

EFFECT OF KUPPET IN PROMOTING PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF TEACHER WELFARE IN PUBLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN MERU COUNTY

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Accepted: June 5, 2026

ABSTRACT

Professional development remains a critical component in enhancing teacher welfare, job satisfaction, and instructional effectiveness, particularly in developing countries such as Kenya. Despite the efforts of trade unions like the Kenya Union of Post-Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET), teachers in public secondary schools continue to experience limited access to structured training, career progression opportunities, and skill enhancement initiatives. This study examined the effect of KUPPET in promoting professional development of teachers in public secondary schools in Meru County, Kenya. The study was anchored on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and the Deliberative Policy Analysis Model, which provided a framework for understanding how motivational factors and institutional engagement influence teacher welfare outcomes. A descriptive research design was adopted. The study targeted public secondary school teachers, KUPPET officials, and education administrators from the Teachers Service Commission and the Ministry of Education. Data were collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. Quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS Version 26 through descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, and regression analysis, while qualitative data were analyzed thematically. The findings revealed that KUPPET's professional development initiatives had a statistically significant positive relationship with teacher welfare ($r = 0.589$, $p < 0.001$) and significantly predicted teacher welfare ($\beta = 0.183$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 34.7% of the variation in teacher welfare ($R^2 = 0.347$). Professional development contributed to enhanced professional skills, improved career progression, and increased job satisfaction, confirming its importance in strengthening teacher capacity and performance. The study concludes that KUPPET plays a significant role in advancing teacher welfare through professional development and recommends strengthening training programs, expanding access to continuous learning opportunities, and enhancing institutional support to maximize the effectiveness of professional development initiatives.

Key Words: Training Opportunities, Career Progression Support, Skill Enhancement Initiatives, KUPPET

CITATION: Kibore, F. M., & Kiruthu, F. (2026). Effect of KUPPET in promoting professional development of teacher welfare in public secondary schools in Meru County. *Reviewed International Journal of Social Science & Humanities*, 7 (1), 526 – 538.

INTRODUCTION

Professional development has become a major global concern in education due to its critical role in enhancing teacher effectiveness, improving instructional quality, and strengthening overall learning outcomes. A systematic review of teacher professional development programs found that sustained and well-structured training significantly improves teaching practices and student achievement across different education systems (Sims et al., 2021). In addition, international evidence shows that continuous professional learning is strongly associated with improved teacher satisfaction, retention, and instructional effectiveness across OECD countries (Viac & Fraser, 2020). These findings highlight the growing global recognition of professional development as a key driver of education quality.

The global response to challenges in teacher performance now depends on structured professional development systems that support continuous learning and skills enhancement. In Finland, sustained investment in teacher professionalism and continuous training has been linked to high levels of instructional quality and student performance (Sahlberg, 2019). In Singapore, structured career development pathways and continuous teacher training systems have been shown to strengthen instructional effectiveness and overall education system performance (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). These studies confirm that effective teacher development depends on institutional support, access to training opportunities, and structured career growth systems.

Schools represent one of the primary environments where professional development is implemented because they provide direct platforms for teachers to apply acquired skills and knowledge in real classroom settings. Evidence from the United States shows that instructional coaching and job-embedded professional development significantly improve teaching effectiveness and student outcomes (Kraft & Hill, 2020). In the United Kingdom, teacher professional learning communities have been found to enhance classroom practices and learner achievement (Brown et al., 2021). These findings underscore the importance of school-based professional development systems in improving educational outcomes.

Effective professional development is further strengthened through continuous training, mentoring systems, and access to learning resources. Empirical evidence indicates that structured professional development programs that integrate feedback and collaborative learning significantly improve instructional quality and teacher performance (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020). Additionally, global education data shows that teachers who participate in ongoing training are better able to adapt to curriculum changes and improve student learning outcomes (OECD, 2019). These findings indicate that sustained professional development enhances teaching innovation, supports career advancement, and improves overall educational outcomes.

