their self-confidence. This research used interviews with several EFL female teachers. The findings showed that the teachers had positive perceptions of the provided service training, as it enabled them to grow professionally. Based on the results, this study highlighted how EFL instructors' self-confidence could be affected positively by the service training program.

Overall, the analysis of the literature underscores the significance of In-service training activities in improving the teaching and learning process and enhancing students' outcomes. Therefore, it is crucial to explore teachers' perceptions of service training and its impact on teaching practices and student performance.

The analysis of the literature on the ELI context has highlighted the significance of In-service training activities as it has a positive impact on the teaching and learning process and upper-level learners' outcomes. Accordingly, it is imperative to explore teachers' perceptions of the perceived service training and how it affects their overall

teaching practice and their students' performance.

This research aims to bridge the gap in the literature by examining male teachers' perceptions of service training at the ELI and its impact on the teaching and learning process. By exploring the experiences, challenges, and recommendations of male educators, this study seeks to inform the design and implementation of In-service training initiatives that cater to the diverse needs of faculty members and contribute to the enhancement of educational outcomes. Hopefully, the outcomes of this study will address the gap in the literature about male teachers' perceptions of service training at an ELI and contribute to the EFL teachers' service training in terms of how this training could influence the teaching and learning process.

3. Research Design

This study employed a qualitative methodology to examine instructors' perspectives on how In-service training impacts their Confidence. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), a qualitative technique is mostly used to identify emerging themes from participants' responses to interview questions and to collect diverse information. Creswell and Poth (2016) state that a qualitative method involves examining how individuals interpret events, comprehend their surroundings, and interpret and reflect upon their experiences. To examine the instructors' perspectives and perceptions regarding the impact of service training activities on their Confidence, a qualitative technique was chosen as the most suitable approach for this research.

3.1 Data Collection

Utilizing qualitative research, the study explored instructors' perspectives through semi-structured interviews, offering a means to investigate and draw conclusions regarding the research questions. Following Bryman's (2016) framework, the interview questions were tailored to align with the main research objectives effectively. Before full implementation, the questions underwent piloting with two ELI English instructors to assess clarity and relevance. Feedback from the pilot participants was instrumental in refining the questions significantly. With approval obtained from the Unit of Graduate Studies and Academic Research at the ELI, the data collection phase commenced, by conducting interviews via Zoom from six Saudi male English language instructors who were working in the ELI at KAU. All of them were foundation-year instructors with teaching experience ranging from one to six years at the ELI. All of them were participating in diverse In-service training activities within the same environment.

3.2 Data Analysis

Upon completion of the data collection process, the analysis phase promptly commenced, employing NVivo software to examine the semi-structured interview data to identify and extract potential codes and themes. Following Mills and Birks' (2011) approach, this phase began with a meticulous review of participants' responses, analyzing each line to scrutinize details, reflect on findings, establish connections, and identify recurring themes early in the interpretation process. Transcripts were imported into NVivo to further explore the data, starting with the analysis of interview data, which was categorized into primary themes and codes. This initial data interpretation stage aids in understanding key findings, facilitating comparisons, extracting results, and potentially generating new hypotheses (Patton, 2002). Before finalizing the process, codes representing key findings were identified, and primary themes emerged to clarify findings and explore significant issues raised by participants during the interviews.

4. Results & Discussion

In-service training IST plays a pivotal role in shaping educators' capabilities, influencing their instructional practices, and ultimately impacting student learning outcomes. In this era of evolving educational landscapes, understanding how IST aligns with teachers' needs and interests is paramount for fostering effective teaching practices and promoting positive student outcomes. This section explores the nuanced interplay between IST initiatives and educators' experiences, focusing on the alignment with teacher needs, participatory involvement in IST design, the impact of time constraints on IST engagement, cultivation of collaborative environments, learning from experts, and sustainability and transferability of training outcomes.

4.1 Alignment with Teacher Needs

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into how in-service training IST activities align with the needs of instructors, ultimately impacting their teaching practices. Participants expressed a strong correlation between IST initiatives and their ability to address their professional requirements effectively. These insights shed light on the pivotal role of tailored IST in enhancing instructors' confidence and competence in meeting the diverse needs of their students.

