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**Contribution of International Non-Governmental Organizations' Interventions on
Students' Competence in English Language in Bugesera District Primary Schools, Rwanda**

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to evaluate the impact of interventions by International Non-Governmental Organizations on students' competence in Rwanda.

Methodology: This research adopted a descriptive case study design aimed at establishing the impact of International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) interventions on learners' competence in English in Rwanda. The study utilized a mixed-method approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a comprehensive analysis. The population of our study was composed of 92 teachers and 16 head teachers of all primary schools in Bugesera District which were the target of Teacher Self Learning Academy project. The population also included 5 SEIs, 1 DEO/DDE in that district and a Plan International staff who has been involved in the TSLA project implementation. The sample size drawn from the total population of 92 teachers is 75 teachers using Slovin's Formula. Alongside the 8 head teachers from the selected schools, 5 SEIs, 1 DDE, and 1 Plan International staff member, this leads to a total of 90 participants for the study. The sampling approach was specifically tailored to suit the different categories of participants in the study. Purposive sampling was employed to select all head teachers from the identified schools. In contrast, stratified random sampling was used to select teachers, ensuring representativeness across various demographics such as gender, experience, and school location. For this study purpose, questionnaires and interview guide was used to collect and analyze data from research participants. The researcher took into consideration validity and reliability of the study to be valid and reliable to the audience. The researcher used descriptive statistics to analyze quantitative data and draw tables. Descriptive statistics were used to simplify large amounts of data. Inferential statistics were used to treat particular factors to detect the contribution of each determinant in learners' competence in English. Primary data was treated through appropriate software as Statistical Package for Social Science (IBM/SPSS Version 21.0) and by after confronted with interviews and secondary data.

Findings: The findings from both quantitative and qualitative data reveal that the TSLA project had a significant positive impact on students' English language skills, particularly in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. The findings revealed that 90.7% of the respondents agreed that instructional videos uploaded on iPods improved students' English listening skills, while 100% believed that these videos enhanced speaking fluency. Additionally, 94.7% of respondents indicated that the provision of teaching aids improved students' reading skills, and 86.7% noted an improvement in writing skills. Methods used in teachers' training, such as study groups and mentoring, were positively evaluated, with 76% and 74.7% of respondents, respectively, affirming their contribution to students' English competence. However, challenges such as inadequate support from school management (62.7%), lack of incentives (88%), and insufficient resources (98.7%) were identified as barriers to effective implementation.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: The Government authorities should enforce policies that mandate continuous professional development for teachers and monitor their implementation to ensure effectiveness. The Ministry of Education should enhance teacher training programs by investing in comprehensive and continuous professional development programs that focus on modern teaching methodologies, ICT integration, and language competences. The Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB) should create incentive schemes to acknowledge and reward teachers who demonstrate exceptional dedication and improvement in their teaching practices. Bugesera Primary Schools should ensure that school management provides adequate support to teachers, including mentoring, peer coaching, and access to necessary teaching materials while parents should encourage and support their children's learning activities at home, particularly in using ICT tools and practicing language skills.

Keywords: *INGOs, Students' Competence, English Language, Bugesera District Primary Schools*

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INTRODUCTION

Non-Governmental Organizations have been involved in education sectors for long time. In 1968, NGOs as non-state development actors were officially recognized by the United Nations and allowed observer status in its conferences (Davis, 2016). From an operational perspective, Ulleberg (2016) confirms that they advocate the individual level by continuously emphasizing training activities in formal and non-formal education. In addition to teacher training, NGOs are widely involved in training principals, building the capacity of school inspectors, and strengthening parent-teacher associations and school management boards. They have concentrated efforts on underdeveloped regions of the globe.

In African countries, the debate has shifted from whether NGOs should have a role in the education sector to the more pressing question of how they can best deliver on their commitment to enhance the quality, equity, accountability, and relevance of education. The research carried out by Campion et al. (2020), it has been attested that national structures accountable for education have run short of financial and technical expertise and, in opportune situations, regulating organs have handed this key responsibility over to a range of professional partners. Denoting governments' attitude, Ulleberg (2016) in his research study notes that governments go back to the Non-Governmental Organizations to thoroughly handle the case.

Rwanda adopted the Dakar Framework for Action and Education for All (EFA) that was approved at the World Education Forum in 2000 (MINEDUC, 2017). EFA program brought about more pressure to the government to outspread access to education. Actual implementation of this program has faced a number of barriers as, lack of funds, growing teacher-pupil ratio, lack of steady planning and professional teachers, endangering teaching quality. In addition to massive NGOs' interventions in local education since 1994, EFA's extemporaneous agenda has opened wider windows of opportunity for NGOs.

The transition from Kinyarwanda and French to English after 1994 has presented serious and persistent challenges to Rwanda's education system for both teachers and learners due to their limited proficiency in English. The lack of qualified teachers to teach in English in all schools and lack enough teaching aids to help in Teaching-Learning process was the source of those key challenges. Consequently, learners' engagement was very limited and teachers' possibility to unplanned code-switching, language pairing and content simplification. As a result, classroom interactions were dominated by drilled repetitions after the teacher, with extremely limited understanding a situation, which impedes learners' deep understanding and, access to quality education. The sudden shift to English in 2009, as a language of instruction from Kinyarwanda and French and waning quality learning outcomes in primary education have brought about contingency for NGOs intervention to enhance teachers' capacity in the very language and methodology. A number of innovations and successful models had to emerge from voluntary sector. Fortunately, the government has opened room to relevant development partners for their sound contribution needed in education, mainly increasing capital flows through budget support, funding educational programs and projects, and providing technical assistance when needed (MINEDUC, 2017).

