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## Perceptions of EFL Teachers on the Effectiveness of Online Professional Development Courses in Pakistan: A Case Study

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### Abstract

Professional development is an integral part of helping teachers improve their skills and knowledge about their respective subjects. Freeman (2004) defines second language teacher education as a means of professional preparation and continuing professional development. The aim of this study is to investigate the perspectives of EFL teachers about online professional development courses in Pakistan. Moreover, it is important to explore to what extent the teachers are satisfied with the support they receive from tutors and teachers' perceptions about the content of the online course. This study used a mixed method approach, a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews; questionnaire was used for collecting quantitative data, while the transcripts of recorded semi-structured interviews characterized the qualitative approach. The participants were male and female English language teachers from Pakistan.

In the light of research findings, various aspects from teachers' perspectives were investigated to establish the effectiveness of an online professional development course for English teachers. The main findings of the research showed that online professional development courses provided ample support of the tutor for the participants throughout the course and helped to improve their knowledge regarding the topic. The teachers talked about the tutor support they received during the online course. Each teacher reported that the tutor provided ample support throughout the online course in all areas. Furthermore, each teacher reported that the overall content, such as quizzes, reading articles, and videos, really helped them effectively understand the content of the course and complete the tasks efficiently. All the activities were designed according to the needs of the learners. This study will aid EFL teachers and other subject teachers in comprehending the benefits of taking online professional development courses.

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### Keywords:

online professional development,  
continuing professional development

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### Introduction

This study intends to look into and examine the perspectives of Pakistani EFL teachers when taking professional development courses on Canvas LMS. This study's focus is specifically on the opinions of English

language teachers in Pakistan who have completed a 5-week online professional development course on Canvas LMS. The aspects encountered by the participants while taking an online professional development course have been examined. Due to the introduction of online learning formats as well as the expansion of the technology resources available to institutions, the use of learning management systems (LMS) has significantly increased over the last 10–15 years for online professional development courses (Dahlstrom, Brooks, & Bichsel, 2014; National Centre for Education Statistics, n.d.).

### **Research Questions**

The current study aimed to answer the following research questions:

Q-1 To what extent are teachers satisfied with the support they receive from online tutors?

Q-2- What are teachers' perceptions of the content of the online course?

### **Literature review**

#### **Continuous Professional Development for Language Teachers**

CPD is described by Richards and Farrell (2005) as a way to aid instructors in developing their pedagogy and self-awareness. Following the method of language improvement, understanding the variety in teachers' roles according to learner needs, using nuanced judgement in lesson planning, self-reflection, incorporating various teaching philosophies, and being cognizant about learners' progress according to the exercises given in the classroom are additional objectives that may be included. Bautista and Oretga-Ruiz (2017) state that promoting the professional development (PD) of in-service teachers is crucial for successful education system reforms, as recognized by policymakers, scholars, and educators globally. Although, CPD has been considered in every domain, it is viewed as a basic component that helps professional development within the English language teaching (EFL) field (Kirkwood & Price, 2011; Littlejohn, 2002).

There is adequate research on teachers' professional development, but there is a small distinction between CPD and merely providing training. According to Lee (2011), with the use of training programs offered by professionals in the field, teaching proficiency can be improved, which helps teachers advance professionally. Training and CPD, according to Richards and Farrell (2005), are the same and frequently overlap. Their approach to teacher preparation entails customizing materials as per the needs of students, incorporating activities in classrooms, and encouraging student collaboration. Professional development also comprises reflective teaching for a greater comprehension of teaching practice, as well as the self-awareness of teachers and an idea of the environment they teach in (Farrell & Richards, 2005). Teachers need to recognize that professional development is a lifelong activity which, according to Little (1993), leads to a major logical, cultural, and emotional responsibility towards ideas, materials, and co-workers within or outside of teaching. Hakim (2015) states CPD is a calculated strategy for influencing and integrating many facets of teaching in a teacher. Qayyum and Munir (2024) and Rienties et al. (2023) also share Hakim (2015)'s view and posit that courses that professional development courses significantly enhance teaching effectiveness and also lead to a robust community of practice. According to Giraldo (2014), professional development aids instructors in bringing about differences through a difficult way of shifting or boosting attention. The importance of such courses is also emphasized on by Darling-hammond et al. (2017) who state that well-designed and practical professional development should be regarded as a critical component of the learning system that assists students in acquiring the knowledge required to thrive in the twenty-first century.

