

English Language Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of Conferences

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Abstract

Conferences around the world have been attended by thousands of ELT professionals each year and such activities are supposed to make a positive contribution to these individuals' professional development and work. In Myanmar, very little is known in an ELT context regarding how teachers perceive these experiences as contributing to their sense of professionalism. The purpose of this research was to report this knowledge gap and to examine teachers' perceptions and experiences of ELT conferences as a means to determine the role which conferences play in professionalism. Based on the literature, a practice-based perceptual definition of professionalism was accepted and operationalized in this study as relating to the concepts of Continuing Professional Development (CPD), Community, and Professional Identity. In the questionnaire survey, one

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hundred and seventy-six teachers attending face-to-face conferences participated and the data were analyzed through content analysis. The results suggested that conferences had a treasured contribution to make to English teachers' sense of professionalism because they offered a rich source of CPD, provided a stout sense of community, and helped develop their professional uniqueness. This led to the acknowledgment of the special role which teaching associations play in conferences and advice on how, through their agency, the conference experience can be maximized. Recommendations were made for future studies, including the suggestion that online conferences will be added to the research plan. In fact, conferences are a traditional indicator of activity within a field and of the obligation of individuals to their own practice and the sphere in which they operate.

Keywords: Continuing professional development (CPD), English Language teachers, Experiences, Conferences

Introduction

Professionalism means the conduct, behavior, and attitude of someone in a work or business environment. But mostly, a person does not have to work in a specific profession in order to establish the important qualities and characteristics of a professional. Evans, 2008 shows that professionalism leads to workplace success, a strong professional reputation, and a high level of work ethic and excellence. It is postulated that professionalism matters both for teachers and their learners. A sense of professionalism authorizes the former to maximize the learning potential of the latter. Conferences have located themselves as suppliers to professionalism. If true, this would be validation for encouraging teachers to attend and for organizations to provide support and encouragement for teachers.

Literature Review

Accordingly, this review of the literature is organized into two parts: the first on conferences in general; the second on ELT conferences.

1. Non-ELT Conferences (Conferences in General)

Meeting other professionals, learning from them, and experiencing their enthusiasm about what we do – helping our students progress and succeed is one of the most exciting times while working in education. A great place to do this is at conferences. Not just that it is a place to share the newest ideas, concepts, and research, it is also a chance for people to get together, to discuss, and to have some fun. CPD is a symbol of a practice-based definition of professionalism as adopted here, and one component of the literature compares conferences to other forms of CPD. Vrettas and Sanderson (2015) observed the legitimacy of conferences by measuring citations of journal articles and conference papers. They found approximately equal citations, pointing towards conferences as sources of scholarship accepted by the scientific community. However, raising the academic authorizations of conferences may not always be in participants' interests: those new presenters struggle to have their papers accepted in refereed conferences. That CPD is the most important benefit of conferences which is confirmed by Shannon, Maeng and Bell, (2019). Chai and Freeman (2019) prove that scientists who attend the same conference are more likely to later produce joint work, for example, publications, than scientists in the same field who have not attended together. The reporting of non-ELT literature comes with the qualification that they are convenient to a completely different environment for professionalism, which is a concern. However, the literature on ELT conferences is limited, and it is referenced exclusively to those organized under the supports of teaching associations. As with non-ELT conferences, the CPD from ELT conferences emerges as the major contributor to professionalism.

2. ELT Conferences

Thousands of ELT professionals attend conferences around the world each year and such activities are supposed to make a positive involvement in these individuals' professional development and work. Overall, the evidence presented here is positive, highlighting a variety of assistances that representatives report as a result of conferences. Compartments in which the impact of attending conferences can be even further improved are also

identified and discussed in this article. Borg (2015) grilled teachers who had recently attended conferences and found three themes in the data: an increased skillset; networking; and professional confidence. The first of these is linked to improved practice, but this relies on teachers' self-reporting rather than a confirmation instrument such as the follow-up lesson observations in Shannon et al. (2019). The second theme, networking, was investigated by Moore, Fisher & Baber in 2016. Networking and interacting with other ELT professionals are as important at virtual events as for those attending face-to-face conferences. Borg's (2015) explanation of the third theme, professional confidence, deals with teachers' self-belief and trustworthiness, and as such connect to identity. The conference was thus a means for teachers to confirm their identity and contribute to a community with the shared beliefs and values that mark professionalism. There is still a high claim for materials, both paper and digital, to complement lessons, and conferences are opportunities, as Aubrey and Coombe (2010) found, to obtain an informed, if not always objective (publishers have commercial motives), picture of the latest products. By seeking to maximize the learning experience through resources, regardless of how operative these materials are in practice, teachers are professional.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this research was to observe ELT teachers' perceptions and experiences of conferences in order to determine the role which conferences play, if any, in contributing to their sense of professionalism.