In response to reported gaps in primary education, especially in teaching aids, teachers' proficiency in English language, sciences and methodology, the Department for International Development

(DFID) committed to underwrite a relevant initiative, “Teacher Self-Learning Academy (TSLA)” project implemented by Plan International Rwanda (2015) as a specializing international Non – Governmental Organization intervening in Education. TSLA was one of 26 education innovation pilot projects funded by the UK through the Department for International Development (DFID). This pilot project was introduced in February 2013 and phased out in March 2015. TSLA offered an innovative training method for 160 Primary 5 (P5) and Primary 6 (P6) Science and English teachers in 32 schools in Nyaruguru and Bugesera Districts.

By supporting in the continuous professional development of teachers, the project ultimately sought to improve the learning outcomes of their 6,000 P5 and P6 learners. Its originality lies in the provision of iPods with a series of 200 instructional videos to teachers (MINEDUC, 2017). The videos propounded model teachers delivering English or Science subjects using learner-centred pedagogy. Target teachers could watch, analyse and study the video material at their own pace, wherever they were situated. Having engaged with the videos independently, the teachers subsequently met for self-evaluation and peer coaching in teacher circles. These teacher circles took place at the school level on bi-monthly basis, while groups of schools met on term basis. Teachers discussed video content, teaching techniques learnt, any progress attained and the effectiveness of their teaching and learning during these circles. The overall goal of the program is to improve student learning outcomes by enhancing the quality of teaching in target areas, specifically English, science, and promoting a learner-centered teaching approach (Musendo et al., 2016).

In 2015, Laterite undertook a study to assess the influence of the Teacher Self-Learning Academy (TSLA) on the academic performance of learners. It has been revealed that learners who were involved in the project had improved their competence as stated by the findings of the study: *“When it comes to student test scores, we find that belonging to the treatment group was associated with an increase in test scores on the national examination in Science for P6 students”* (Laterite, 2015). The primary objective of this study is to evaluate the effect of the project on the competence of learners. The main objective of this study was to assess the contribution of International Non-Governmental Organizations interventions on students’ competence in Rwanda. It was guided by the following specific objectives:

- i. To assess the language competences acquired by learners through TSLA in Bugesera District;
- ii. To examine the contribution of the methods utilized in teachers training during TSLA project implementation on students’ competency in English language in Bugesera District;
- iii. To ascertain the challenges encountered by teachers and students during Teacher Self-Learning Academy program in Bugesera District.

Problem Statement

Despite efforts to improve English language competence in Rwanda, challenges remain in achieving sufficient proficiency. The Education Sector Strategic Plan (MINEDUC, 2018) reported that only about 60% of primary school leavers achieved basic proficiency in English, indicating a need for improved teaching methods and teacher capacity. While initiatives such as the Teacher Self-Learning Academy (TSLA) project, implemented by Plan International in 2015, aimed to enhance P5 and P6 teachers' skills in English and methodology, there has been limited

comprehensive analysis of its direct impact on student competence. The Ministry of Education's progress report noted some improvement in language skills among primary school students, but there is a lack of detailed understanding of how these gains correlate with TSLA interventions and what challenges may have affected its success. Previous studies (e.g., Laterite, 2015) highlighted the importance of teacher training in improving student outcomes, yet gaps exist in assessing the sustainability and scalability of such projects. Additionally, while research has broadly focused on teacher preparation, methodologies, and curriculum content, there is a research gap in understanding how self-learning and technology-based teacher training, such as TSLA, specifically influence English language proficiency among students. This study, therefore, seeks to bridge this gap by evaluating the effectiveness of TSLA in improving students' English competence in Bugesera District and identifying factors that influenced its implementation and outcomes.

Beneficiaries of Study

The findings from this research study hold significant relevance for various stakeholders, including Plan International Rwanda, the Ministry of Education, Rwanda Basic Education Board, Bugesera primary schools, government authorities, school administrations, and concerned parents. The results will give them a better understanding of the impact and limitations of the Teacher Self-Learning Academy project to education programs development.

The findings will inspire and guide TSLA practitioners and implementers, civil society organizations, government, families and communities to work towards a better future for Rwandan young children. The findings will show lessons learnt during the project implementation and serve for the future planning of other projects to enhance students' competence. The findings therefore will be significant to the Ministry of Education which is in charge of policy formulation and planning the programs that integrate the various Education projects in the whole process of Education.

They will give a clear picture on how various interventions from various stakeholders contribute the development of education sector in Rwanda including learner's competences. The findings also will also make a significant contribution to existing Education projects from various education partners and stakeholders including NGOs that can be used in development of Education projects, program strategies and policies where the overall purpose is to promote and improve the capacity of teachers and students.

Theoretical Framework

This research was guided by several but complementing theories. In the research by Candy, (2015), self-directed learning is not a singular, uniform concept; rather, it exists along a continuum that encompasses various instructional situations. It is conceptualized as comprising different elements, areas, or activities, each of which learners can exert varying levels of control. This delineates the extent to which responsibility for learning is distributed between teachers and learners.

According to (Mae, 2017), in the process of learning, there exist varying degrees of teacher-directedness and self-directedness. These differences manifest in decisions about what to learn, the selection of methods and materials for learning, communication with others regarding the learning process, and the evaluation of goal achievement. The author contends that individuals

may inherently possess different levels of self-direction, and these levels can be developed or acquired through experiences derived from interactions with external elements like resources, facilitators, or institutions. Thus, we presume that designated in-service teachers in Bugesera District were exposed to and served with learner-tailored resources to ensure proficient learners' facility.

The Transformational Learning Theory

John Mezirow's theory of transformational learning is validated by recent research on peer support in adult education and workplace environments, which has evolved to address technological and human-centric advancements. Roumell and Jabarkhail (2023) emphasize that lifelong learning strategies integrated with peer support are essential for adult workers adapting to the rapidly changing technological landscape (Roumell & Jabarkhail, 2023). Similarly, Poon et al. (2021) highlight the critical role of peer support in empowering home care workers, facilitating emotional labor, and creating a sense of community among a distributed workforce (Poon et al., 2021). Assia (2020) explores the workplace learning experience of young adult peer-support workers, showing how such roles foster identity development and role adaptation in community-based mental health services (Assia, 2020).