#### **In-Person and Distance Learning in CPD**

Continuous professional development of teachers can be done in the form of in-person as well as distance or online learning. In the 21st century, virtual education has become a vital component of higher education that cannot be ignored owing to the rise in the availability of internet and the adaptability of virtual courses (Qayyum & Munir, 2024; Allen & Seaman, 2014; Li & Irby, 2008; Luyt, 2013; Lyons, 2004). Virtual education offers various benefits especially to the learners who are struggling financially (Limperos et al., 2015; Al-Badi et al., 2023). Moreover, it also provides learners with the opportunity to learn at their own pace and time (Rienties et al., 2023). These benefits of virtual learning, according to Konetes (2011), are one of the leading causes behind the ever-growing interest in it.

Online professional development programs are associated with various types of in-person professional development such as virtual conferences, virtual activities, and virtual communication. Online professional development is a kind of teacher education that can improve English language instructors' teaching skills. Online professional development significantly enhances English language teachers' teaching abilities and knowledge, which has a great effect on English language learners' performance and development.

### **Empirical Studies on Online/Distance CPD**

To investigate the effectiveness of OPD and the means through which online professional development of English language teachers can be achieved, several studies have been carried out (Kabilan et al., 2011; Magidin de Kramer et al., 2012; Liu, 2012; Silvia, 2015; Alimirzaee & Ashraf, 2016; McCall, 2018).

One such study was conducted by McCall (2018) who investigated topic teachers' attitudes toward an online professional development program in government schools in the US that served a significant number of English language learners. The findings of the study revealed that instructors acknowledged that the virtual program improved the preparation strategy for English Language Learners lessons in topic classrooms. The importance of teachers' online professional development is further emphasized on by a study conducted by Silvia (2015) who investigated English language instructors' perceptions of Coursera online professional development courses in various contexts. Teachers' attitudes were investigated using Guskey(2000)'s five layers of information: (1) reaction of participants, (2) learning of participants, (3) organization support and change, (4) participants' use of new knowledge and skills, and (5) student learning outcomes. Silvia (2015) observed that instructors had optimistic behaviour towards the concept and idea of OPD and they stated that the OPD positively influenced their teaching methods and incidentally, their students' learning. Magidin de Kramer et al. (2012) used a quasi-experimental way to test the effects of the OPD program on teaching practices. The course consists of virtual workshops and virtual teacher-to-teacher discussions. It provides the best pedagogical skills for improving reading comprehension skills, writing, and vocabulary techniques. The results of the study highlighted that the OPD course had a substantial impact on instructors' content knowledge, their writing and vocabulary teaching techniques. Moreover, it also improved students' reading comprehension skills. The importance of OPD has also been highlighted by Al-Badi et al. (2023) who state that during the Covid-19 pandemic, Omani teachers used MOOCs as a form of professional development to gain new insights, update their knowledge and skills, and access high-quality education at no cost.

Educational institutions in Pakistan are also gradually adapting to the changing trends of this century by arranging online professional development programs for their teachers. However, these programs and their relevant components are far from being perfect and these programs face major challenges (Abbasi, 2015). Majoka et al. (2013) also shed light on this issue and state that instructors in professional development courses are often unaware of how to use ICT tools which makes it difficult for them to fulfil the objectives of the courses. Qayyum and Munir (2024) conducted a study exploring Pakistani EFL teachers' perspectives on online professional development courses. The findings of this study showed that EFL teachers in Pakistan viewed online professional development as a means for integrating new teaching strategies into their contexts and advancing their subject knowledge. Khan et al. (2023) conducted a study on teachers from Karakoram International University and found that the majority of teachers, particularly those from the arts and humanities faculties, were in favour of conducting workshops and courses that aimed to enhance their professional growth. Similar findings were reported by Bakhsh (2023) who found that teachers in Pakistan have a positive attitude towards training and professional programs aimed at enhancing their capacity building through ongoing learning and practical skill development.