Methodology

This research is a tentative study of the extent to which teachers' self-articulated perceptions and experiences of conferences are predictions of a sense of enhanced professionalism.

1. Research Design

Three themes relevant to professionalism have emerged from the investigation of literature. The first, and the most obvious one, is CPD and how conferences are avenues for an improved knowledge base and skills set

which allow teachers to perform at a level perceived as appropriate to professionalism. Community and how conferences create solidarity and relationships that make professionalism a shared investment is the second theme of this research. The third one is identity and how conferences method teachers' self-image and the implementation of beliefs and values that institute a personal projection of professionalism. With the intention of this study, professionalism is thus considered around the three interlinking concepts of CPD, community, and professional identity.

2. Population and Samples

Teachers who are known to have attended at least one face-to-face ELT conference were interconnected and informed about the aims and procedure of the study. In order to respond to the research questions, it was proper to accept a qualitative approach in order to capture teachers' own articulation of the meaning and interpretation they attribute to the conference experience. According to research methods, interviews and questionnaires were chosen. Teachers with experience of different ELT conferences participated in a questionnaire survey and some of them were interviewed. Only 41 had agreed to be interviewed. In the interviews, participants referred to the conferences they had attended without naming them. Furthermore, Semi-constructed interviews were conducted by phone or Skype.

The profile of the participants is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Participant Profile

SN	Identifiers	Details	Number	Total
1	Gender	Female	79	176
		Male	97	
2	Age range	31-40	22	176
		41-50	27	
		51-60	91	
		61-70	36	

Table 1 (Continued)

SN	Identifiers	Details	Number	Total
3	Nationality	American	4	176
		Bangladeshi	4	
		Canadian	1	
		Chinese	9	
		Filipino	2	
		Indian	12	
		Japanese	3	
		Myanmar	79	
		Spanish	1	
4	Teaching experience	Thai	64	176
		1-10 years	32	
		11-20 years	33	
		21-30 years	40	
		31-40 years	71	
5	Current employment	Education college	21	176
		Freelance	45	
		Government University	82	
		Private University	23	
		State secondary school	2	
		State high school	3	
6	Conferences attended	1-5	28	176
		6-10	32	
		10-20	61	
		20+	55	

4. Instrument(s) and Procedures

Interviews and questionnaires were arranged individually with participants. For this purpose, once they had signed their consent to an ethical agreement form explaining the purpose of the project, the interview procedure, and how their data would be used. Both the interview and questionnaire included questions on the topics of CPD, community, and professional identity in

relation to the conference participants had attended. Interviews were recorded, transliterated, and then sent to the participants for them to confirm the authenticity and edit as they wished.

5. Data Analysis

The interview data were categorized to CPD, Community, and Professional Identity as theoretical paradigms which were used as themes. Data analysis was an iterative process of reading the interviews, coding the data into categories that could be documented onto the themes, and constantly revising the categorization as the process generated fresh insights. The results of the content analysis in Table 2 show the subsequent categorization and the rotation of codes.

Table 2

Theme and Categories

SN	Theoretical construct	Theme	Category
1	Professionalism	CPD	Knowledge and skills Resources
		Community	Bonding Collaboration
		Professional Identity	Self-efficacy Status Motivation

According to Table 2, CPD consists of two categories: Knowledge and skills (the perceived impact of the input on the pedagogical understanding that informs practice); and Resources (exposure and access to pedagogical materials). Community is made up of two categories: Bonding (interacting and relationship-building); and Collaboration (joint endeavour towards a goal). Professional Identity contains three categories: self-efficacy (confidence in one's fitness to practise); status (self-esteem and a sense of purpose); and motivation (the desire to teach).

Results

In this research, teacher participants' perceptions towards attending non-ELT conferences were shown in table 3.