The implementation of professional development programs, however, remains inconsistent in many regions due to limited resources and weak institutional frameworks. Evidence shows that fragmented and short-term professional development initiatives have limited impact on teacher effectiveness (Opfer & Pedder, 2019). Furthermore, lack of alignment between training programs and teachers' needs reduces the effectiveness of professional learning initiatives (Avalos, 2019). These gaps limit teachers' ability to adapt to curriculum changes and undermine efforts to improve education quality.

In Africa, professional development faces additional structural challenges. In Nigeria, access to continuous training has been shown to significantly improve teacher productivity and job satisfaction (Akinwale, 2023). In South Africa, professional development programs are often constrained by contextual and institutional challenges despite their potential benefits (Msila, 2022). In Tanzania, limited access to structured training opportunities has been found to hinder teachers' professional growth and instructional effectiveness (Ng'eleshi, Abdi, & Chidyau, 2022). These studies demonstrate persistent gaps in professional development across African education systems.

In Kenya, the need for effective professional development has intensified due to ongoing curriculum reforms and increasing demand for improved learning outcomes in public secondary schools. Evidence shows that teacher performance improves when supported through structured training and union-led initiatives in Homa Bay County (Misoro & Minja, 2023). However, in Meru County, teachers continue to face challenges such as limited access to training opportunities, inadequate institutional support, and restricted career progression pathways (Ouma, 2021). These constraints negatively affect teacher motivation, job satisfaction, and overall welfare.

Trade unions have therefore emerged as key institutional actors in promoting teacher professional development through advocacy and stakeholder engagement. The Kenya Union of Post-Primary Education Teachers (KUPPET) plays a central role in supporting training initiatives and enhancing teachers' professional competencies. Despite this, limited empirical research has examined how trade union-driven professional development initiatives influence teacher outcomes in public secondary schools, particularly in rural contexts such as Meru County. This study, therefore, seeks to examine the effect of KUPPET in promoting professional development of teachers in public secondary schools in Meru County, Kenya.

Statement of the Problem

Despite ongoing efforts to improve teacher welfare in Kenya, access to effective professional development remains a significant challenge, particularly in public secondary schools located in rural areas. Evidence indicates that many teachers continue to experience limited access to structured training programs, inadequate opportunities for skill enhancement, and restricted career progression pathways, which negatively affect their instructional effectiveness and job satisfaction (Wafula et al., 2024). In Meru County, these challenges are more pronounced, where teachers face limited exposure to continuous professional development initiatives and insufficient institutional support mechanisms necessary for improving their competencies.

Although trade unions such as KUPPET are expected to play a key role in promoting teacher professional development through advocacy and stakeholder engagement, concerns persist regarding the effectiveness of their efforts in enhancing access to training opportunities and career advancement. Empirical evidence indicates that teachers often raise concerns about the extent to which trade unions support professional growth and capacity-building initiatives, highlighting limitations in their effectiveness in improving teacher welfare and performance (Bascia & Stevenson, 2020).

Existing studies on trade union engagement in the education sector have primarily focused on broader welfare issues such as salaries, working conditions, and medical benefits, with limited attention given to professional development as a distinct and measurable construct. For instance, recent studies have examined teacher welfare challenges and institutional constraints without isolating the specific contribution of trade unions to professional development outcomes (Msila, 2022). Other studies have focused on union engagement in urban contexts, emphasizing collective bargaining and policy advocacy while overlooking professional development in rural secondary schools (Kuja et al., 2022). Similarly, research on union influence in neighboring counties has explored welfare-related benefits such as medical schemes and career progression without adequately examining structured professional development initiatives (Mbaka et al., 2022).