Numerous participants highlighted how IST sessions directly addressed their specific instructional needs and challenges. One instructor emphasized the significance of IST workshops that focused on topics directly relevant to teachers: “I found the IST workshops immensely beneficial because they addressed topics that directly resonated with our needs as educators. For instance, we delved into strategies for differentiated instruction, which greatly enhanced my ability to cater to the diverse learning needs of my students.” The participant’s comment underscores the importance of IST initiatives that prioritize topics aligned with the daily realities of teaching. Such targeted interventions empower instructors to refine their teaching methods and adapt them to the unique requirements of their students.

Another participant shared their experience of how IST activities enhanced their ability to engage with students effectively: “Through IST sessions, I learned invaluable strategies for fostering student engagement and interaction in the classroom. This not only boosted my confidence in my teaching abilities but also enabled me to create a more dynamic and inclusive learning environment for my students.” This feedback underscores the transformative impact of IST in equipping instructors with the tools and techniques necessary to address their students’ needs comprehensively. By aligning IST activities with teachers’ instructional contexts and professional goals, educators are better equipped to navigate the complexities of classroom instruction and foster positive learning outcomes. Furthermore, participants highlighted the role of IST in enhancing their awareness and understanding of diverse student needs. One instructor reflected on how IST sessions facilitated their development of strategies tailored to individual learners: “Participating in IST activities allowed me to deepen my understanding of students’ diverse abilities and learning styles. This awareness has empowered me to adopt a more personalized approach to instruction, ensuring that I can effectively support each student on their learning journey.”

The participant’s comment underscores the importance of IST initiatives that promote individualized instruction and cater to the varied needs of students. By equipping instructors with the knowledge and skills to address diverse learner profiles, IST initiatives play a critical role in promoting equitable and inclusive teaching practices. Overall, the feedback from participants highlights the significant impact of IST activities that are closely aligned with teachers’ needs and interests. By addressing instructors’ specific professional requirements and empowering them with relevant strategies and resources, IST initiatives contribute to the enhancement of teaching practices and ultimately support improved student learning outcomes.

The discussion on alignment with teacher needs underscores the importance of in-service training IST initiatives that are tailored to address the specific requirements of educators. This alignment not only enhances instructors’ confidence and competence but also contributes to improved teaching practices and student learning outcomes. By examining the findings in the context of existing research, we can further elucidate the significance of aligning IST with teacher needs.

The results highlight the critical role of IST workshops that directly resonate with educators’ instructional challenges and objectives. This finding is consistent with research by Darling-Hammond and Richardson (2009), who emphasize the importance of IST programs that address the diverse instructional needs of teachers. Such targeted interventions have been shown to enhance teachers’ pedagogical knowledge and instructional effectiveness (Yoon et al., 2007). Therefore, IST initiatives that prioritize topics aligned with teachers’ daily practices are more likely to result in meaningful learning outcomes. Participants’ feedback underscores how IST activities enhance their confidence in addressing students’ diverse learning needs and employing effective instructional strategies. This aligns with research by Guskey and Yoon (2009), who argue that IST programs tailored to teachers’ needs and interests lead to increased confidence and instructional competence. Moreover, studies have shown that teacher confidence is positively associated with student engagement and academic achievement (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). Therefore, IST initiatives that bolster teachers’ confidence can have a cascading effect on student learning outcomes. The discussion highlights how IST activities enhance instructors’ awareness of diverse student needs and foster personalized approaches to instruction. This resonates with research by Darling-Hammond (2017), who advocates for IST programs that promote equity and inclusivity in education. By equipping teachers with strategies to address diverse learner profiles, IST initiatives contribute to the creation of more equitable learning environments. Consequently, students from diverse backgrounds are more likely to experience academic success and positive educational outcomes.

While the study emphasizes the immediate benefits of IST aligned with teacher needs, sustaining the impact of such initiatives over time is equally important. Research by Desimone (2009) underscores the significance of ongoing support and follow-up activities in maintaining the effectiveness of IST programs. Therefore, IST initiatives should incorporate mechanisms for continuous learning and reflection to ensure that teachers can apply newly acquired knowledge and skills in their practice over the long term.

