Coordination in Planning and Implementing Professional Development Programs for Teachers: A Much-needed Component in Rural Areas

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Abstract
Coordination among stakeholders has been considered as a significant influential factor in providing teachers with quality Professional Development (PD) opportunities. The importance of coordination intensifies when a variety of PD providers work on the capacity building of teachers in the same region such as in some rural areas of Pakistan. The current research explored the nature of coordination among various stakeholders while designing and implementing PD programs for teachers in rural Pakistan. To achieve this aim, qualitative case study approach was used and data were generated through focused group interviews from PD providers, education managers, school leaders, and teachers. The results indicated a limited coordination among the stakeholders leading to a variety of issues such as overlapping programs, conflicting expectations from teachers, and selection of irrelevant teachers for PD. Drawing on the experience of the stakeholders who participated in this research, the paper suggests a model of coordination which the educational reformers, especially the PD providers and education managers, should consider while designing and implementing the capacity building programs for teachers.

Keywords
coordination in professional development, designing professional development, rural areas

Introduction
With the increasing demand for continuing professional development owing to the frequently changing expectations from teachers, coordination among the stakeholders in the provision of quality professional development opportunities for teachers has been receiving a growing recognition across the globe. Studies suggest that the quality of learning experience provided to the teachers depend upon the nature of coordination among the relevant stakeholders (Council, 1997; Firestone et al., 2005). Well-coordinated efforts lead to improved teacher preparation and vice versa. Coordination allows intervening in an informed way, using available resources in an effective way, avoiding replication of programs, and reaching out those teachers who really need a particular type of support (Gjedia & Gardinier, 2018; Jackson & Cobb, 2013).

The need of coordination among the relevant stakeholders is even more important in rural and marginal areas of the developing world where a bulk of donor agencies with a variety of reform initiatives have intervened to address the dearth of quality teachers. One example is the rural Pakistan where the documentation of the poor quality of pre-service teacher education has generated a focus on the importance of in-service training as a major strategy to develop quality teachers (Rizvi & Elliott, 2007). In this background, due to the lack of resources and capacity, the government has heavily relied on donor agencies and private organizations for in-service PD provision (Lister et al., 2010). Consequently, a good number of NGOs have intervened to supplement government efforts in improving the quality of teachers through various projects and in-service teacher development programs. The dominant models that these organizations use are the traditional external workshops lasting a couple of hours or even a couple of months. Since the programs are mainly determined by the priorities of the donors, their aims and content also vary.

Although these initiatives have substantially contributed to developing the capacity of the participating teachers and schools, they have also been criticized on several grounds. Firstly, the sustainability of the donor funded in-service training

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projects has been questionable. A critical overview of these programs suggests that they have been less successful in institutionalizing the introduced models. As the funding dries up, the donor initiated innovations also disappear (Ali, 2011). Likewise, the donor funded in-service programs focus only on improving the pedagogical practices of teachers without giving any attention to school structures, cultures, and other aspects. Consequently, these programs result in unresolved problems for teachers who gradually return to their traditional practices (UNESCO, 2006). The donor driven projects have also been found to be supply driven as these projects mainly set benchmarks based on their own assumptions (Hatfield, 2001). They have failed to integrate their models with the existing framework in place for teacher development in Pakistan. In addition, many donor activities have been found overlapping. In Sindh Province of Pakistan, for example, three different agencies provided the same training to the same group of teachers within a year (Kardar, 2005).