### **Research Methodology**

The researcher utilized a mixed methods approach, incorporating both questionnaires and semi-structured interviews for data collection. The questionnaire, comprising close-ended items, facilitated efficient data collection, but as noted by Dörnyei (2007), it may suffer from the limitation that respondents' contributions could be superficial. Nevertheless, questionnaires are valuable for swiftly gathering a large volume of data.

Subsequently, semi-structured interviews were conducted to delve deeper into participants' perspectives, addressing the potential limitation of superficial responses observed in the questionnaire survey. This approach

allowed for a more thorough exploration of the research questions and provided richer insights into the experiences and viewpoints of the participants.

Data analysis involved descriptive analysis for the quantitative questionnaire data and thematic analysis for the qualitative interview data, ensuring a comprehensive examination of the research questions from both quantitative and qualitative perspectives.

**Sampling**

Thirty-three English language teachers from higher secondary schools in Punjab, Pakistan participated. These participants were selected based on their attendance at a 5-week EFL professional development online course held in November 2022. Sponsored by the Regional English Language Office, US Embassy, Islamabad, and administered by Evolution Igniting Future, Karachi, Pakistan, the course titled "Teaching Grammar Communicatively (TGC)" was the focus of the investigation.

Convenience sampling was employed, resulting in a diverse sample of teachers with varying teaching experience and qualifications. Demographic statistics revealed participant characteristics:

**\*\*Table 1: Participants' Gender\*\***

| Gender            | Number of Participants | Percentage |
|-------------------|------------------------|------------|
| Male              | 17                     | 51.51%     |
| Female            | 14                     | 42.42%     |
| Prefer not to say | 02                     | 6.06%      |

**\*\*Table 2: Participants' Years of EFL Teaching\*\***

| Years of Experience | Number of Participants | Percentage |
|---------------------|------------------------|------------|
| 1 year              | 5                      | 15.15%     |
| 2 years             | 6                      | 18.18%     |
| 3 years             | 1                      | 3.03%      |
| 4 years             | 2                      | 6.06%      |
| More than 5 years   | 19                     | 57.57%     |

**\*\*Table 3: Participants' Qualification\*\***

| Qualification | Number of Participants | Percentage |
|---------------|------------------------|------------|
| Bachelor's    | 14                     | 42.42%     |
| Master's      | 10                     | 30.30%     |
| M. Phil       | 9                      | 27.27%     |
| PhD           | 0                      | 0%         |

These methodological approaches, coupled with the insights from Dörnyei (2007) regarding questionnaire surveys, enhance the rigor and validity of the study's findings, providing a comprehensive understanding of the impact of online professional development courses on English language teachers in Pakistan.

**Data Analysis**

**Table 1a- Analysis**

**R.Q.1-To what extent are teachers satisfied with the support they received from online tutors?**

|          | Less than 1 hour |        | Less than 2 hours |        | Less than 3 hours |        | Less than 4 hours |       | Less than 5 hours |        | total |      |
|----------|------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|--------|-------------------|-------|-------------------|--------|-------|------|
|          | N                | %      | N                 | %      | N                 | %      | N                 | %     | N                 | %      | N     | %    |
| How much | 08               | 24.24% | 15                | 45.45% | 04                | 12.12% | 02                | 6.06% | 04                | 12.12% | 33    | 100% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| time did you get from your tutor per week? |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

The responses of teachers to the statement, ‘How much time did you get from your tutor per week?’ were: Less than 1 hour (N = 8, 24.24%) Less than 2 hours (N = 15, 45.45%) Less than 3 hours (N = 4, 12.12%) Less than 4 hours (N = 2, 6.06%) Less than 5 hours (N = 4, 12.12%). The overall responses indicated that the majority of the teachers are at combined agreement regarding this statement as N = 23, 69.69% responded that they got less than 1 or less than 2 hours from a tutor per week, while (N = 10, 30.30%) teachers got less than 3, 4, or 5 hours per week from a tutor.