In conclusion, aligning IST with teacher needs is essential for enhancing instructional practices and promoting positive student outcomes. By integrating insights from the study with existing research, we gain a comprehensive understanding of the importance of targeted IST initiatives in supporting teacher growth and fostering inclusive, equitable, and effective teaching practices.

4.2 Limited Participatory Involvement in Service Training Design

Overall, the responses from participants underscored the importance of genuine and comprehensive involvement in the design and planning of in-service training activities. Partial exclusion can lead to feelings of frustration, doubt, and disempowerment among educators, ultimately hindering their sense of professional growth and Confidence. These insights emphasize the need for inclusive and collaborative approaches to IST design that fully recognize and value the expertise of teachers.

The findings from the preceding section shed light on the significant impact of partial exclusion in teacher participatory involvement in IST design. Teachers' experiences of feeling only partially included in the planning and implementation of IST activities have notable implications for their professional growth and Confidence within the educational context. This discussion aims to further explore these implications, contextualize them within existing research, and offer insights into potential strategies for addressing the issue.

The responses from participants underscore the frustration and disconnection that arise when educators feel their input is not fully considered in IST design. This sentiment aligns with previous research highlighting the importance of teacher agency and empowerment in in-service training initiatives (Borko, 2004). Studies have shown that when teachers are actively involved in the design and planning of IST activities, they are more likely to perceive the training as relevant, meaningful, and beneficial to their practice (Desimone et al., 2002).

Furthermore, the feelings of doubt and disempowerment expressed by participants echo findings from research on teacher Confidence and motivation. Bandura (2013) defines confidence as individuals' beliefs in their capabilities to produce desired outcomes. When teachers perceive themselves as having limited influence over the design of IST activities, it can undermine their confidence in their ability to enact meaningful change in their practice (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001). This highlights the critical role of participatory involvement in IST design in fostering teacher Confidence and motivation.

The issue of partial exclusion in IST design also intersects with broader discussions on teacher professionalism and collaboration. Hargreaves and Fullan (2001) emphasizes the importance of creating cultures of collaborative professionalism, where educators are actively engaged in ongoing learning and improvement processes. When teachers are marginalized in the design of IST activities, it not only diminishes their sense of professional agency but also hampers efforts to cultivate a culture of collective responsibility for student learning outcomes (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

Addressing the issue of partial exclusion in teacher participatory involvement requires a multifaceted approach that prioritizes collaborative decision-making, shared leadership, and ongoing dialogue between educators and IST providers. Research suggests that IST programs characterized by distributed leadership and inclusive decision-making processes are more likely to result in positive outcomes for teachers and students alike (Harris, 2005).

Moreover, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and reflective practice within schools and districts can enhance the effectiveness of in-service training initiatives (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). By creating structures for ongoing feedback, reflection, and evaluation, educators can collaboratively identify areas for improvement in IST design and implementation, ensuring that training activities are responsive to the evolving needs of teachers and students.

In conclusion, the issue of partial exclusion in teacher participatory involvement in IST design is a critical concern with significant implications for teacher professional growth and Confidence. By prioritizing collaborative decision-making, fostering cultures of collective responsibility, and promoting reflective practice, educators and IST providers can work together to ensure that in-service training initiatives are meaningful, relevant, and impactful in supporting teacher learning and student success.

4.3 Unpacking the Impact of Time Constraints on Service Training for ESL Educators

The findings shed light on the challenges ESL educators face due to time constraints when engaging in in-service training activities. Participants expressed frustration with limited time availability and highlighted the impact of these constraints on their ability to fully benefit from IST opportunities. This discussion aims to further explore the implications of time constraints on in-service training for ESL educators, contextualize these findings within existing research, and offer insights into potential strategies for addressing the issue.

Time constraints are a pervasive challenge for educators across various contexts, impacting their ability to engage meaningfully with in-service training initiatives. The findings from this study align with previous research highlighting the negative effects of time limitations on teacher learning and development (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). Educators often struggle to balance competing demands on their time, such as classroom responsibilities, administrative tasks, and personal commitments, which can impede their participation in IST activities.

Furthermore, time constraints disproportionately affect ESL educators, who may face additional challenges related to language barriers, diverse student populations, and cultural considerations. Research suggests that ESL educators often have limited opportunities for in-service training tailored to their unique needs and experiences. As a result, time limitations exacerbate existing disparities in access to high-quality IST for ESL educators, hindering their ability to effectively support English language learners.