One of the many reasons resulting in the above mentioned issues is said to be the lack of coordination among the PD provider organizations. One of the ways to address the above mentioned issues is to enhance networking and coordination among the various agencies aimed to share lessons based on practical experience (Ali, 2011; Hunzai, 2009; UNESCO, 2006). However, we lack any research-based knowledge on the existing practices of coordination among the various agencies and stakeholders in designing and implementing capacity building programs for teachers. Our existing knowledge is limited to general conclusions regarding the lack of coordination. Since the area is unexplored, a need for in-depth understanding of the situation especially using qualitative approach drawing on the real experiences of the variety of stakeholders has been felt (Ali, 2011). To address this gap, the current research seeks to understand the perceptions of key stakeholders on the nature of coordination among PD providers and issues emerging due to the lack of coordination. Building on this purpose, the research responds to a specific question; how PD provider organizations coordinate in planning and implementing PD programs and how such coordination affects the effectiveness of the existing PD programs on offer for teachers in rural Pakistan? The results emerging from this research provide significant insights into the existing practices of coordination and the issues associated with PD programs resulting from the lack of coordination among the relevant stakeholders. The emerging insights have implications for educational reformers and change agents working on capacity building of teachers in rural contexts within and beyond Pakistan.

**Coordination in PD**

Coordination as defined for this research is “the anticipated organizational complexity of decomposing tasks among partners along with ongoing coordination of activities to be completed jointly or individually across organizational boundaries and the related extent of communication and decisions that would be necessary” (Gulati & Singh, 1998, p. 782). As emerges from this conceptualization, coordination is about division of labor among stakeholders and pooling of resources aimed to generate value in an alliance (Hoetker & Mellewigt, 2009). Castañer and Oliveira (2020) propose “to define coordination as the attitudes, behaviors, and outcomes of joint determination of common goals” (p. 994). Attitude in coordination, for them, refers to the disposition to recognize common goals whereas behavior refers to actions such as division of labor and pooling of resources carried out to read the common goals. Outcome could be the resulting common goal.

When the above conceptualization of coordination is applied to PD programs, an effective coordination in PD of teachers would have certain features. Firstly, the PD providers will recognize and develop common goals for the capacity building of teachers on the basis of mutual understanding. Secondly, the roles and responsibilities in the form of actions will be distributed among the stakeholders. Thirdly, the stakeholders will pool their resources together and use them effectively. As a result, the common goals will be achieved.

Coordination has been considered as one of the significant factors in making any PD program effective for teachers. Studies suggest that the improved preparation of teachers depends on the nature of coordination among relevant stakeholders (Council, 1997). Well-coordinated efforts lead to improved teacher preparation and vice versa. While comparing PD activities in three districts in the United States, Firestone et al. (2005) found that the district with well-coordinated PD activities had greater influence on teaching practice of teachers. The districts having limited coordination among the various actors showed reduced impact on teaching practices.

Coordination among the relevant stakeholders will allow approaching and selecting schools and teachers who really need the support on offer (Gjedia & Gardinier, 2018). When the PD providers approach school and teachers, they will not only identify their real needs but also involve them in planning PD programs. Such involvement will help the PD providers to intervene in an informed way drawing on the experience of the actors who are responsible for implementing the reform initiatives. In this way, teacher learning can be supported by coordinating PD across contexts and role groups (Jackson & Cobb, 2013). Despite such importance of coordination, however, reform initiatives mainly in PD of teachers especially in developing context are usually mandated from upper without involving schools and teachers.

Such activities, as warned by (Fullan, 2012), are less likely to positively impact the practices of teachers. Fullan suggests coordinating top down and button up strategies to successfully initiate and sustain any reform in education.

Although limited, the available literature on coordination in PD coming from the developed context as presented above
suggests that coordination among relevant stakeholders allows designing and implementing capacity building for teachers having enhanced impact on their practices. Well-coordinated programs result in not only providing teachers with relevant and effective PD, but also using the available resources more effectively. In the context of Pakistan, although the need of coordination has been highlighted (Ali, 2014; Hunzai, 2009), we lack an understanding regarding how coordination among various PD providers and relevant stakeholders is in practice and how it affects the PD programs on offer for teachers especially in rural areas. The current research addresses this gap by exploring the views of relevant stakeholders such as PD providers, education managers, school leaders, and teachers.