Moreover, the use of peer support as a faculty development strategy is effective in clinical teaching settings. Campbell et al. (2019) demonstrate that collaborative peer-supported models enhance teaching practices and organizational culture by embedding support strategies into daily routines (Campbell et al., 2019). Parker et al. (2018) further emphasize peer coaching as a powerful relational learning approach, enabling professional development and career breakthroughs (Parker et al., 2018). These findings highlight the significance of peer and leadership support in facilitating successful adult learning, professional growth, and workplace transformation, aligning well with Mezirow's focus on the transformative power of supportive learning environments.

Theory of Action

This theory, derived from Gibson's perception–action theory, pertains to the alignment between the physical characteristics of the environment and an animal's physical capabilities, enabling the execution of a specific action (Eckensberger, 2023). A theory of action establishes a connection between cause and effect, meaning that a particular action is anticipated to yield specific outcomes. In the context of teaching, a theory of action links the behaviors of teachers to the consequences on student learning and achievement. When teachers consciously integrate and consistently apply these theories of action in their teaching practices, it significantly enhances students' learning skills, fosters a spirit of inquiry, and boosts overall academic achievement. This approach empowers students to set their own learning objectives, progress at their individual pace, and assess their advancements using well-designed assessments that confirm mastery of the material. The envisioned establishment of a professional practice, as outlined, holds the potential to cultivate a novel culture of teaching and learning. Achieving this transformation involves implementing strategies with the capacity to:

- Foster a shared language of teaching practice,
- Develop the connective elements that propagate the learning culture within and across schools,
- Place heightened emphasis on the knowledge and skill prerequisites for executing the work.

For Lewis (2017), NGOs play a triple role in development process, Implementer, catalyst and partner. On this perception, TSLA's draws a framework, avails self-learning resources, inspires, facilitates or contributes to fuels teachers' stimulus vis-à-vis target subjects English and Sciences and methodology. Students radiate teachers' performances in score improvement. The implementing organization responsibility becomes monitoring of the process through preset mechanism and framework.

For the above-mentioned theories, they are all relevant to TSLA objectives mainly with the focus of supporting the professional development of teachers, the project ultimately sought to improve the learning outcomes of P5 and P6 students. For instance, the self-directed learning theory directly supports the iPod-based self-learning activities in the project whereby Instructional videos uploaded on I Pods. TSLA target teachers "self-taught" with videos' instructions; they develop remarkable performances and manifest them in the subject (English) mastery, methodology, class content etc. Their students also demonstrate related improvement in academic performance in the very subjects.

In regard to the transformation learning theory which mainly focuses on peer support in adult education and workplace environments, it is linked to TSLA focus because after the self-directed activities through content in I Pods, at regular time they come together on a round table to share experience and lessons learnt through teachers' circles' sessions whereby they do self-reflection of peer-coaching which helps to adopt learner-centered teaching techniques and improved quality of teaching.

Finally, the theory of action which is defined as the link between cause and effect, the TSLA draws a framework, avails self-learning resources, inspires, facilitates or contributes to fuels teachers' stimulus vis-à-vis target subjects English and methodology. Students radiate teachers' performances in score improvement. Consequently, providing English teachers with audio-visual material on iPods, complemented with regular reflection circles, would improve teachers' performance and outcomes amongst students.

Critical Review and Gap Identification

The literature reviewed for this study underscores the significance of language competences, encompassing listening, speaking, reading, and writing, within the educational context, particularly in English language learning. It acknowledges the Rwandan government's initiatives to integrate Information and Communication Technology (ICT) into education, emphasizing its potential to enhance teaching outcomes. The literature also recognizes the importance of teachers' professional development (PD), outlining various initiatives like in-service training, distance learning programs, and the utilization of ICT in teacher training. However, challenges in CPD implementation, such as teacher motivation, insufficient training and resources, and high participant workload, are acknowledged.

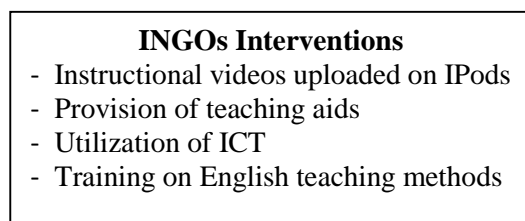
While the literature emphasizes the importance of language competences, it does not extensively explore the specific ways in which these competences impact students' learning outcomes. There is a potential gap in understanding the relationship between language competences and academic performance in different contexts, suggesting a need for further research in this area. Additionally, the literature lacks a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of the government's ICT integration initiatives in education. Future research could delve into the impact of ICT integration

on teaching and learning outcomes, examining potential challenges in implementation. Teacher motivation is identified as a crucial factor in CPD success, but the literature does not thoroughly explore the factors influencing teacher motivation and how it correlates with the success of CPD programs. Future research could investigate strategies to motivate teachers actively participating in professional development.

In summary, while the literature touches on essential aspects of language competences, ICT integration, teacher training, and CPD challenges in the Rwandan education context, there are opportunities for additional research to offer a more comprehensive understanding of these areas and their overarching impact and effectiveness.

Conceptual Framework

Independent variable



Dependent variable

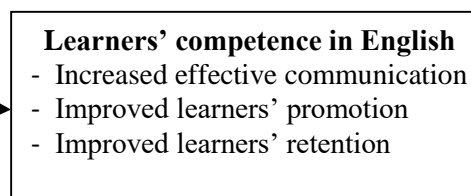


Figure 1: Contribution of INGOs Interventions on Learners' Competences in English

In above diagram, two variables concur to build a full framework. The International Non-Government Organizations (represented by TSLA project) are referred to as independent variable. They provide to each of target P5 and P6 teachers an iPod uploaded with videos designed to help teachers improve their teaching methodology and English language proficiency. Individual teachers watch them and learn at own pace. At regular time they come together on a round table to share experience and lessons learnt. Subsequent students' competence in English is referred to as dependent variable. TSLA target teachers "self-taught" with videos' instructions; they develop remarkable performances and manifest them in the subject (English) mastery, methodology, etc. Their students also demonstrate related improvement in academic performance in the very subjects.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research adopted a descriptive case study design aimed at establishing the impact of International Non-Governmental Organizations (INGOs) interventions on learners' competence in English in Rwanda. The study utilized a mixed-method approach, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methodologies to provide a comprehensive analysis. Quantitative data was collected through structured, close-ended questionnaires, which facilitated the analysis of trends and patterns in responses. Conversely, qualitative data was gathered using open-ended questions and interview guides, allowing for an in-depth exploration of individual perceptions and experiences. Emphasis was placed on collecting primary data from teachers, head teachers, Sector Education Inspectors (SEIs), the District Director of Education (DDE), and Plan International staff involved in the Teacher Self-Learning Academy (TSLA) project.