**Table 1b - Analysis**

|  | Strongly agree |        | Agree |        | Neither agree nor disagree |       | Disagree |       | Strongly disagree |    | Total |      |
|--|----------------|--------|-------|--------|----------------------------|-------|----------|-------|-------------------|----|-------|------|
|  | N              | %      | N     | %      | N                          | %     | N        | %     | N                 | %  | N     | %    |
| The amount of time the tutor gave me was very appropriate.               | 14             | 42.42% | 15    | 45.45% | 03                         | 9.09% | 01       | 3.03% | 0                 | 0% | 33    | 100% |
| Teacher support was available throughout the course.                     | 19             | 57.57% | 12    | 36.36% | 02                         | 6.06% | 0        | 0%    | 0                 | 0% | 33    | 100% |
| The tutor facilitated me in using canvas LMS in the orientation session. | 16             | 48.48% | 5     | 15.15% | 01                         | 3%    | 01       | 3.03% | 0                 | 0% | 33    | 100% |

As can be seen from Table 1, the teachers were asked questions related to research question #1 in the questionnaire. The teachers responded with strongly agree (N = 14, P = 42.42%), agree (N = 15, P = 45.45%), neither agree nor disagree (N = 3, P = 9.09%), and disagree (N = 1, P = 3.03%). None of the teachers rated strongly disagree (N = 0, P = 0%) about the question, "The amount of time the tutor gave me was very appropriate. In other words, the majority of the teachers (N = 29, P = 87.87%) responded with a combination of strongly agreeing and agreeing thus implying that the amount of time the tutor gave them was very appropriate.

More than half of teachers stated that they strongly agree (N = 19, 57.57%), agree (N = 12, 36.36%), neither agree nor disagree (N = 02, 6.06%), and none of the teachers rated disagree (N=0, 0%) and strongly disagree (N=0, 0%) that teacher support was available throughout the course. In response to this question (N = 31, 93.93%), teachers were rated as either strongly agree or agree that teacher support was available throughout the course.

In response to the third question, the majority of the teachers either went with strongly agree (N = 16, 27.27%) or agree (N = 15, 45.45%). There were fewer responses with neither agree nor disagree (N = 01, 3.03%) disagree (N= 01, 3.03%) with the statement ‘tutor facilitated me in using Canvas LMS in the orientation session, and none of the teachers rated strongly disagree (N = 0, 0%). The overall responses witnessed that the majority of the teachers (N = 31, 93.93%) responded with either strongly agree or agree to the statement that the tutor facilitated me in using Canvas LMS in the orientation session."

**Table 2 - Analysis**

**R.Q.2-What are teachers’ perceptions of the content of the online course?**

|   | Strongly agree |        | Agree |        | Neither agree nor disagreed |       | Disagree |          | Strongly disagree |    | Total |      |
|---|----------------|--------|-------|--------|-----------------------------|-------|----------|----------|-------------------|----|-------|------|
|   | N              | %      | N     | %      | N                           | %     | N        | %        | N                 | %  | N     | %    |
| The content of the Teaching Grammar Communicatively (TGC) course was well organised.                                  | 16             | 48.48% | 13    | 39.39% | 02                          | 6.06% | 02       | 6.06%    | 0                 | 0% | 33    | 100% |
| The Professional Development program (teaching grammar communicatively) was relevant to the overall outcomes.         | 14             | 42.42% | 14    | 42.2%  | 03                          | 9.09% | 02       | 6.06.39% | 0                 | 0% | 33    | 100% |
| The online course content was consistent with the overall objectives.   | 13             | 39.39% | 16    | 48.48% | 02                          | 6.06% | 02       | 6.06%    | 0                 | 0% | 33    | 100% |
| The professional development program enabled me to acquire intended knowledge about Teaching Grammar Communicatively. | 13             | 39.39% | 18    | 54.54% | 02                          | 6.06% | 0        | 0%       | 0                 | 0% | 33    | 100% |
| The Professional development course helped me   | 16             | 48.48% | 16    | 48.48% | 01                          | 3.03% | 0        | 0%       | 0                 | 0% | 33    | 100% |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| to get intended skills to create my teaching program |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|