Research Method

In order to explore the exiting practices of coordination among stakeholders in the provision of PD, this research used a constructivist-interpretive paradigm with the assumption that knowledge is socially constructed and the researcher’s role is to interpret the situation (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000). Similarly, qualitative approach being aligned with the said epistemological perspective was opted which allowed the researcher to go to the field, interact with and listen to the participants in the real setting (Bogdan & Biklen, 1998).

A variety of stakeholders such PD providers, school leaders, teachers, and education managers were recruited to collect data from. Preference was given to teachers who teach at the secondary level with the assumption and available evidence that greater number of PD opportunities had been provided to teachers of this level compared with primary level teachers. Similarly, teachers who availed PD during the last three years were considered assuming that they could provide more updated data in relation to coordination among PD providers. As the record of District Education Office showed, 88 teachers of secondary level out of 1,159 had availed PD opportunity during the last 3 years (Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, 2017–2018). Out of the 88 teachers, 50 teachers were approached through random sampling procedure (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2009). Reading the information sheet and invitation letters, 32 teachers showed willingness to be part of the research. Invitation letters were sent to 50 teachers, 32 of them agreed to participate in the research.

Likewise, using random sampling procedure, out of 38 school leaders who attended PD programs during the last 3 years, 12 were recruited to be part of this research. On the other hand, purposive sampling procedure (Bloor, 2001) was used to select participants from PD providers and education department in order to consult those individuals who had the experience of working with schools and teachers. Detail of participants is provided in Table 1 below.

| Stakeholders       | Total number | No. of groups | Number in each group |
|--------------------|--------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Teachers           | 32           | 6             | 5–6                  |
| School leaders     | 12           | 3             | 4                    |
| PD providers       | 5            | 1             | 5                    |
| Education officials| 5            | 1             | 5                    |

Considering the relevancy between the research purpose and the data collection techniques (Howe & Eisenhart, 1990), the research used focus group interview as the major data generation tool. Focus group interviews were used not only to generate maximum data in minimum time but also to rouse participants to remember particular events and to express their perspective being exposed to others’ experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2011). Similarly, to address power and status issues (Bloor, 2001), the participants were grouped according to their positions. As shown in the table above, stakeholders were groups separately. Separate groups were formed of PD providers, education officials, school leaders, and teachers as shown in table above. The groups were interviewed twice and each interview lasted 50 to 80 minutes. The interview questions revolved round the purpose of the research focusing the coordination among the stakeholders and its impact on the effectiveness of PD programs. Each group was asked questions in relation to their role and experience of coordination among stakeholders while planning and implementing PD programs.

To maintain trustworthiness and to overcome the challenge of subjectivity, this research employed strategies, namely, adequacy of sampling, and reflexivity. To ensure the adequacy of sampling, as suggested by Strauss and Corbin (1998), this research recruited participants who were assumedly more informed and represented the field at multiple levels such as teachers, school leaders, PD providers, and officials of the education department. Another strategy to overcome the challenge of subjectivity was reflexivity—questioning own assumptions and critically looking at any impacts that might influence data collection and interpretation (Engward & Davis, 2015).

Data collection and analysis was a simultaneous process (Hodkinson, 2008). The interviews were transcribed, translated, and coded using NVIVO. Using thematic analysis approach (Braun & Clarke, 2006), the data were first coded and then the frequently occurring patterns were identified. These patterns were developed into themes. Emerging from the analysis, the following section presents and discusses the major results. It is to be noted here that, for the purpose
of confidentiality, pseudonyms are used instead of the real names of the participants while presenting data.

**Results**

The following table (Table 2) shows an overview of the themes and subthemes emerging from the analysis of data. Data under these themes and subthemes are presented and interpreted in the next sections.

**Lack of Coordination Among Stakeholders**

Under this main themes, three subthemes, namely limited efforts for coordination, realizing the importance of coordination, and lack of relevance and shared goals among the key stakeholders are presented and interpreted.