Target Population

The population of our study was composed of 92 teachers and 16 head teachers of all primary schools in Bugesera District which were the target of Teacher Self Learning Academy project. The population also included 5 Sector Education Inspector s, 1 District Education Officer in that district and a Plan International Rwanda staff who has been involved in the TSLA project implementation. These participants were chosen due to their firsthand experience and active role in the project's execution and outcomes, making them valuable sources of data on the impact of the TSLA interventions.

Sample Design

This section deals with the sample size determination and sampling techniques as detailed below.

Sample Size

The researcher selected 8 schools among the 16 schools that benefited from the TSLA Project. 8 head teachers from selected schools participated in this study. Furthermore, the all SEIs and the DDE were considered for this study. Sampling for teachers was determined using Slovin's Formula, given that the population size is known. That formula is given and explained as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where:

e is the margin of error (equals to 0.05)

N is the total population size

n is the required sample size.

The required sample size for teachers and learners shall be: $\frac{92}{1 + 92 * (0.05)^2} = 75$

Therefore, the sample size drawn from the total population of 92 teachers is 75 teachers. Alongside the 8 head teachers from the selected schools, 5 SEIs, 1 DDE, and 1 Plan International staff member, this leads to a total of 90 participants for the study. The breakdown of the sample is shown below:

Table 1: Target Population

Population Category	Target Population	Sample Size
Head Teachers	16	8
SEIs and DDE	6	6
Teachers	92	75
Plan staff	1	1
Total	115	90

Source: Researcher, 2024

In sampling schools, the researcher considered the schools' location and resources to control other factors that may interfere with the researcher's findings' reliability.

Sampling Techniques

The sampling approach was specifically tailored to suit the different categories of participants in the study. Purposive sampling was employed to select all head teachers from the identified schools, as well as the Sector Education Inspectors (SEIs) in Bugesera District and the District Director of Education (DDE) who were actively involved in the TSLA project and still held their roles at the time of the study. This approach ensured that those with direct involvement and knowledge of the project were included, allowing for a comprehensive understanding of its implementation and outcomes. In contrast, stratified random sampling was used to select teachers, ensuring representativeness across various demographics such as gender, experience, and school location. This technique controlled for potential biases and facilitated balanced representation among different subgroups within the teaching population. By employing this method, the study was able to achieve a more accurate reflection of the diverse experiences and perspectives of the teachers who were impacted by the TSLA project, while also enabling meaningful comparisons across the subgroups.

Data Collection Method

Using questionnaires, at individual level, extensive survey was conducted to collect data from teachers and head teachers still in service at the selected schools. Focus group Discussions were conducted with the same teachers in group to allow teachers to remind each other the process TSLA conducted and from there compare the situations before and after. Interviews were used to gather information with Headteachers, SEIs/DDE and relevant Plan staff available.

Data Collection Instrument

For this study purpose, questionnaires and interview guide was used to collect and analyze data from research participants.

Questionnaire

For our study, the researcher established a questionnaire which guided information gathering among teachers from selected schools. It involved a set of written questions about the problem to which respondents are expected to provide information. Questions constructions were close, open-ended. Likert scale type was used for close-ended questions to help the researcher find information from respondents, where everyone found a free way of responding to asked questions.

Interview

The researcher designed interview tools in a way that qualitative information got collected. Interviewees were given open-ended questions and ample space. The researcher investigated Head teachers SEIs, DDE and Plan staff to be aware of their point of view about the effectiveness of TSLA on students' competence in English. They were interviewed one by one to avoid peer influence in answers.

The stratified random sampling was used to select teachers, ensuring representativeness across various demographics such as gender, experience, and school location. This technique controlled for potential biases and facilitated balanced representation among different subgroups within the

teaching population in Bugesera District. By employing this method, the study was able to achieve a more accurate reflection of the diverse experiences and perspectives of the teachers who were impacted by the TSLA project, while also enabling meaningful comparisons across the subgroups

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

First and foremost, it is important to present general information on respondents' age, gender, level of education, and work experience. Note that basing on the questionnaires returned from respondents, the data collection administration has been effective. All the questionnaires distributed have been collected and all the interviewees have been able to respond to research questions.

Gender of the Respondents

Details about gender classification will help assess the balance among respondents. The table below outlines the gender distribution for all respondents.

Table1: Gender Distribution of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	37	49.3	49.3	49.3
Female	38	50.7	50.7	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data (2024)

As observed from Table 1, females are a bit many compared to males. They are 50.7 and 49.3 respectively. This predominance of females over males will be considered when interpreting the study's results in relation to gender issues.