Despite the challenges posed by time constraints, ESL educators recognize the importance of continuous learning and improvement in enhancing their teaching practices (Malderez & Bodoczky, 2018). The findings from this study underscore educators' resilience and determination in seeking out alternative strategies to overcome time limitations and engage with IST opportunities. Educators demonstrate a proactive approach to professional development, leveraging available resources, and utilizing innovative methods such as self-directed learning and technology integration (Guskey & Yoon, 2009).

To address the issue of time constraints in in-service training for ESL educators, it is essential to adopt a multifaceted approach that considers the unique needs and circumstances of this population. Schools and districts can explore flexible scheduling options, such as asynchronous online IST courses or job-embedded learning opportunities, to accommodate educators' busy schedules (Garet et al., 2001). Additionally, collaboration between ESL educators and IST providers can help tailor in-service training initiatives to meet the specific needs of English language learners and their teachers.

Moreover, investing in supportive organizational structures and cultures that prioritize teacher well-being and professional growth can mitigate the impact of time constraints on in-service training (Little, 2012). School leaders play a crucial role in creating environments that value continuous learning and provide resources and support for educators to engage in ongoing in-service training activities (Harris, 2005).

In conclusion, while time constraints pose significant challenges for ESL educators engaging in professional development, proactive strategies, and collaborative efforts can help mitigate these obstacles. By acknowledging the unique needs of ESL educators, leveraging available resources, and fostering supportive organizational cultures, schools, and districts can promote continuous learning and ensure that all educators have access to high-quality in-service training opportunities.

4.4 Cultivating Collaborative Environments

The findings presented in the preceding results section shed light on the positive impact of in-service training IST initiatives in cultivating collaborative environments among educators. Participants highlighted the importance of programs such as mentoring, classroom observations, and workshops in fostering collegiality, sharing ideas, and promoting a sense of belonging within their professional community. This discussion aims to further explore the implications of cultivating collaborative environments through IST, contextualize these findings within existing research, and offer insights into potential strategies for maximizing the benefits of collaboration in educational settings.

The results regarding the influence of IST on developing collegiality and collaboration among educators align with previous research emphasizing the importance of social learning and collaborative practices in in-service training (Lieberman & Miller, 2008). Collaborative environments facilitate the exchange of knowledge, skills, and experiences among educators, leading to enhanced teaching practices and improved student outcomes (Little, 2012).

Furthermore, the positive associations between collegiality, motivation, and workplace satisfaction highlighted in the results resonate with studies emphasizing the impact of supportive organizational cultures on teacher well-being and effectiveness (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Collaborative environments not only foster professional growth but also contribute to educators' overall sense of fulfillment and commitment to their profession (Harris, 2005).

Moreover, the role of IST in promoting collaboration and collegiality has implications beyond individual teacher effectiveness. Research suggests that collaborative cultures within schools lead to improved student achievement and school effectiveness (Tschannen-Moran & Barr, 2004). When educators work collaboratively, they are better equipped to address diverse student needs, implement effective instructional strategies, and create supportive

learning environments (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009).

To maximize the benefits of cultivating collaborative environments through IST, institutions can adopt several strategies. Providing structured opportunities for collaboration, such as lesson study groups, professional learning communities, and peer coaching programs, can facilitate meaningful interactions among educators. Additionally, fostering a culture of trust, openness, and shared responsibility is essential for creating an environment conducive to collaboration (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

In conclusion, cultivating collaborative environments through IST initiatives is essential for promoting professional growth, enhancing teaching practices, and improving student outcomes. By fostering a culture of collaboration, institutions can create supportive learning communities where educators thrive, and students succeed.

4.5 Professional Identity and Sense of Confidence

Overall, participation in in-service training programs has profound implications for English teachers' professional identity and sense of efficacy. By providing opportunities for professional growth and development, these programs empower teachers to fulfill their roles as educators and advocates for language learning. As teachers continue to engage in ongoing professional learning experiences, their professional identity evolves, and their sense of efficacy strengthens, ultimately contributing to the advancement of language education and the success of their students.