**Limited Efforts for Coordination**

The analysis of data revealed that coordination among the relevant stakeholders influences not only the quality of external programs but also the implementation of new learning in the classroom context. Participants reported their dissatisfaction with the existing coordination mechanism and highlighted several flaws in coordination to support their perspectives. The majority of the participants consider PD providers responsible for the lack of coordination. A school leader revealed that no one consults him regarding the nature of the PD program. “They just inform me to send a teacher for PD, but I don’t know which teacher this course is relevant for.” Interestingly, PD providers themselves agreed with this perspective and acknowledged the lack of serious efforts from their side to enhance coordination with other parties. Discussing the nature of coordination among stakeholders, Inayat, representing PD providers, stated that:

> We have not worked seriously on coordination except we occasionally meet officials of education department asking them to send teachers for our PD programs, and sometimes we invite them to attend ceremonies at the closure of PD programs. But sitting together at the beginning of the year, formulating common goals and developing strategies together, it is not happening.

This quote is representative of a shared opinion and provides a comprehensive view of a failure to achieve coordination among stakeholders in the research region. It reveals conclusively that coordination is lacking or, at best, very superficial. Meeting education officials on an occasional basis or inviting education official to attend a closing ceremony may not be considered a systematic PD coordination. As the PD provider reveals, the PD providers and Education Department lack any interaction and coordination to formulate goals for PD of teachers and to distribute roles and responsibilities to achieve the set goals.

**Realizing the Importance of Coordination**

It was interesting to note that almost all the stakeholders realize the importance of coordination. The majority of school leaders and officials from the education department, for example, were of the view that coordination would be helpful for PD providers to concentrate their efforts on specific aspects through agreeing on their areas of PD focus. For example, an Assistant District Education Officer (ADEO) was of the view that “based on their expertise and interest, one organization may work with teachers of English and the other with teachers of Science. They may choose various levels for their focus such as primary, middle or secondary.” This being the case, participants believed that coordination would result in effective utilization of resource.

The majority of teachers and school leaders were also of the view that if PD providers interact with school leaders to identify the issues their teachers face and discuss a possible time to conduct PD programs, both parties will benefit. School leaders expected PD providers to plan their PD activities in consultation with them to allow releasing relevant teachers for PD programs. School leaders further intimated that when they lacked awareness concerning the content of a PD program, they did not know what the teachers needed to implement as a result of attending PD.

Thus, the data suggest that all the relevant stakeholders are not only aware of the importance of coordination but also show willingness to develop a system for coordination. This is a positive sign which should be materialized. However, someone has to take the initiative. This aspect will be discussed further in the discussion section.

**Table 2. An Overview of the Emerging Themes and Subthemes.**

| Themes                        | Subthemes                              | Data mainly coming from                      |
|-------------------------------|----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| Lack of coordination among stakeholders | Limited efforts for coordination       | PD providers, education managers, and school leaders |
|                               | Realizing the importance of coordination | PD providers, education managers, school leaders, and teachers |
|                               | Lack of relevance and shared goals      | Education managers, school leaders, and teachers |
|                               | Overlapping programs                   | Education managers, school leaders, and teachers |
|                               | Differing expectations from teachers    | Education managers, school leaders, and teachers |
|                               | Issues in selection of teachers for PD | Education managers, school leaders, and teachers |

This table provides an overview of the themes and subthemes that emerged from the analysis of data.
Lack of Relevance and Shared Goals

Clearly, all stakeholders are aware of the importance of coordination; therefore, the failure to take any significant initiative in this regard is quite surprising. It also lends weight to the argument that every PD provider organization has its own internalized unique goals and agendas. This fact is also highlighted by the research participants. A school leader showed his concern stating that “these organizations [the PD providers] have their unique agendas to achieve. They do not consider what I need. They try to impose what they feel is the right way.” This representative quote shows a dissatisfaction with the existing PD programs as these programs, according to some stakeholders, are conducted to achieve certain unique agendas. The school leaders complain about the lack of relevance of these programs to the need of their schools and consider them top down impositions. Participants believed that coordination requires having shared goals and their lack suggests that the PD providers might consider shared goals as a hindrance in achieving their unique agendas. Agreeing on the goals of another’s organization could be sacrificing one’s preferred agendas hence the reason for PD providers’ reluctance to engage in such collaboration.