Experience of Respondents in Teaching

The P5/P6 teaching experience of the respondents helps the study establish the relationship between their teaching skills at the stated level and their ability to provide necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes that will lead the students to a successful career. Therefore, the researcher gathered information on the duration of the staff respondents' tenure in teaching at P5/P6 level, as shown in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Work Experience in Teaching (in years)

Experience	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
9-12	39	52.0	52.0	52.0
13-15	22	29.3	29.3	81.3
16 and beyond	14	18.7	18.7	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Source: Primary Data (2024)

The Table 2 indicates that the majority of the study respondents have experience in teaching in P5/P6 of 9 to 12 years (52%), while 29.3% have between 13 and 15 years. Only 18.7% respondents hold more than 16 years of teaching experience in those specific classes

Table 3: Schools' Geographical Location of the Respondents

School	Administrative Sector	No. of the respondents
Musenyi G.S.	Musenyi	11
Gaseke P.S	Rilima	9
Kagasa P.S	Gashora	8
Mbuye P.S	Juru	8
Murama G. S	Nyamata	11
Rilima Catholique G.S	Rilima	11
Rushubi P.S (A)	Juru	8
Rugando P.S (A)	Musenyi	9
Total		75

Source: Primary Data (2024)

The table 3 indicates that respondents from the schools are coming from various schools located in different administrative sectors of Bugesera District which ensures the sample diversity to minimize biases

FINDINGS

Under this section, the researcher presents the research findings related to the research objectives as well as demonstrating the indicators of teachers' performance. This is to recall that the objectives of this study were: to assess the language competences acquired by learners through TSLA in Bugesera District; to examine the contribution of the methods utilized in teachers training during TSLA project implementation on students' competency in English language in Bugesera District; and to ascertain the challenges encountered by teachers and students during Teacher Self-Learning Academy program in Bugesera District. The quantitative findings for this study are presented in terms of percentage distribution and means. Qualitative data will be an integral part of the findings' interpretation and discussions. All the variable statistics were computed in regards to Likert Scale to measure the respondents' attitudes towards the study related questions/statements.

Language Competences Acquired by Learners through TSLA

This section sought to assess the extent to which students in Bugesera District public primary schools acquired the different English Language competences through Teacher Self-Learning Activities implementation. The table below shows findings.

Table 4: Acquired Language Competences through TSLA Implementation

Statement	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
I believe that the instructional videos uploaded on IPods through TSLA project improved my learners' English listening skills	0.0	0.0	90.7	9.3
I believe that the instructional videos uploaded on IPods through TSLA project improved my learners' English-speaking fluency	0.0	0.0	100.0	0.0
I believe that the provision of teaching aids by TSLA project improved my learners' English reading skills	0.0	0.0	94.7	5.3
I believe that the provision of teaching aids by TSLA project improved my learners' English writing skills	0.0	0.0	86.7	13.3
Utilization of ICT improved my learners' retention in classroom.	1.3	12.0	76.0	10.7

Source: Primary Data (2024)

Referring to the findings displayed in Table 4, the results from the respondents' judgment showed that all statements have been agreed and strongly agreed at a 100% except the statement indicating that the Utilization of ICT has improved learner's retention in classrooms. The latter statement has also been agreed and strongly agreed at an extent of 86.7% (76% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 10.7% of them strongly agreed). 12% of the respondents were uncertain about the statement whereas only 1.3% disagreed with the statement.

TSLA Project Implementation Contribution on Students' Competency in English

This research study sought to establish the contribution of the methods utilized in teachers training during TSLA project implementation on students' competency in English language in Bugesera District. A number of statements were given to research teachers who were the research participants. Those statements included: The methods I use to teach learners after TSLA project contribute to students' competence improvement in English than before; through TSLA Project, I acquired the role of study groups in boosting learners' competence in English Language; through TSLA Project, I acquired the role of mentoring in boosting learners' competence in English Language; I believe, through TSLA project, I was equipped with action research skills that enabled me to find solutions to daily academic related challenges; training on English teaching methods Increased my learners effective communication; and implementation of the Training on English teaching methods improved my learners' promotion. The table below presents the findings.

Table 5: TSLA Project Implementation Contribution on Students' Competency in English Language

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
The methods I use to teach learners after TSLA project contribute to students' competence improvement in English than before.	0.0	0.0	0.0	37.3	62.7
Through TSLA Project, I acquired the role of study groups in boosting learners' competence in English Language	0.0	0.0	0.0	24.0	76.0
Through TSLA Project, I acquired the role of mentoring in boosting learners' competence in English Language	0.0	0.0	0.0	25.3	74.7
I believe, through TSLA project, I was equipped with action research skills that enabled me to find solutions to daily academic related challenges	0.0	0.0	0.0	17.3	82.7
Training on English teaching methods increased my learners 'effective communication	0.0	0.0	1.3	93.3	5.3
Implementation of the Training on English teaching methods improved my learners' promotion	0.0	0.0	44.0	56.0	0.0

Source: Primary Data (2024)

As indicated by the findings displayed in Table 4, the results from the respondents' perceptions revealed that 4/6 statements have been agreed and strongly agreed at a 100% except two statements; one indicating that the training on English teaching methods increased learners' effective communication and another stating that implementation of the training on English teaching methods improved my learners' promotion. The first statement amongst the two has been agreed and strongly agreed at an extent of 98.6% (93.3% of the respondents agreed with the statement while 5.3% of them strongly agreed). 1.3% of the respondents were uncertain about the statement. On the other hand, the second of the two has been agreed at an extent of 56% while another big number of the participants (44%) were uncertain about the statement.

Challenges Encountered by Teachers and Students during Teacher Self-Learning Academy Program

In order to examine the challenges encountered by teachers and students during Teacher Self-Learning Academy program in Bugesera District, close-ended questions were asked to assess their perception on the following nine (9) statements: During TSLA project, inadequate support provided by the school management was a challenge for both teachers and learners; during TSLA project, teachers were reluctant to participate in planned activities; TSLA project ended due to lack of budget to continue running the program; the absence of incentive mechanisms to acknowledge

teachers who exerted significant efforts to improve themselves and their colleagues posed a challenge; lack of teachers interest in the project was among the challenges for its implementation; the project had no adequate training to every teacher; during TSLA project, there were no adequate resources in conducting the training; during TSLA project, facilitators were not well trained; and high workload was a challenge for us to complete the training.. The study revealed the following results:

Table 6: Teachers and Students Challenges during Teacher Self-Learning Academy Program

Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Uncertain	Agree	Strongly agree
During TSLA project, inadequate support provided by the school management was a challenge for both teachers and learners.	1.3	30.7	5.3	62.7	0.0
During TSLA project, teachers were reluctant to participate in planned activities.	1.3	98.7		0.0	0.0
TSLA project ended due to lack of budget to continue running the program.	0.0	0.0	22.7	77.3	0.0
The absence of incentive mechanisms to acknowledge teachers who exerted significant efforts to improve themselves and their colleagues posed a challenge.	10.7	88.0	1.3	0.0	0.0
Lack of teachers' interest in the project was among the challenges for its implementation	0.0	36.0	6.7	57.3	0.0
The project had no adequate training to every teacher.	0.0	93.3	1.3	5.3	0.0
During TSLA project, there were no adequate resources in conducting the training	0.0	98.7	1.3	0.0	0.0
During TSLA project, facilitators were not well trained.	0.0	88.0	1.3	10.7	0.0
High workload was a challenge for us to complete the training.	0.0	13.3	0.0	86.7	0.0

Source: Primary Data (2024)

As shown in Table 5, the results from the study participants' judgment revealed that nobody strongly agreed with the statements. The majority disagreed with the statements. This is justified

by the fact that only 4 statements were agreed at least at 50% of all the study participants. The remaining statements were not agreed by respondents.

Discussion of Results

This section deals with data analysis and discusses the results. The analysis and discussion aimed to describe the contribution of INGOs' Interventions on Students' Competences in English Language in Primary Schools of Rwanda. The analysis is based on the respondents' perceptions of the research questions. It is also based on interview guide responses from interviewees. It discusses the main findings of the study and their importance to the field of knowledge based on previous studies that support or deviate from our conclusions. To discuss the results logically and clearly, the research objectives are mentioned.

Language Competences Acquired by Learners through TSLA

The findings from the TSLA project highlight significant improvements in various aspects of English language learning among students. A notable 90.7% of respondents agreed that the instructional videos uploaded on iPods through the project improved their learners' English listening skills, while 9.3% strongly agreed. This unanimous consensus (100% agreement) underscores the effectiveness of using instructional videos for enhancing listening skills. The absence of any disagreement or uncertainty among respondents further validates the positive impact of this method on listening proficiency.

When it comes to speaking fluency, the results are equally impressive, with 100% of respondents agreeing that the instructional videos enhanced their learners' English-speaking fluency. This complete agreement highlights the significant positive influence of the instructional videos on speaking skills, reflecting the success of the TSLA project in this crucial area of language learning.

The impact on reading skills was also noteworthy, with 94.7% of respondents agreeing and 5.3% strongly agreeing that the provision of teaching aids by TSLA improved their learners' English reading skills. This near-universal agreement (100%) emphasizes the value of teaching aids in fostering reading proficiency, demonstrating their essential role in the educational process.

Similarly, the improvement in writing skills was evident, with 86.7% of respondents agreeing and 13.3% strongly agreeing that the teaching aids enhanced their learners' English writing skills. The total agreement once again indicates the effectiveness of teaching aids, with a slightly higher percentage of respondents strongly agreeing compared to those for reading skills. This suggests that the aids might have had an even more pronounced impact on writing proficiency.

However, when examining the utilization of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and its effect on classroom retention, the findings show some variability. While 76% of respondents agreed and 10.7% strongly agreed that the use of ICT improved learners' retention in the classroom, 12% were uncertain, and 1.3% disagreed. Despite a strong majority (86.7%) believing in the positive impact of ICT on retention, the presence of uncertainty and a small percentage of disagreement indicates differences in perception. These differences could be attributed to the varying levels of ICT implementation or the teachers' differing levels of familiarity and comfort with technology.

The findings from the study revealed that the Teacher Self-Learning Academy (TSLA) project in Bugesera District significantly improved students' English language competences, particularly in

listening, speaking, reading, and writing. These findings align with Khasawneh's (2021) assertion that these four skills are fundamental language competences. The results also echo the challenges identified by Khasawneh, where students with learning disabilities faced difficulties in acquiring new language competences. However, the positive outcomes in Bugesera suggest that targeted interventions like TSLA can overcome such challenges.

Klimova (2014) observed that receptive skills (listening and reading) are prioritized over productive skills (speaking and writing) in the Czech Republic. In contrast, the Bugesera study indicates a more balanced improvement across both receptive and productive skills, likely due to the use of instructional videos and teaching aids provided by TSLA, which offered ample opportunities for students to practice all four language competences. This finding suggests that integrating multimedia resources can effectively bridge the gap between receptive and productive language skills.

Darancik (2018) highlighted the significance of speaking proficiency, noting that students often feel inadequate in speaking due to limited opportunities for verbal communication. The TSLA project's positive impact on speaking fluency, with 100% agreement among respondents, underscores the importance of creating a supportive environment for oral practice. This aligns with Darancik's emphasis on providing more speaking opportunities to address students' fears and improve their verbal skills. Vacide Erdoğan (2019) introduced the 4C skills communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking as essential for language learning. The TSLA project, through its use of ICT and collaborative learning strategies, seems to have fostered these skills among students, as evidenced by the high agreement on the effectiveness of teaching aids and instructional videos. This highlights the importance of integrating these 4C skills into language education to enhance overall language competence and prepare students for real-world communication challenges.

TSLA Project Implementation Contribution on Students' Competency in English Language

The teaching methods used post-TSLA have shown a marked improvement, with 37.3% of respondents agreeing and 62.7% strongly agreeing that these methods contribute more significantly to students' competence in English than the methods used before the project. This high level of agreement (100%) underscores the transformative impact of the training provided during the TSLA project. The comprehensive nature of the training likely introduced innovative teaching strategies and techniques that enhanced the overall effectiveness of English language instruction, resulting in better student outcomes.

The role of study groups in boosting learners' competence is also highly regarded, with 24% of respondents agreeing and 76% strongly agreeing on their effectiveness. This overwhelming consensus highlights the importance of collaborative learning environments as perceived by the teachers. Study groups not only foster peer learning and support but also encourage active participation and engagement among students, leading to a deeper understanding of the material and improved competence in English.