The findings of this part underscore the profound implications of participation in in-service training IST training programs for English teachers' professional identity and sense of efficacy. Through a reflective lens, we delve into the transformative effects of these programs on teachers' beliefs and practices, drawing on existing research to enrich our understanding. Engaging in IST training programs catalyzes English teachers' professional identity formation. Much like previous research by Day and Gu (2007), our findings reveal that participation in workshops, seminars, and collaborative discussions fosters a renewed sense of purpose and commitment among teachers. They begin to view themselves not just as language instructors but as facilitators of cultural understanding and communication. Participant E's reflection echoes this sentiment, highlighting the transformative nature of IST training in reshaping teachers' perceptions of their roles. By embracing broader notions of cultural competence and inclusivity, teachers develop a more holistic understanding of their professional identities.

4.6 Learning from Experts Enhances Instructors' Proficiency

The findings presented in the preceding results section provide valuable insights into the impact of learning from experts on instructors' professional growth and proficiency. Participants highlighted the transformative effect of interactions with experts, emphasizing how expert guidance bolstered their confidence, expanded their pedagogical repertoire, and facilitated continuous improvement in their teaching practices. This discussion aims to further explore the implications of learning from experts, contextualize these findings within existing research, and offer insights into potential strategies for maximizing the benefits of expert interactions in educational settings.

The results regarding the positive influence of learning from experts align with previous research emphasizing the importance of mentorship and professional learning communities in promoting teacher development (Darling-Hammond et al., 2009; Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Interactions with experts provide opportunities for knowledge exchange, skill development, and reflective practice, ultimately contributing to instructors' proficiency and effectiveness in the classroom (Lieberman & Miller, 2008).

Furthermore, the findings underscore the significance of constructive feedback from experts in shaping instructors' teaching practices. Research suggests that feedback plays a critical role in promoting teacher learning and improvement, particularly when it is specific, timely, and actionable (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Expert feedback not only helps instructors identify areas for growth but also validates their strengths and accomplishments, fostering a supportive and growth-oriented mindset (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).

Moreover, the results highlight the importance of creating supportive learning environments that facilitate interactions between educators and experts. Schools and institutions can leverage various strategies, such as in-service training workshops, guest speaker sessions, and collaborative projects, to provide opportunities for expert engagement and knowledge sharing (Little, 2012). Additionally, fostering a culture of collaboration and inquiry encourages educators to seek out expert guidance, share best practices, and engage in continuous learning (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012).

Furthermore, the findings emphasize the need for ongoing support and mentorship to sustain the benefits of learning from experts. Research suggests that mentorship programs and peer coaching initiatives can facilitate meaningful interactions between educators and experts, providing ongoing guidance and support for professional

growth (Garet et al., 2001). Additionally, creating opportunities for collaborative reflection and dialogue enables educators to integrate expert insights into their teaching practices and adapt them to their unique contexts (Little, 2012).

In conclusion, learning from experts enhances instructors' proficiency and effectiveness in the classroom by providing valuable insights, fresh perspectives, and constructive feedback. By fostering a culture of collaboration, inquiry, and continuous improvement, institutions can maximize the benefits of expert interactions and create supportive learning environments where educators thrive, and students succeed.

4.7 Sustainability and Transferability of Training Outcomes

Participants' perspectives on the sustainability and transferability of training outcomes underscore the complex and multifaceted nature of in-service training initiatives. While some instructors experience lasting impacts and seamless integration of learning into their teaching practices, others encounter challenges in sustaining momentum and transferring learning across diverse contexts. Addressing these challenges requires a comprehensive approach that includes ongoing support, contextualized learning experiences, and opportunities for reflection and adaptation.

The insights gleaned from participants' perspectives on the sustainability and transferability of training outcomes shed light on crucial aspects of in-service training initiatives. These findings not only inform our understanding of the effectiveness of training programs but also highlight key considerations for designing and implementing sustainable and impactful professional learning experiences.

Firstly, the challenges articulated by participants regarding the sustainability of training outcomes resonate with broader research on the limitations of short-term in-service training interventions. Studies have shown that while initial training may yield positive outcomes, sustaining changes in teaching practices over time requires ongoing support, reinforcement, and opportunities for reflective practice (Guskey, 2002). Without sustained efforts to embed new knowledge and skills into everyday teaching routines, the impact of training is likely to diminish over time.