Issues Resulting from the Lack of Coordination

Due to the lack of coordination among the relevant stakeholders, there emerge certain issues which affect the availability and quality of PD programs for teachers. These issues and the way they affect the quality of PD are elaborated below.

Overlapping Programs

Participants revealed that PD providers organize overlapping programs due to their lack of coordination. As a PD provider stated “we have no linkages with other PD providers. Sometimes we are working on the same topic. We do not sit together to determine who will do what. It is very much needed but none has taken such initiative.” The phrase “working on the same topic” refers to commonly highlighted issue: overlapping of activities. It was revealed that several organizations were occupied in conducting capacity building programs for teachers in the research region and some of them were providing similar types of PD programs. Under these conditions, a teacher who attends a PD program with a PD provider ends up attending the similar topic with another one. Participants reported that such repetition is wasting not only PD providers’ resources but also teachers’ time. Munaza, a school leader, showed her concern stating that:

Why the PD providers do not sit together and plan their programs? I want to send my teachers to attend PD programs, but when there is a repetition of the topics, it is a waste of time which I cannot afford.

Given that schools in the research context have limited teachers, attending the same topic with different organizations seems an ineffective utilization of teachers’ time.

Differing Expectations from Teachers

Whereas the lack of coordination among PD providers leads to repetition of PD programs and ineffective utilization of resources, participants also highlighted the differing expectations from teachers resulting from the lack of coordination between PD providers and education department. Teachers and Assistant District Education Officers (ADEOs) made apparent that officials from the education department who visit schools were usually unaware of the purpose, content and expected outcomes of PD programs that the teachers attended. The lack of such knowledge significantly limits an effective monitoring of teacher development by education officials. Mehreen, ADEO stated that:

Even if we monitor teachers, what can we monitor? Some other organisation has given the training. We do not know what was in the training, what the content was and what teachers are expected to implement.

ADEOs expressed their concern that PD providers did not share their plan, objectives and manuals with them, so that even when they visited schools, they were unable to properly monitor teachers’ progress since they were not aware of the training objectives and content. This issue was particularly highlighted by teachers who were of the view that lack of coordination between the education department and PD providers resulted in differing expectations from teachers. They reported that PD providers shared instructional strategies with them which were not fully applicable due to the different expectations of officials from the education department. Shafiq, a public school teacher, remarked that:

PD providers share with us and expect us to use interactive activities. If I use such strategies, my students may not be able to translate the text, and they will be labelled weak. I teach the way ADEOs evaluate my students, and that is contradictory to what we are taught during PD programs. It is very confusing for us, whom to follow?

The impact of the lack of coordination between PD providers and education department officials who monitor teachers is illustrated clearly in this view of the conflicting agendas and challenges which teachers face, namely, a lack of shared understanding on student learning outcomes, effective teaching, and philosophies underpinning teaching practices and strategies to facilitate learning. PD providers intervene to encourage teachers to use child-centered teaching and learning approaches. Education department officials, however, have a different orientation to teaching and learning processes. For them, effective teaching seems to be the one that enables students to translate text from one language to another.
Issues in Selection of Teachers for PD

It was evident from the views of teachers and school leaders that due to a lack of coordination, selection of teachers for PD programs was also problematic. Sometimes PD providers ask the education department to nominate teachers for PD programs. The education department provides names of teachers without considering the relevance of the program to the needs of the selected teachers. Sardar, a public school leader, stated that:

One teacher has got ten times training and he will be called for the next training as well. Another teacher has not got any training, and he will not be given an opportunity even in the future. Similarly, a Science teacher is called for English training, or a secondary teacher is called for a primary level training.