While these studies provide valuable insights, they do not adequately address how trade unions influence professional development outcomes in rural contexts such as Meru County, where access to training and career development opportunities remains limited. Consequently, there is insufficient empirical evidence on the effectiveness of KUPPET's role in promoting professional development among teachers in public secondary schools in this region. This study seeks to examine the effect of KUPPET in promoting professional development of teachers in public secondary schools in Meru County, Kenya.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical review is anchored on Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory and the Deliberative Policy Analysis Model to provide a framework for examining the role of KUPPET in promoting professional development and its influence on teacher welfare in public secondary schools in Meru County, Kenya.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, developed by Frederick Herzberg (1959), explains employee motivation and job satisfaction through two distinct categories of factors: hygiene factors and motivators. Hygiene factors include elements such as salary, working conditions, and job security, which prevent dissatisfaction but do not necessarily lead to increased motivation. On the other hand, motivators, such as achievement, recognition, responsibility, and opportunities for growth, are critical in enhancing job satisfaction and improving employee performance.

In this study, professional development was conceptualized as a key motivator that influences teacher welfare. Access to training opportunities, skill enhancement, and career progression enables teachers to achieve professional growth and improve their instructional competencies. These aspects align with Herzberg's motivators, which are essential in fostering intrinsic satisfaction, commitment, and improved job performance among teachers.

Trade unions such as KUPPET play a significant role in facilitating professional development by advocating for training programs, career advancement opportunities, and capacity-building initiatives. Through these efforts, unions contribute to enhancing motivational factors that go beyond basic working conditions, thereby improving teacher welfare. This theory is therefore relevant in explaining how professional development initiatives supported by KUPPET influence teachers' job satisfaction and overall well-being in public secondary schools.

The Deliberative Policy Analysis Model, advanced by Frank Fischer (2000), emphasizes the importance of dialogue, stakeholder engagement, and participatory decision-making in shaping effective public policies. The model argues that policy outcomes are strengthened when multiple stakeholders engage in deliberative processes, share perspectives, and collectively develop solutions to complex policy issues.

The model was relevant in this study in explaining how KUPPET engages with key education stakeholders, including the Teachers Service Commission and the Ministry of Education, to influence policies related to teacher professional development. Through negotiations, consultations, and advocacy, trade unions play a critical role in shaping policies that affect training opportunities, capacity building, and career progression for teachers.

The model further explains how inclusive and participatory policy processes enhance the relevance and effectiveness of professional development initiatives. By incorporating teachers' views and experiences, union-led engagements can contribute to the development of more responsive and context-specific professional development programs. This theory is therefore applicable in examining how KUPPET's involvement in policy dialogue influences the promotion of professional development and its subsequent impact on teacher welfare in public secondary schools in Meru County.

Empirical Literature

Professional development plays a critical role in enhancing teacher welfare by improving instructional competencies, job satisfaction, and overall performance. It involves continuous learning processes that enhance teachers' skills, competencies, and career progression. Effective professional development initiatives support access to training opportunities, skill enhancement, and career advancement, thereby contributing to improved teacher well-being and job performance.

Wang (2024) studied how secondary school teachers in China achieve professional development and how it affects their job satisfaction and school outcomes. The study utilized a descriptive research design and collected data through surveys and interviews. The findings revealed a strong positive relationship between sustained professional learning, improved school climate, and increased teacher job satisfaction.

Ayodele and Ajani (2020) assessed the effectiveness of professional development programs in meeting the welfare and professional needs of teachers in South African high schools. Using a qualitative research approach, data were collected through semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions. The findings indicated that teachers were dissatisfied with the frequency, structure, and relevance of professional development programs, emphasizing the need for context-specific and well-structured training initiatives.