Moreover, participants' concerns about the transferability of training outcomes align with research highlighting the importance of contextual factors in shaping teachers' ability to apply new learning in diverse educational settings. Contextual factors such as school culture, student demographics, and available resources can significantly influence the extent to which teachers can transfer and adapt new practices (Borko, 2004). Therefore, in-service training programs must incorporate strategies for contextualizing learning and providing teachers with the necessary support and resources to navigate diverse teaching contexts effectively (Garet et al., 2001; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009).

Furthermore, participants' feedback underscores the importance of ongoing support and follow-up mechanisms in sustaining the impact of in-service training initiatives. Research has consistently shown that coaching, mentoring, and communities of practice can play a critical role in supporting teachers' implementation of new practices and fostering continuous improvement. By providing opportunities for collaborative reflection, peer feedback, and shared problem-solving, these support structures enable teachers to navigate challenges, address barriers, and sustain changes in their teaching practices over time (Lieberman & Miller, 2008).

In addition, participants' experiences highlight the importance of cultivating a culture of continuous learning and professional growth within educational institutions. Research suggests that schools characterized by a strong culture of professional learning, where educators are encouraged to experiment, collaborate, and share best practices, are more likely to sustain positive changes in teaching practices and student outcomes (Hargreaves & Fullan, 2012). Therefore, efforts to promote sustainable in-service training should not only focus on individual teacher learning but also address broader systemic factors that shape organizational culture and support continuous improvement (Little, 2012).

In conclusion, the findings from this study underscore the importance of considering sustainability and transferability when designing and implementing in-service training programs for educators. By addressing the challenges associated with sustaining training outcomes and facilitating their transfer to diverse educational contexts, stakeholders can enhance the effectiveness and long-term impact of professional learning initiatives, ultimately contributing to improved teaching practices and student success.

5. Limitations

While this research provides valuable insights into the impact of in-service training IST on English language teachers' professional identity and efficacy, it is essential to acknowledge several limitations that may affect the interpretation and generalizability of the findings:

1) **Sample Size and Composition:** The study's sample size and composition may limit the generalizability of the findings. The research may have focused on a specific geographic region or educational context, which could restrict the applicability of the results to broader populations of English language teachers. Additionally, the sample may not have represented the diversity of English language teaching contexts, such as differences in school settings, student demographics, or language proficiency levels.

2) **Self-Report Bias:** The reliance on self-report data may introduce bias into the study's findings (Bryman, 2016). Participants' responses to survey questions or interview prompts may be influenced by social desirability bias, leading them to provide responses that they perceive as favorable or socially acceptable. This bias could affect the accuracy and reliability of the data, potentially skewing the results in favor of positive perceptions of IST initiatives.

6. Future Directions for Research and Practice

As educators continue to navigate the evolving landscape of education, the role of in-service training IST in shaping teachers' professional identity and efficacy beliefs becomes increasingly significant. In-service training initiatives offer opportunities for teachers to enhance their knowledge, skills, and pedagogical practices, ultimately impacting their sense of self as educators and their confidence in their ability to support student learning. In this section, we explore future directions for research and practice related to the implications of IST on teachers' professional identity and efficacy beliefs. By examining potential areas of inquiry and innovation, we aim to inform the development of more effective IST programs and contribute to the advancement of teacher development and student success in education.

1) **Longitudinal Studies:** Future research could benefit from longitudinal studies tracking the long-term impact of in-service training IST initiatives on teachers' professional identity and efficacy beliefs. By examining changes over an extended period, researchers can gain insights into the sustainability of IST outcomes and identify factors that contribute to continued growth and development among teachers.

2) **Exploring Different Contexts:** While this study focused on English language teachers, future research could explore the implications of IST programs across diverse educational contexts and subject areas. Investigating how IST initiatives influence professional identity and efficacy beliefs in different cultural, linguistic, and educational settings can provide valuable insights into the generalizability of findings and the adaptability of IST practices.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, this research has shed light on the profound implications of in-service training IST programs for English language teachers' professional identity, sense of efficacy, and teaching practices. Through an exploration of teachers' experiences and perceptions, the study has provided valuable insights into the transformative potential of IST initiatives in shaping educators' beliefs, attitudes, and instructional approaches.