This concern of a school leader highlights several issues resulting from the lack of coordination. The Education Department either lacked records of who attended PD or did not care about who had benefited from the previous opportunities. Consequently, some teachers have availed many opportunities while others may not get access to PD even in the future. Similarly, lack of coordination also resulted in sending teachers to PD which was irrelevant to them. When a Science teacher attends a teacher education program on teaching of English, he or she is unlikely to bring back ideas to implement in her class. Again, poor coordination between PD providers and the education department appears central to inappropriate selection of teachers for PD.

Discussion

This research revealed a lack of coordination among key stakeholders in provision of PD programs for teachers resulting in many issues in relation to teacher engagement and ultimately influencing the quality and productivity of the outcomes of PD. It was interesting to note that none of the stakeholders has taken any serious effort to coordinate their efforts in relation to the provision of PD programs for teachers. The very first issue resulting in the lack of coordination is the unique agendas of the PD providers. Since each PD provider has its own mandate, objectives, and agendas, agreeing on shared goals is, in a way, compromising their unique agendas. The research found very limited examples of the stakeholders sitting together and discussing their plans, priorities, and needs. The examples they shared were very superficial such as an official from education department attending a closing ceremony of a PD program offered by a PD provider or a PD provider visiting education department inviting teachers for a PD program. Coordination as presented in educational literature coming from the developed context such as shared goals, division of labor, and pulling of resources (Firestone et al., 2005; Gjedia & Gardinier, 2018; Jackson & Cobb, 2013) was not evident in this context.

Lack of coordination results in a variety of issues adversely affecting the quality of PD programs on offer for teachers in this region. PD programs offered by different organizations, for example, usually overlap causing a waste of resources and time. Since the PD provider organizations lack information on the courses offered by other organizations and the teachers attending those courses, at times they conduct the same training and invite the same teachers. A teacher ends up attending workshop on the same topic from different PD providers. This scenario results in a waste of not only the organizational resources but also teachers’ time who attend PD programs despite shortage of teachers in their schools.

Moreover, education officials responsible for monitoring teachers are unfamiliar with the objectives, content, and outcome of PD programs that the teachers attend. PD providers and educational managers have conflicting expectations from trainee teachers creating confusion for them in implementing new practices. It has been argued that to attain results from PD, stakeholders at all levels not only require coordination of effort but also need to have consensus on desired goals (Little, 1993; Louis & Miles, 1991). Through mutual coordination, stakeholders identify and agree on what they want to achieve through PD and how they might achieve them. In the context of this study, Education department officials have a different orientation to teaching and learning processes. For them, effective teaching seems to be the one that enables students to translate text from one language to another. Their differing orientation to teaching and learning practices ultimately generates confusion for teachers when they attempt new practices (Hollingsworth, 1999).

It was interesting to note that stakeholders consider PD providers mainly responsible for the lack of coordination. This argument is weighty with the fact that PD providers are intervening for capacity building of teachers in the region. If they are taking initiative for the development of teachers, they should also take initiative to work in coordination with other stakeholders in order to improve the quality of the PD programs they offer. Despite the need of such coordination, if they are not taking such initiative, it certainly raises doubts with regard to their agendas and intentions which they want to achieve through their PD programs. If their intention is to develop the capacity of teachers to ultimately enhance the academic achievement of students, they have to prove it by developing coordination with relevant stakeholders providing teachers with more relevant PD opportunities as per their needs.

Where PD providers have failed to coordinate their efforts, District Education Department has also shown reduced interest and role in this regard. The main responsibility of overseeing education in the district and consequently, supporting teachers in their PD rests with the District Education Department. They have first to realize that lack of coordination leads to not only waste of resources but also offering teachers with irrelevant opportunities. Lack of any
efforts from this department in streamlining PD program and catering them to the real needs of teachers shows their lack of concern and commitment to the PD of teachers and improvement of their schools. Research from other contexts, for example, Avidov-Ungar and Reingold (2018) have shown from Israel that organizing effective PD for teachers is more likely when district education managers take the lead involving other stakeholders.