As can be seen from Table 1, the teachers were asked questions related to research question #4 in the questionnaire. The teachers responded with strongly agree (N = 16, 48.48%) agree (N = 13, 39.39%). neither agree nor disagree (N = 2, 6.06%) and disagree (N = 2, 6.06), none of the teachers rated strongly disagree (N=0, 0%) about the statement: “The content of the Teaching Grammar Communicatively (TGC) course was well organised.” In other words, the majority of the teachers (N = 29, 87.87%) responded with a combination of strongly agree and disagree to the statement: “The content of the Teaching Grammar Communicatively (TGC) course was well organised.”

In response to the question: “The professional development program teaching grammar communicatively was relevant to the overall outcomes”, teachers that went with strongly agree (N = 14, 42.42%), agree (N = 14, 42.42%), neither agree nor disagree (N = 03, 9.09%) disagree (N = 2, 6.06%). None of the teachers rated and strongly disagree (N= 0, 0%). In response to this question (N = 28, P = 84.84%), teachers were rated as either strongly agree or agree that the professional development program (teaching grammar communicatively) was relevant with overall outcomes.

Teachers’ responses show that they strongly agree (N = 13, 39.39%) and agree (N = 16, 48.48%). Neither agree nor disagree (N = 02, 6.06%) or disagree (N = 02, 6.06%) with the statements ‘the online course content was consistent with the overall objectives, and none of the teachers rated strongly disagree (N = 0, 0%). The overall responses indicated that the vast majority of the teachers (N = 29, 87.87%) responded either strongly agree or agree to the statement" "The online course content was consistent with the overall objectives.

Teachers strongly agree (N = 13, 39.39%) and agree (N = 18, 54.54%). Neither agree nor disagree (N = 02, 6.06%) with the statement ‘the professional development program enabled me to acquire intended knowledge about teaching grammar communicatively, and none of the teachers rated disagree (N = 0, 0%) and strongly disagree (N = 0, 0%) about this question. The overall responses indicated that the vast majority of the teachers (N = 31, 93.93%) responded either strongly agree or agree to the statement that the professional development program enabled them to acquire the intended knowledge about teaching grammar communicatively.

Results show that teachers strongly agree (N=16, 48.48%) agree (N=16, 48.48%) Neither agree nor disagree (N = 01, 3.03%), and none of the teachers rated disagree (N = 0, 0%) and strongly disagree (N = 0, 0%) about this question. The overall responses indicated that the vast majority of the teachers (N = 31, 93.93%) responded with either strongly agree or agree to the statement “The professional development course helped me to get the intended skills to create my teaching program” and none of the teachers rated disagree (N = 0, 0%) and strongly disagree (N = 0, 0%) about this question. The overall responses indicated that the vast majority of the teachers (N = 32, 96.96%) either strongly agree or agree that the professional development course helped them to get intended skills to create their teaching program.

**Qualitative Data**

**Theme: 1- Students’ Satisfaction about Teacher Support**

The majority of teachers believe that teacher support is adequate. The teachers discussed the support they received from their tutor during the online course. Almost all the participants mentioned that the tutor provided extensive help across all aspects of the course. The tutor was readily available for help throughout the course via a WhatsApp group and promptly addressed all questions. Some participants also mentioned that the tutor made it convenient for them to complete their tasks. The views of a two participants regarding the performance and contribution of the tutor is given below:

**Participant No. 3:**

“Well, the teacher's performance and contribution was amazing. As I have mentioned earlier, online courses provide you with the convenience of being able to learn confidently without the fear of being judged.”