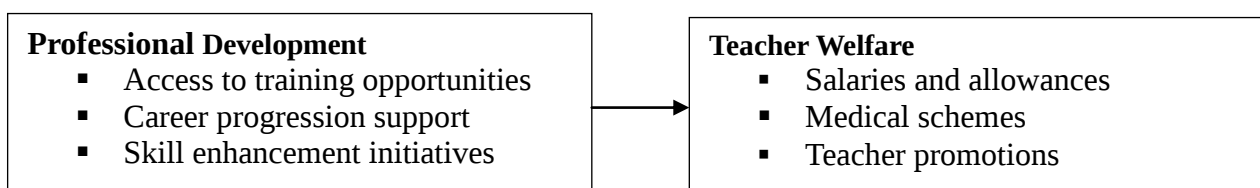
Tom, Ursulla, and Daisy (2022) examined the effects of trade union strategies on teacher development and professional welfare in public secondary schools in Nairobi City County, Kenya. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and collected data using questionnaires and interviews. The findings established a strong relationship between union strategies and teacher welfare, although 40.4% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction with the professional development support provided by trade unions.

Malebe, Ochieng, and Nyabisi (2024) investigated the influence of professional development programs on teacher welfare and job performance in public primary schools in Nakuru County, Kenya. The study employed a mixed-methods design using questionnaires, interviews, and focus group discussions. The results indicated that while professional development contributed to improved performance in high-performing schools, its overall effect on teacher welfare was not statistically significant.

Mutua, Koech, and Kimiti (2022) examined the influence of school leadership-driven professional development practices on teacher job performance and well-being in Kathiani Sub-County, Machakos County, Kenya. Using a descriptive research design, data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. The findings showed that mentoring and in-service training programs had a significant positive relationship with teacher performance and overall well-being.

Conceptual Framework

This study conceptualizes professional development as facilitated by KUPPET, which is measured through access to training opportunities, skill enhancement initiatives, and career progression support. Teacher welfare in public secondary schools is assessed through improved job satisfaction, enhanced instructional effectiveness, and overall professional well-being. This relationship is illustrated in Figure 1.



Independent Variable

Dependent Variable

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework (Researcher, 2026)

METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a descriptive research design to examine the effect of KUPPET in promoting professional development of teachers in public secondary schools in Meru County, Kenya. This design was appropriate as it enabled the investigation of the phenomenon within its natural setting without the manipulation of variables. Descriptive research design is suitable for describing existing conditions, relationships, and practices relevant to the study (Mahat, Neupane, & Shrestha, 2024). Furthermore, the design facilitated the systematic collection of both quantitative and qualitative data, allowing for comprehensive analysis of teachers' experiences and perceptions regarding professional development initiatives. The use of statistical tools and qualitative

techniques enhanced the clear interpretation of the findings. This approach was therefore appropriate for examining how KUPPET influences professional development and its implications for teacher welfare.

Target Population

The study targeted a population of 1,041 respondents drawn from Igembe Central Sub-County in Meru County, Kenya. This population comprised 966 public secondary school teachers, 30 KUPPET officials, and 45 education administrators from the Teachers Service Commission (TSC) and the Ministry of Education. These groups were selected because they are directly involved in or influence professional development initiatives and teacher welfare in public secondary schools.

The population of 966 public secondary school teachers was obtained from staffing records maintained by the Teachers Service Commission Sub-County Office in Igembe Central, which provides updated data on teacher deployment within public secondary schools in the sub-county (TSC, 2024). The 30 KUPPET officials comprised branch representatives, school-level union representatives, and other union leaders operating within Igembe Central Sub-County. These figures were obtained from KUPPET Meru Branch membership records, which document union representation in the area (KUPPET, 2024). The 45 education administrators included officers from the Teachers Service Commission and the Ministry of Education, such as Sub-County Directors of Education, Quality Assurance and Standards Officers, and other officials responsible for the management and supervision of public secondary schools. These figures were obtained from administrative records maintained by the Ministry of Education and the TSC offices in Meru County (MoE, 2024; TSC, 2024).