Consequently, there seems an urgent need for all stakeholders to enhance coordination in order to provide teachers with more effective PD opportunities. For this purpose, building on the literature coming from other contexts (see, e.g., Firestone et al., 2005; Gjedia & Gardinier, 2018; Jackson & Cobb, 2013) and the analysis of data emerging from the current study, a model of coordination is proposed for stakeholders as represented in Figure 1.

As represented in the figure, similar to a triangle which remains incomplete if any of its sides is missing, coordination will not be effective unless the three main stakeholders, namely, PD providers, Education office, and schools work together. Once they come together, the first step would be formulating common goals in relation to PD of teachers. Once the goals are set and the priorities are identified, any decision for their interventions and actions should be taken on the basis of mutual agreement. Next, there should be a clear division of labor where each party is assigned particular roles and responsibilities in relation to PD of teachers. Such division of labor should be according to the expertise and jurisdiction of the stakeholders. Whereas planning and implementing a PD program would be more related to PD providers, education office may better extend monitoring support to teachers in implementing the training ideas. This will also lead to pulling resources in more effective way. Wherever required, the stakeholders will benefit from the expertise and resources of each other. This model is congruent with literature on coordination in PD coming from the developed world (see, e.g., Anson, 1994; Kelly, Wright, Dawes, Kerr, & Robertson, 2019; Lalitha, 2005; Pietarinen, Pyhältö, & Soini, 2019).

**Conclusion**

As emerged from this research and supported by earlier studies (Anson, 1994), coordination of efforts is the most influencing factor to attain intended results from PD. However, lack of coordination among key stakeholders permeates in this part of the world, resulting in many issues in relation to teacher engagement in PD and ultimately influencing the quality and productivity of the outcomes of PD. PD programs offered by different organizations usually overlap causing a waste of resources and time. Moreover, education officials responsible for monitoring teachers are unfamiliar with the objectives, content, and outcome of PD programs that the teachers attend. PD providers and educational managers have conflicting expectations from trainee teachers creating confusion for them in implementing new practices. Similarly, lack of coordination also results in the selection of teachers for irrelevant PD programs. Collectively, the issues emerging from lack of coordination lead to less effective PD opportunities for teachers.

These apparently simple conclusions provoke thoughts about the nature of coordination among relevant stakeholders in the provision of effective PD opportunities for teachers in the rural and marginal areas. Teachers’ limited professional capacity resulting in low academic achievement of students is a common issue many rural and marginal areas face. Many organizations working on educational reforms present this scenario to donor agencies and attract substantial funding aimed to improve the capacity of teachers. However, as the current study conducted in rural Pakistan revealed, the organizations availing grants and working on capacity building of teachers have reduced impact upon the practices of teachers mainly because of the limited coordination among the key stakeholders. If PD provider organizations continue with the similar practices without improving the coordination mechanism, they will keep on wasting resources on activities that produce no or restricted outcomes. Since the existing literature is surprisingly silent about the nature of coordination among key stakeholders in the provision of PD programs in rural contexts, the conclusions of this study provide guidelines for interventions in the rural and marginal areas within and beyond Pakistan. Concerned stakeholders, therefore, should consider the insights emerging from this research if their intention is to provide teachers with quality experience to improve their practices with the ultimate aim of enhancing student achievement.

This research recommends to conduct similar studies in other rural and marginal areas beyond Pakistan to add to our understanding on the nature of coordination among stakeholders in PD of teachers and the way the existing coordination among stakeholders affect the quality of PD in those regions. Since expectations from teachers will constantly keep on changing with the rapidly changing trends, teachers’ capacity will most probably continue attaining attention of educational reformers and donor agencies. As coordination among relevant stakeholders is an influential factor in the

![Figure 1. An approach to coordination among stakeholders for effective PD of teachers.](image-url)
provision of quality PD opportunities to teachers, by improving the mechanism of coordination, teachers will be afforded with more quality learning experiences, eventually leading to enhanced achievement of students—the ultimate aim of any reform initiative in education.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests
The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding
The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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