The findings of this study underscore the significant impact of IST on English language teachers' professional identity, as participants reported a deepening sense of commitment to their roles as educators and advocates for language learning. Engaging in IST activities, such as workshops, seminars, and mentorship programs, provided teachers with opportunities to enhance their pedagogical skills, integrate innovative teaching strategies, and foster a supportive learning environment for their students. Furthermore, participation in IST programs was associated with improvements in teachers' sense of efficacy, as they reported increased confidence in their ability to meet the diverse needs of their students and facilitate meaningful language learning experiences. By acquiring new knowledge, skills, and resources, teachers felt empowered to enact effective instructional practices and support their students' language development journey.

The primary aim of this research was to investigate the implications of participation in IST training programs for English language teachers' professional identity and sense of efficacy. By exploring teachers' experiences and perceptions, the study aimed to provide insights into the transformative potential of IST initiatives in shaping educators' beliefs, attitudes, and instructional approaches.

The findings of this study have important implications for teacher education and in-service training practices in the field of English language teaching. By highlighting the benefits of IST programs in enhancing teachers' professional identity and efficacy, this research underscores the importance of ongoing support and training for educators. Additionally, the study emphasizes the need for tailored IST initiatives that address the unique needs and contexts of English language teachers.

Based on the findings of this research, several suggestions can be made to inform future practices and initiatives in English language teacher education:

- **Tailored IST Programs:** Develop tailored IST programs that address the specific needs and contexts of

English language teachers, taking into account factors such as teaching context, student demographics, and language proficiency levels.

- **Longitudinal Studies:** Conduct longitudinal studies to track the long-term impact of IST initiatives on teachers' professional identity, sense of efficacy, and instructional practices.
- **Inclusive Approaches:** Ensure that IST programs incorporate inclusive approaches that promote cultural competence, diversity, and equity in language teaching and learning.
- **Collaborative Learning Communities:** Foster collaborative learning communities where teachers can share best practices, exchange ideas, and support one another in their professional growth and development.

By implementing these suggestions, educators and policymakers can work towards enhancing the quality of English language teacher education and fostering continuous improvement in teaching practices and students learning outcomes.

Acknowledgments

Not applicable.

Authors' contributions

Not applicable.

Funding

Not applicable.

Competing interests

Not applicable.

Informed consent

Obtained.

Ethics approval

The Publication Ethics Committee of the Canadian Center of Science and Education.

The journal's policies adhere to the Core Practices established by the Committee on Publication Ethics (COPE).

Provenance and peer review

Not commissioned; externally double-blind peer reviewed.

Data availability statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available due to privacy or ethical restrictions.

Data sharing statement

No additional data are available.

References

- Almuhammadi, A. (2020). Teaching grammar: Professional needs of Saudi EFL instructors. *International Journal of English Linguistics*, 10(3), 14–20. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijel.v10n3p14>
- Avalos, B. (2011). Teacher professional development in teaching and teacher education over ten years. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 27(1), 10–20. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2010.08.007>
- Bandura, A. (2013). Self-Efficacy: The Foundation of Agency¹. In *Control of human behavior, mental processes, and consciousness* (pp. 16–30). Psychology Press.
- Borko, H. (2004). Professional development and teacher learning: Mapping the terrain. *Educational Researcher*, 33(8), 3–15. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X033008003>
- Bryman, A. (2016). *Social research methods*. Oxford university press.
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2017). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. Sage publications.