Sample Size

The study employed stratified random sampling to ensure adequate representation of teachers, KUPPET officials, and education administrators. The population was first divided into three strata based on respondent categories, after which simple random sampling was applied within each stratum. The sample size was determined using the formula proposed by Yamane (1967), which is appropriate for finite populations:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e^2)}$$

Where: n = sample size, N = population size (1,041), and e = precision level (0.05)

Substituting the values:

$$n = \frac{1,041}{1+1,041(0.05^2)}$$

Thus, the study sample size was 289 respondents. The sample proportion formula was applied in each group. The sample distribution used this formula to distribute 264 teachers, 10 KUPPET officials, and 15 education administrators.

$$n_i = \left(\frac{N_i}{N} \right) \times n$$

Data Collection Instruments

The study collected primary data using a semi-structured questionnaire and an interview guide as the main research instruments. The questionnaire was administered to public secondary school teachers and contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions, enabling the collection of quantitative data alongside qualitative insights. It was designed in line with the study objectives and conceptual framework to gather data on professional development initiatives facilitated by KUPPET, including access to training opportunities, skill enhancement initiatives, and career progression support, as well as their influence on teacher welfare. Teacher welfare was assessed through indicators such as job satisfaction, instructional effectiveness, and overall professional well-being.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with KUPPET officials and education administrators to obtain in-depth insights on trade union involvement in promoting professional development, while allowing respondents to elaborate on their experiences and perspectives.

Secondary data were collected using a data extraction sheet to obtain relevant information from official documents such as Teachers Service Commission circulars, KUPPET reports, Ministry of Education policy documents, and Kenya National Bureau of Statistics reports related to teacher professional development and welfare. The validity of the instruments was ensured through expert review and pilot testing, while reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, with a threshold of 0.70 indicating acceptable internal consistency (Reales et al., 2022).

Data Analysis

Quantitative data were coded and analyzed using SPSS Version 26. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations) summarized demographic data and key variables. Pearson correlation assessed the relationship between professional development and teacher welfare, while simple linear regression determined its effect. Qualitative data from interviews and open-ended responses were analyzed thematically using NVivo. Findings were presented using tables, bar graphs, and pie charts. The study applied a simple linear regression model to examine the effect of professional development on teacher welfare. Professional development was the independent variable, and teacher welfare was the dependent variable. Constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale and aggregated into composite indices.

The regression model was specified as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots \text{[Equation 1]}$$

Where:

Y = Composite index of teacher welfare

X_1 = Professional Development

β_0 = Constant

β_1 = Regression coefficient for professional development

ϵ = Error term

This model ensures consistency between the conceptual framework and statistical analysis by focusing specifically on the effect of professional development on teacher welfare.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive Analysis of Professional Development

Descriptive analysis was used to summarize and explain the effect of KUPPET in promoting professional development of teachers in public secondary schools in Meru County. This was assessed through training program sponsorship, dissemination of professional opportunities, advocacy for fair promotion practices, and support for continuous teacher competency development. Responses were measured on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). Descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, were computed to summarize responses and identify a general trend.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics of Professional Development

Statement	SD F (%)	D F (%)	N F (%)	A F (%)	SA F (%)	Mean	Std. Dev
KUPPET advocates for sponsorship and training programs relevant to teacher professional growth.	13 (5.1%)	22 (8.6%)	53 (20.7%)	116 (45.3%)	52 (20.3%)	3.66	1.06
Teachers receive timely information about KUPPET-supported training and development opportunities.	15 (5.9%)	20 (7.8%)	51 (19.9%)	118 (46.1%)	52 (20.3%)	3.67	1.05
KUPPET advocates for fair and transparent criteria in teacher promotion processes.	14 (5.5%)	25 (9.8%)	56 (21.9%)	110 (43.0%)	51 (19.9%)	3.62	1.07
Teachers attribute part of their career advancement to KUPPET support or lobbying.	18 (7.0%)	29(11.3%	61 (23.8%)	104 (40.6%)	44 (17.2%)	3.50	1.08
KUPPET organizes workshops that build both teaching and leadership capabilities.	12 (4.7%)	21 (8.2%)	58 (22.7%)	109 (42.6%)	56 (21.9%)	3.68	1.04
KUPPET-led training has measurably improved teacher competence in classroom and administrative roles.	17 (6.6%)	24 (9.4%)	59 (23.0%)	106 (41.4%)	50 (19.5%)	3.58	1.07
Mean						3.62	1.06