Another participant also held similar views regarding the constant support offered by the tutor throughout of the online course:

**Participant No. 4:**

“Whenever we needed the teacher, he was already there.”

Theme: 2- Teachers’ Perceptions on the Content of Online Course

The fourth theme was about the content of the course. The teachers expressed their perceptions about the content of the online course, saying that the overall course content was effective. They mentioned that the reading material was comprehensive and helpful. One of the participants shared his experience regarding the course and said:

**Participant No. 3:**

“Well, my experience regarding the content was good. It was a sort of, you can say improvised course because, being a facilitator in that course, I had the opportunity. Well, it was quite supportive. The learning outcomes were quite, clear in the beginning and the contents of the course. They were streamlined in an organized manner. Like, starting from, enabling the participants. About the techniques, methods, that should be done in order to make grammar more communicative. The reading material was outstanding. It was standardized. It was mostly taken from the university programs and courses all the activities they will be cited properly and it was designed, keeping in view the needs of the language teacher.”

Another participant shared his views regarding the reading material of the online course and explained how it helped him to understand the content of the course.

**Participant No. 4:**

“After reading all the material shared by the moderator, it was quite easy for us to understand what is going on and how to deal with the problems we face as teachers”

## Discussion

**Research Question 1****To what extent are the teachers satisfied with the support they received from the tutor?**

According to the collected data analysis from the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, the results about the statement about how much time the teachers got from their tutor per week clearly depict that 24.24% said less than 1 hour and 45.45% said less than 2 hours, while 12.12% said less than 3 hours, 6.06% said less than 4 hours, and 12.12% said less than 5 hours. It showed that the majority of the participants reported less than 2 hours of weekly tutor support time, and they were happy with this duration per week, as shown in the next statement that the given time was appropriate in terms of teachers’ support.

Furthermore, 42.42% of teachers strongly agreed and 45.45% agreed, while 9.09% of teachers neither agreed nor disagreed and 3.03% disagreed that the amount of time the tutor gave me was very appropriate, 57.57% strongly agreed and 36.36% agreed, while 6.06% of teachers neither agreed nor disagreed that teacher support was available throughout the course, and 48.48% strongly agreed and 45.45% agreed, while 3.03% of teachers neither agreed nor disagreed that the tutor facilitated me in using Canvas LMS in the orientation session. These results show the importance of tutor support time in an online professional development course, which can greatly assist course participants in completing their tasks and course. Teacher support time is crucial for addressing learners’ questions and providing guidance about activities; it ensures a supportive and interactive online learning environment. However, there is an inconsistency in the responses. While participants varied in their opinions on the duration of tutor support time in the initial statement, there was a strong consensus in subsequent questions about the appropriateness of time, teacher availability, and facilitation. This discrepancy does not provide a clear indication of the optimal amount of tutor support time required.

As discussed in the literature review, In the professional development trainings commonly conducted by consultants who have received training in the topic of interest and who work as role models and mentors for the strategy (Dettmer, Landrum, & Miller, 2006), the question was further discussed in the semi-structured interviews, and the teachers talked about tutor support they received during the online course. Each teacher reported that the tutor provided ample support throughout the online course in all areas. The tutor was easily accessible for any assistance through the WhatsApp group, and the tutor responded to all the queries within the best possible time.



Some participants reported that the tutor provided convenience in completing the tasks. Teachers' efficacy is specified as beliefs regarding the efforts teachers put into teaching, the aims they determine, their perseverance when things do not work accordingly as well as their resilience in the case of setbacks (Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998).