Similarly, mentoring is seen as a highly beneficial practice, with 25.3% of respondents agreeing and 74.7% strongly agreeing on its positive impact on learners' competence. The high level of strong agreement indicates that mentoring, as promoted by the TSLA project, plays a crucial role

in supporting students' academic growth. Mentoring provides personalized guidance and feedback, helping students to identify and address their weaknesses while reinforcing their strengths, thus contributing to their overall language proficiency.

The acquisition of action research skills is another significant outcome of the TSLA project, with 17.3% of respondents agreeing and a remarkable 82.7% strongly agreeing that they were equipped with these skills to solve daily academic challenges. The very high level of strong agreement suggests that the action research component of the training was particularly impactful. Teachers were empowered with practical, research-based problem-solving skills that enabled them to address and overcome the various academic challenges they encounter in their classrooms, thereby enhancing their teaching effectiveness.

Training on English teaching methods has also led to increased learners' effective communication, with 93.3% of respondents agreeing and 5.3% strongly agreeing on this improvement, although 1.3% were uncertain. The near-universal agreement points to the success of the training in enhancing students' communication skills. However, the slight uncertainty suggests that further investigation might be needed to understand the variability of training outcomes across different contexts. This could help in fine-tuning the training programs to ensure even more consistent results.

The impact of the TSLA project on learners' promotion rates presents a more mixed picture. While 56% of respondents agreed that the implementation of the training improved learners' promotion rates, 44% were uncertain. This mixed response indicates that although a majority see a positive impact, a significant portion of respondents are unsure. This uncertainty could reflect a lag in observable outcomes, where the benefits of the training might not yet be fully evident. It could also indicate varying levels of effectiveness of the training across different schools, suggesting a need for further evaluation and possibly additional support to maximize the impact on promotion rates.

The study found that the methodologies utilized in the TSLA project significantly contributed to students' competency in English language, with high levels of agreement on statements regarding improved teaching methods, study groups, mentoring, and action research skills. This supports the notion that continuous professional development (CPD) and innovative training methods are crucial for teacher effectiveness, as highlighted by various studies. Musendo et al. (2016) emphasized the importance of providing teachers with model lessons and opportunities for critical reflection. The TSLA project's use of iPods with pre-recorded lessons aligns with this approach, offering teachers accessible and practical resources for professional growth. The high agreement on the role of study groups and mentoring reflects the value of collaborative learning and peer support in professional development.

Sandgren et al. (2023) noted improvements in teacher efficacy through CPD programs, although not directly linked to student outcomes. The Bugesera study, however, shows a direct positive impact on student competencies, suggesting that well-designed CPD programs, like TSLA, can indeed enhance both teacher and student performance.

Asmari (2016) and Hismanoglu (2017) pointed out the need for contextualized CPD activities and the challenges of inadequate institutional support. The Bugesera District findings, with high agreement on the effectiveness of TSLA training methods, indicate that tailored and well-

supported CPD programs can overcome these challenges and lead to substantial improvements in teaching and learning outcomes.

Challenges Encountered by Teachers and Students during TSLA Program

The issue of inadequate support from school management was a significant challenge, with 62.7% of respondents agreeing and 30.7% disagreeing. A small percentage (5.3%) were uncertain. This majority consensus indicates that many educators felt they did not receive the necessary backing from their school administration. However, the considerable minority who disagreed suggests that experiences with management support varied widely among the respondents, possibly due to differences in leadership styles or resource allocation at different schools.

Regarding teacher reluctance, an overwhelming 98.7% of respondents disagreed that teachers were reluctant to participate in planned activities, with only 1.3% disagreeing. This near-unanimous disagreement suggests that teacher participation was not a major issue and that most educators were willing and enthusiastic participants in the activities. This contradicts any assumptions of teacher reluctance and highlights a positive attitude towards involvement in the TSLA project.

Budget constraints were identified as a significant issue for the TSLA project, with 77.3% of respondents agreeing that the project ended due to lack of budget, while 22.7% were uncertain. The high level of agreement underscores the impact of financial limitations on the project's sustainability. The uncertainty among some respondents, however, indicates that not all were fully aware of the financial challenges, pointing to a need for better communication regarding budgetary issues within the project.

The absence of incentive mechanisms was not widely perceived as a significant issue, with 88% of respondents disagreeing and 10.7% strongly disagreeing, while 1.3% were uncertain. This broad disagreement suggests that other motivating factors may have been at play, encouraging participation and commitment without the need for additional incentives. It highlights that the intrinsic motivation or other benefits provided by the project were sufficient to maintain high levels of engagement.

When it came to teachers' interest, 57.3% of respondents agreed that lack of interest was a challenge, while 36% disagreed, and 6.7% were uncertain. These mixed responses indicate that while a notable portion of educators saw lack of interest as an issue, it was not universally acknowledged as a challenge. This suggests that teacher engagement varied, possibly influenced by individual motivation, workload, or the perceived relevance of the activities.

The adequacy of training provided by the project was another concern, with 93.3% of respondents disagreeing that every teacher received adequate training, and 5.3% uncertain. This strong disagreement points to a significant gap in the training coverage, indicating that the training programs may not have been comprehensive or inclusive enough. This highlights the need for more extensive and accessible training to ensure all teachers are well-prepared. Similarly, the issue of adequate resources was highlighted, with 98.7% of respondents disagreeing that there were sufficient resources for conducting the training, and 1.3% uncertain. This near-unanimous disagreement underscores a major concern regarding the lack of resources, which could severely impact the program's effectiveness. Ensuring that adequate materials and tools are available is crucial for the success of any educational initiative.

The training of facilitators was also perceived as deficient, with 88% of respondents disagreeing that facilitators were well-trained, 10.7% agreeing, and 1.3% uncertain. This significant disagreement points to a perceived inadequacy in the preparation of facilitators, which could compromise the quality of the training delivered. Improving facilitator training is essential to enhance the overall effectiveness of the program.