Source: Researcher, 2026

Table 1 shows that 116 respondents (45.3%) agreed that hat KUPPET advocates for the sponsorship of training programs relevant to teacher professional growth, while 52 (20.3%) strongly agreed. In contrast, 53 (20.7%) were neutral, 22 (8.6%) disagreed, and 13 (5.1%) strongly disagreed. The mean ($\bar{x} = 3.66$) and standard deviation ($\sigma = 1.06$) indicate a generally positive perception of KUPPET's contribution to professional development. Regarding timely access to information on KUPPET-supported training opportunities, 118 respondents (46.1%) agreed, and 52 (20.3%) strongly agreed, while 51 (19.9%) were neutral, 20 (7.8%) disagreed, and 15 (5.9%) strongly disagreed. The mean ($\bar{x} = 3.67$) and standard deviation ($\sigma = 1.05$) suggest a favorable perception of information flow related to professional development programs.

On KUPPET's advocacy for fair and transparent promotion criteria, 110 respondents (43.0%) agreed and 51 (19.9%) strongly agreed. However, 56 (21.9%) were neutral, 25 (9.8%) disagreed, and 14 (5.5%) strongly disagreed. The mean ($\bar{x} = 3.62$) and standard deviation ($\sigma = 1.07$) indicate general agreement, although some uncertainty remains among respondents. When asked whether they attributed part of their career progression to KUPPET support, 104 respondents (40.6%) agreed and 44 (17.2%) strongly agreed, while 61 (23.8%) were neutral, 29 (11.3%) disagreed, and 18 (7.0%) strongly disagreed. The mean ($\bar{x} = 3.50$) and standard deviation

($\sigma = 1.08$) reflect moderate agreement, suggesting that KUPPET's impact on career advancement is present but not strongly perceived by all teachers.

Regarding workshops for teaching and leadership development, 109 respondents (42.6%) agreed, and 56 (21.9%) strongly agreed. Meanwhile, 58 (22.7%) were neutral, 21 (8.2%) disagreed, and 12 (4.7%) strongly disagreed. The mean ($\bar{x} = 3.68$) and standard deviation ($\sigma = 1.04$) indicate a positive perception of the quality and relevance of these workshops. Finally, 106 respondents (41.4%) agreed, and 50 (19.5%) strongly agreed that KUPPET-led training improved teacher competence, while 59 (23.0%) were neutral, 24 (9.4%) disagreed, and 17 (6.6%) strongly disagreed. The mean ($\bar{x} = 3.58$) and standard deviation ($\sigma = 1.07$) suggest a generally positive but cautious perception of training outcomes. Overall, the six statements yielded a composite mean of $\bar{x} = 3.62$ and $\sigma = 1.06$, indicating a generally positive perception of KUPPET's role in promoting professional development. However, the findings also suggest the need to strengthen the visibility, consistency, and measurable effect of professional development initiatives.

The qualitative findings indicate that KUPPET plays a role in supporting professional development and career advancement, although implementation remains inconsistent across schools. While some teachers reported access to training and development opportunities, others indicated limited or no participation. For instance, respondent T042 noted that *"I have not attended any professional training organized through KUPPET,"* while T117 stated that *"there has been no clear training program from the union that has reached my school."* This suggests that access to union-supported professional development is uneven, limiting its overall impact on teacher welfare.

Concerns were also raised regarding irregular scheduling and the limited relevance of training programs. Respondent T089 observed that *"trainings occur at irregular times and their primary focus is to deliver policy updates which take precedence over teaching methods,"* while T011 reported that *"information about workshops usually arrives at schools after the scheduled time, which decreases their ability to participate."* These findings imply that weaknesses in program design and communication reduce the effectiveness of professional development initiatives.