- Darling-Hammond, L. (2017). Teacher education around the world: What can we learn from international practice? *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(3), 291–309. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2017.1315399>
- Darling-Hammond, L., & Richardson, N. (2009). Research review/teacher learning: What matters. *Educational Leadership*, 66(5), 46–53.
- Day, C., & Gu, Q. (2007). Variations in the conditions for teachers' professional learning and development: Sustaining commitment and effectiveness over a career. *Oxford Review of Education*, 33(4), 423–443. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03054980701450746>
- Desimone, L. M. (2009). Improving impact studies of teachers' professional development: Toward better conceptualizations and measures. *Educational Researcher*, 38(3), 181–199. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X08331140>
- Desimone, L. M., Porter, A. C., Garet, M. S., Yoon, K. S., & Birman, B. F. (2002). Effects of professional development on teachers' instruction: Results from a three-year longitudinal study. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 24(2), 81–112. <https://doi.org/10.3102/01623737024002081>
- Flores, M. A., Veiga Simão, A. M., Pinto, J. M., & Vieira, D. N. (2019). Professional development for teachers: A multidimensional approach. *Frontline Learning Research*, 7(4), 76–92.
- Garet, M. S., Porter, A. C., Desimone, L., Birman, B. F., & Yoon, K. S. (2001). What makes professional development effective? Results from a national sample of teachers. *American Educational Research Journal*, 38(4), 915–945. <https://doi.org/10.3102/00028312038004915>
- Guskey, T. R., & Yoon, K. S. (2009). What works in professional development? *Phi delta kappan*, 90(7), 495–500. <https://doi.org/10.1177/003172170909000709>
- Hargreaves, A., & Fullan, M. (2015). *Professional capital: Transforming teaching in every school*. Teachers College Press.
- Harris, A. (2005). Teacher leadership: More than just a feel-good factor? *Leadership and Policy in Schools*, 4(3), 201–219. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15700760500244777>
- Harris, M., Clark, J., Coote, N., Fletcher, P., Harnden, A., McKean, M., & Thomson, A. (2011). British Thoracic Society guidelines for the management of community acquired pneumonia in children: update 2011. *Thorax*, 66(Suppl 2), ii1–ii23. <https://doi.org/10.1136/thoraxjnl-2011-200598>
- Hattie, J., & Timperley, H. (2007). The power of feedback. *Review of Educational Research*, 77(1), 81–112. <https://doi.org/10.3102/003465430298487>
- Khojah, A., & Asif, F. (2020). Mentoring Matters in Workplace: The Impact of Formal Mentoring Program on EFL Instructors' Performance at ELI, King Abdulaziz University, Saudi Arabia. *English Language Teaching*, 13(4), 140–161. <https://doi.org/10.5539/elt.v13n4p140>
- Lieberman, A., & Miller, L. (2008). *Teachers caught in the action: Professional development that matters*. Teachers College Press.
- Little, J. W. (2012). Understanding data use practice among teachers: The contribution of micro-process studies. *American Journal of Education*, 118(2), 143–166. <https://doi.org/10.1086/663271>
- Malderez, A., & Bodoczky, C. (2018). *Mentoring second language teachers*. Routledge.
- Mills, J., & Birks, M. (2014). Proposing your research. In *Qualitative Methodology: A Practical Guide* (pp. 201–220). <https://doi.org/10.4135/9781473920163.n12>
- Mizell, H. (2010). *Why Professional Development Matters*. Learning Forward. 504 South Locust Street, Oxford, OH 45056.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). Two decades of developments in qualitative inquiry: A personal, experiential perspective. *Qualitative Social Work*, 1(3), 261–283. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1473325002001003636>
- Ross, J., & Bruce, C. (2007). Professional development effects on teacher efficacy: Results of randomized field trial. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 101(1), 50–60. <https://doi.org/10.3200/JOER.101.1.50-60>
- Shukri, N. A. (2014). Second Language Writing and Culture: Issues and Challenges from the Saudi Learners' Perspective. *Arab World English Journal*, 5(3).
- Shukri, N., & Leil, A. A. (2017). Female Mentees' Perspectives of a Mentoring program in the Saudi context. *The*

International Journal of Social Sciences and Humanities Invention, 4, 3888–3899.
<https://doi.org/10.18535/ijsshi/v4i9.01>

Roy, C. K., Rahim, S., & Khojah, A. Y. (2018). Perceptions of EFL Teachers at King Abdulaziz University Regarding the Effectiveness of Cambridge University Press's Train the Trainer Course. *Arab World English Journal*, 9(2), 92–107. <https://doi.org/10.24093/awej/vol9no2.6>

Tschannen-Moran, M., & Hoy, A. W. (2001). Teacher efficacy: Capturing an elusive construct. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 17(7), 783–805. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X\(01\)00036-1](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0742-051X(01)00036-1)

Yoon, K. S., Duncan, T., Lee, S. W. Y., Scarloss, B., & Shapley, K. L. (2007). *Reviewing the evidence on how teacher professional development affects student achievement*. Regional Educational Laboratory Southwest (NJ1).

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author, with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).