High workload was identified as a significant challenge by 86.7% of respondents, with 13.3% disagreeing. The majority agreement suggests that teachers faced substantial time and resource constraints, which hindered their ability to complete the training effectively. Addressing workload issues by providing additional support or adjusting expectations could help in mitigating this challenge and improving the training experience.

The study identified several challenges encountered during the TSLA program, including inadequate support from school management, reluctance to participate in activities, budget constraints, and lack of incentives. These challenges are consistent with findings from previous research on CPD programs.

As recommendation from the respondents in regards to budgetary constraints budgetary constraints and lack of incentives, The Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB) should continue creating incentive schemes to acknowledge and reward teachers who demonstrate exceptional dedication and improvement in their teaching practices. Recognizing and rewarding such efforts can motivate teachers to continue their professional growth and commitment to quality education. Additionally, REB should encourage collaboration between schools to share best practices, resources, and experiences gained from projects like TSLA.

The non-government organizations should allocate adequate financial resources in sustainability and scalability of the implemented projects to ensure that they reach a large number of communities mainly the ICT related projects so that they can keep supporting those in need.

Geldenhuis & Oosthuizen (2015) and Desta et al. (2013) highlighted the importance of school management support and teacher participation in CPD programs. The Bugesera study's findings on inadequate support and reluctance to participate reflect similar issues. These challenges underscore the need for better management practices and more engaging CPD activities to ensure active participation and support from teachers.

Abraham (2019) identified a lack of motivation, inadequate training, and high workload as significant barriers to effective professional development. These challenges were also evident in the Bugesera study, particularly the high workload reported by teachers. Addressing these issues requires a comprehensive approach that includes reducing workload, providing adequate training, and creating incentives for teachers to engage in professional development.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The conclusion of this research is aligned to the three research objectives. The first objective was, to assess the language competences acquired by learners through TSLA in Bugesera District; the second was to examine the contribution of the methods utilized in teachers training during TSLA project implementation on students' competency in English language in Bugesera District while

the third was to ascertain the challenges encountered by teachers and students during Teacher Self-Learning Academy program in Bugesera District.

For the first objective of assessing the language competences acquired by learners through the TSLA project, the findings from the study revealed that the Teacher Self-Learning Academy (TSLA) project in Bugesera District significantly improved students' English language competences, particularly in listening, speaking, reading, and writing. An impressive percentage of respondents more than 98% agreed that instructional videos on iPods have played a great role on teachers' improvement of their skills and practices which also has the implications on their students' English language competences.

Regarding the second objective of examining the contribution of the methods used in teachers training, the study found that the methodologies utilized in the TSLA project significantly contributed to students' competency in English language, with high levels of agreement on statements (99%) regarding improved teaching methods, study groups, mentoring, and action research skills adopted by teachers. The impact of the TSLA project on learners' promotion rates has been evoked during this finding. This supports the notion that continuous professional development (CPD) and innovative training methods are crucial for teacher effectiveness, as highlighted by various studies.

The third objective addressed the challenges encountered during the TSLA program. The study identified several challenges encountered during the TSLA program, including inadequate support from school management, reluctance to participate in activities, budget constraints, and lack of incentives.

The findings highlight the overall success of the TSLA project in improving English language competences among learners and enhancing teaching methods. However, some challenges have been identified and need to be addressed by the concerned institutions not only for the betterment of this project but also for other education initiatives aiming for to capacity developments of teachers.

The findings align with existing literature, emphasizing the importance of continuous professional development (CPD) and the integration of ICT in education. Studies by Khasawneh (2021) and Klimova (2014) highlight the critical role of language competences in academic performance, while Musendo et al. (2016) and Sandgren et al. (2023) underscore the effectiveness of CPD programs in improving teacher efficacy and student outcomes. To sustain and further enhance the positive outcomes observed in the TSLA project, it is crucial to address the identified challenges and provide ongoing support and resources for both teachers and students.

Recommendations

Having concluded that the TSLA project has had a significant positive impact on the language competences of learners in Bugesera District, and that the project's success can be attributed to the innovative use of ICT and effective teacher training methods, the researcher would like to recommend several actions to sustain and enhance these outcomes.

Government authorities should enforce policies that mandate continuous professional development for teachers and monitor their implementation to ensure effectiveness. It is crucial for the authorities to engage the local community and parents in educational initiatives to create a

supportive environment for students' learning. Such engagement can help build a collaborative effort towards enhancing education quality and student performance.

The Ministry of Education should enhance teacher training programs by investing in comprehensive and continuous professional development programs that focus on modern teaching methodologies, ICT integration, and language competences. Adequate budget allocation is essential to support ICT infrastructure, teaching aids, and other resources crucial for effective teaching and learning. By prioritizing these investments, the Ministry can ensure that teachers are well-equipped to deliver high-quality education.

The Rwanda Basic Education Board (REB) should create incentive schemes to acknowledge and reward teachers who demonstrate exceptional dedication and improvement in their teaching practices. Recognizing and rewarding such efforts can motivate teachers to continue their professional growth and commitment to quality education. Additionally, REB should encourage collaboration between schools to share best practices, resources, and experiences gained from projects like TSLA. This collaborative approach can enhance the overall educational landscape by fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

Bugesera Primary Schools should ensure that school management provides adequate support to teachers, including mentoring, peer coaching, and access to necessary teaching materials. It is important for school management to foster a culture of integrating ICT in daily teaching practices by providing ongoing training and technical support for teachers. Ensuring that teachers have access to the required teaching aids, ICT tools, and other resources needed to implement innovative teaching methods is vital for maintaining the positive impacts observed from the TSLA project.

Parents should encourage and support their children's learning activities at home, particularly in using ICT tools and practicing language skills. Active participation in school activities and maintaining regular communication with teachers to stay informed about their children's progress is also crucial. By taking an active role in their children's education, parents can reinforce the learning experiences provided at school and contribute to their overall academic success.

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