In terms of career progression, teachers acknowledged the importance of professional development but expressed dissatisfaction with union support. Respondent T198 stated that *"promotion stagnation has become normal, and the union rarely follows up on individual cases,"* while T064 noted that *"career progression feels disconnected from union support."* Concerns about transparency were also evident, with T129 indicating that *"promotion decisions are not clearly explained and often appear influenced by personal connections,"* and T019 stating that *"teachers receive limited information about promotion criteria and their respective timelines."* This indicates that limited transparency and follow-up weaken the link between professional development and career advancement.

Interview findings indicate that KUPPET plays a supportive role in promoting professional development by disseminating information on training programs and encouraging teacher participation in professional learning activities. For example, U006 noted that *"KUPPET provides teachers with information about Teachers Service Commission training programs while urging them to join professional development courses,"* while U002 stated that *"the union collaborates with educational partners to ensure teachers receive information about workshops and seminars."* Administrators also acknowledged this role, with A005 observing that *"when unions share information about training opportunities, more teachers become aware of professional development programs,"* and A013 noting that *"union communication channels sometimes help disseminate information about teacher training activities."* These findings suggest that KUPPET plays an important facilitative role in linking teachers to professional development opportunities.

However, interview respondents also highlighted key challenges, including unequal access to training opportunities and resource limitations. U008 stated that *"some teachers get more opportunities for training*

than others depending on the school or available resources,” while A014 explained that “limited resources sometimes restrict how many teachers can attend professional development programs.” There was also a strong emphasis on the need for continuous and practice-oriented training, with U003 noting that “professional development should be continuous and closely linked to classroom practice,” and A011 adding that “training programs become more useful when they help teachers solve their actual work problems.” This implies that structural and resource constraints limit the effectiveness and equity of professional development initiatives.

Secondary data from TSC promotion circulars, institutional records, and KUPPET reports indicate that administrative procedures and policy changes significantly influence teacher promotion decisions. The findings show that professional development contributes to career advancement by supporting teachers’ progression through promotion opportunities. This suggests that professional development serves as a critical pathway for career growth within the teaching profession. However, inconsistencies in promotion processes were observed, particularly in relation to transparency and standardization. This implies that weak governance structures limit the effectiveness of professional development in achieving equitable career progression. These findings are consistent with Ingvarson, Kleinhenz, and Wilkinson (2022), who argue that career advancement in teaching is often shaped by institutional governance systems, which may create inconsistencies in professional development pathways.

Overall, both quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that while KUPPET contributes to professional development, its effectiveness is constrained by inconsistencies in access, communication, coordination, and program implementation. This means that the impact of professional development on teacher welfare depends on improving accessibility, strengthening institutional coordination, and ensuring consistent and structured implementation of training initiatives.

Correlation Analysis

Table 2: Correlation between Professional Development and Teacher Welfare

		Professional Development	Teacher Welfare
Professional Development	Pearson Correlation	1.000	
Teacher Welfare	Pearson Correlation	0.589**	1.000

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

The results in Table 2 indicate a moderate positive and statistically significant relationship between professional development and teacher welfare ($r = 0.589$, $p = 0.000$). This means that increased access to professional development initiatives, such as training programs, skill enhancement, and career development opportunities, is associated with improved teacher welfare. The strength of the relationship suggests that professional development is an important factor influencing teacher welfare, although its effect may be less immediate compared to other factors. This implies that the benefits of professional development, such as improved competencies, job satisfaction, and career progression, tend to develop over time.

The statistical significance ($p = 0.000$) indicates that the relationship is reliable and not due to chance. This finding is consistent with earlier descriptive and qualitative results, which showed that teachers who participated in professional development programs reported improved teaching effectiveness, increased confidence, and enhanced career growth. Overall, the findings confirm that professional development has a positive and significant relationship with teacher welfare, highlighting the need for consistent, accessible, and well-structured training programs to enhance teacher outcomes in public secondary schools.