### **Research question 2**

#### **What are the teachers' perceptions of the content of the online course?**

According to the collected data analysis from the questionnaire and semi-structured interviews, the results clearly depict that 48.48% of teachers strongly agreed, 39.39% agreed, 6.06% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 6.06% disagreed that the content of the Teaching Grammar Communicatively (TGC) course was well organized. The questionnaire responses depict that almost half of the teachers strongly agreed with the statement that the content of the Teaching Grammar Communicatively course was well organized through clear modules, sequential lessons, and consistent use of instructional materials, ensuring a coherent and useful learning experience. Furthermore, 42.42% of teachers strongly agreed and 42.42% agreed, while 9.09% of teachers neither agreed nor disagreed and 6.06% disagreed that the professional development program (teaching grammar communicatively) was relevant to overall outcomes. similar percentage of the participants, i.e., 42.42%, strongly agreed and agreed about online course relevancy with overall outcomes by improving teachers' skills and enabling them to effectively teach grammar in a communicative context, which 6.06% teachers disagreed with this statement. And 39.39% of teachers strongly agreed, 48.48% agreed, 6.06% neither agreed nor disagreed, and 6.06% disagreed that the online course content was consistent with the overall objectives.

The results show that almost half of the participants agreed that the online course content aligns consistently with the overall objectives by enfolded topics, activities, and assessments that clearly impact achieving the intended learning outcomes and goals of the online professional development course. While 39.39% of teachers strongly agreed and 54.54% agreed, 6.06% of teachers neither agreed nor disagreed that the professional development program enabled them to acquire intended knowledge about teaching grammar communicatively. The results depict that more than half of the participants agreed that the professional development program facilitated teachers in obtaining their intended knowledge about teaching grammar communicatively through targeted instructional materials, quizzes, and feedback mechanisms that directly supported their learning goals. 39.39% teachers strongly agreed and 54.54% agreed while 6.06% teachers neither agree nor disagree that the Professional development course helped them to get intended skills to create their teaching program. The findings show that more than half of the participants agreed that the Professional development course equipped teachers with the intended skills to make their teaching programs by offering them with practical strategies, resources, and guidance tailored to their instructional requirements and objectives.

As discussed in the literature review, McCall (2018) investigated topic teachers' attitudes toward an online professional development program in government schools in the US that served a significant number of English language learners. Instructors acknowledged that the virtual program improved the preparation strategy for English Language Learners lessons in topic classrooms. The question was further discussed in the semi-structured interviews, and the teachers shared their perceptions of the content of the online course. Each teacher reported that the overall content, such as quizzes, reading articles, and videos, really helped them understand the content of the course and complete the tasks in a good way. All the activities were designed according to the needs of the learners. The course consists of virtual workshops and virtual teacher-to-teacher discussions. It provided the best pedagogical skills for improving reading comprehension, writing, and vocabulary techniques. The results highlighted that the OPD course had a substantial impact on instructor's content knowledge, their writing and vocabulary teaching techniques. Moreover, it also improved students reading comprehension skills Magidin de Kramer et al. (2012).

### **Conclusion**

This research consists of an investigation of EFL teachers' perspectives towards the online EFL professional development course in Pakistan. It presents various factors of investigation, such as impact of OPD course, opportunities to create a community of practice, tutor support throughout the course, and the impact of the content of the online course. In this study, the purpose is to learn about teachers' perspectives regarding online

professional development course. Therefore, it will help other EFL teachers learn about their professional advancement through an online platform.

The overall conclusion, then, is that online professional development course is useful based on the study findings. A small percentage of participants raised questions regarding the content of the course in terms of organization, relevancy with overall outcomes, and consistency of the overall objectives, but in the interviews, they showed their satisfaction regarding all these aspects. Overall, more research needs to be conducted to identify the best practices in online professional development courses for EFL teachers, researchers, and universities in Pakistan so that teachers can avail online professional development opportunities easily and improve their learning opportunities to keep themselves updated about new developments and strategies being used in the virtual professional development context. It will also help the teachers learn about the technological aspects of the online learning and teaching while doing online professional development courses.

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