Regression Analysis

The model summary shows the extent to which professional development predicts teacher welfare, with R^2 indicating the proportion of variance explained and adjusted R^2 reflecting the model's generalizability.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R-Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.589	.347	.344	.520

Predictor: Professional Development

The regression model results indicate an R^2 value of 0.347, implying that professional development explains 34.7% of the variation in teacher welfare. This demonstrates that professional development is a significant predictor of teacher welfare. The adjusted R^2 value of 0.344 shows minimal shrinkage from R^2 , indicating that the model has good explanatory power and is stable. This suggests that the model is reliable in explaining the relationship between professional development and teacher welfare. However, approximately 65.3% of the variation in teacher welfare is explained by other factors not included in this model, indicating that while professional development is important, additional variables also influence teacher welfare.

Regression Coefficients

The regression coefficients indicate the extent to which professional development predicts teacher welfare.

Table 5: Regression Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	0.481	0.287	–	1.676	.156
	Professional Development	0.197	0.058	0.183	3.379	.000

Source: Researcher, 2026

The results show that professional development has a positive and statistically significant relationship with teacher welfare ($\beta = 0.183$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that higher levels of professional development are associated with improved teacher welfare. Specifically, a unit increase in professional development is associated with a 0.197 increase in teacher welfare. These findings are consistent with studies showing that sustained professional development enhances teacher effectiveness and job-related outcomes (Desimone & Garet, 2019). Overall, professional development remains a key determinant of teacher welfare in public secondary schools.

Summary of Research Findings

The study established that professional development has a positive and statistically significant relationship with teacher welfare in public secondary schools in Meru County. Descriptive results indicated that KUPPET's professional development initiatives were rated positively by respondents ($\bar{x} = 3.62$, $\sigma = 1.06$), suggesting a moderately positive perception of the support provided. Correlation analysis revealed a moderate positive association ($r = 0.589$, $p < 0.001$), indicating a positive association between professional development and teacher welfare. Regression analysis further confirmed that professional development is a significant predictor of teacher welfare ($\beta = 0.183$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that a unit increase in professional development is associated with a 0.197 increase in teacher welfare. The model summary indicated that professional development explains a moderate proportion of the variation in teacher welfare.

Qualitative findings supported these results by showing that professional development enhances teachers' competencies, job satisfaction, and overall professional well-being. However, challenges such as limited access, inconsistent implementation, and inadequate communication were identified as factors constraining its

effectiveness. Overall, the study concludes that professional development plays a critical role in shaping teacher welfare, and its effectiveness depends on consistent implementation and improved accessibility across public secondary schools.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study concluded that professional development is a significant predictor of teacher welfare in public secondary schools in Meru County. The findings demonstrate that increased levels of professional development are associated with improved teacher welfare, as evidenced by both the quantitative and qualitative results. The study further concludes that while professional development contributes positively to teacher welfare, its effectiveness is influenced by factors such as accessibility, consistency, and implementation. Inadequate access to professional development opportunities and inconsistencies in program delivery limit the extent to which teachers fully benefit from such initiatives. Overall, professional development remains a key determinant of teacher welfare, and its successful implementation is essential for enhancing teachers' professional well-being in public secondary schools.

The study recommends strengthening professional development frameworks within the education sector to clearly define the roles of key stakeholders, including KUPPET, the Teachers Service Commission (TSC), and the Ministry of Education, in supporting teacher welfare in public secondary schools. These institutions should establish coordinated approaches to ensure that professional development initiatives are effectively implemented and accessible to all teachers.

KUPPET should be supported with adequate resources and institutional backing to enhance its role in promoting professional development, while also developing structured internal mechanisms that improve the consistency and reach of its initiatives. There is a need to establish standardized approaches to professional development that emphasize continuous learning, clear implementation procedures, and equitable access across schools.

The study further recommends improving communication systems to ensure the timely dissemination of information on professional development opportunities, as well as strengthening collaboration among stakeholders through shared platforms and coordinated strategies. This will enhance the effectiveness of professional development initiatives and ensure that they contribute meaningfully to improving teacher welfare.

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