Table 3

Teacher Participants' Questionnaire Responses Towards Attending Non-ELT Conferences (n=176)

SN	Statements	Calculation		Scale
		Mean	SD	
1	Conferences have positioned themselves as contributors to professionalism.	4.63	0.61	Very much agree
2	Conferences are regarded as sources of scholarship accepted by the scientific community.	4.54	0.68	Very much agree
3	Continuing Professional Development (CPD) is the most important benefit of conferences.	4.48	0.70	Very much agree
4	Scientists who attend the same conference are more likely to later produce joint works, for example, publications, than scientists in the same field who have not attended together.	4.50	0.67	Very much agree

Table 3 (Continued)

SN	Statements	Calculation		Scale
		Mean	SD	
5	Attending a conference means that you can meet more advanced researchers, as well as established senior professionals and scholars. Listening to talks and presentations can open up new ways of thinking about a specific topic or even give you a new idea, one that you had previously not thought about.	4.84	0.42	Very much agree
	Average	4.60	0.64	Very much agree

Note. 1.00-1.80= Not at all, 1.81-2.60= Don't agree, 2.61-3.40= Slightly agree, 3.41-4.20= Somewhat agree, 4.21-5.00= Very much agree.

Generally, the evidence presented in Table 3 is positive, highlighting a range of benefits because congresses report as a result of conferences. The results suggest that conferences have a valuable contribution to make to English teachers' sense of professionalism because they can meet more advanced researchers, as well as established senior professionals and scholars. Listening to talks and presentations can open up new ways of thinking about a specific topic or even give them a new idea, one that they had previously not thought about (Mean=4.84). Moreover, participants very much agree that conferences have to be found as contributors to professionalism (Mean=4.63) followed by conferences are regarded as sources of scholarship accepted by the scientific community (Mean=4.54). The questionnaire responses suggest that the ultimate majority recognize the central role of attending conferences in their proficient development at work.

Semi-constructed interviews were conducted by phone or Skype. The impact of attending ELT conferences is also identified and discussed in the following table.

Table 4

Teacher Participants' Interview Responses Towards Attending ELT Conferences (n=41)

SN	Theme	Interviewee	Discussion
1	An increased skillset	Interviewee 1	Some employers might appreciate seeing that we attend international conferences on our CV. After all, we should be learning something while we are there. Presenting at a conference also looks good on our CV since we were required to put in a proposal which was selected, and we spoke to a group of our colleagues from around the world. We should be learning more about our craft while attending these conferences and this leads us to our next reason.
		Interviewee 2	Attending an ELT conference is a fantastic opportunity to learn from teachers, trainers, managers, publishers, ed-tech professionals, and even students. They can provide us with unique opportunities for transforming the way we work and our career progression.
		Interviewee 3	Involvement in teaching conferences around the world has many advantages. We might be very attracted to what we see, hear, and experience, or we may gain a deeper appreciation for the situation we are currently in. Improve ourselves. Improve our career. Attend a conference and see the world.

Table 4 (Continued)

SN	Theme	Interviewee	Discussion
2	Networking	Interviewee 4	<p>ELT conferences offer many opportunities to network with other professionals in the industry. Networking can lead to meaningful connections with educators from all over the world. We can exchange ideas, compare professional experiences, and get inspired by other teachers. Some of these connections may go on to become an integral part of our teacher support group, as keeping in touch via online platforms like LinkedIn and Facebook is easy.</p>
		Interviewee 5	<p>Making contacts with publishers, educational materials vendors, department heads, and big-name educators from around the world can open up doors for us. We never know when we might need help finding a contributor to the magazine we have been tasked with editing or finding the right textbook for our department. We might help organize a conference and be asked to recommend a plenary speaker. I spoke with the program chair of the conference and asked for input to help with my duties as the program chair for the International Conference in Seoul this October. People feel more comfortable dealing with people they know and a great place to meet these movers and shakers in our industry face to face is at an international conference.</p>

Table 4 (Continued)

SN	Theme	Interviewee	Discussion
		Interviewee 6	When we sit in a classroom or auditorium, we discover that we're not alone in wanting to improve our skills and bring something back to our workplace. Let's celebrate the ELT community and keep it alive by attending these events.
3	Professional confidence	Interviewee 7	Breaking out of our comfort zone is just the type of action we need in order to break out of old ways of thinking or try something new. Present a workshop, raise our hand, break the ice with a stranger, pitch our idea, organise the event (gulp). If we find this nerve-wracking, we're not alone. I'm right there with you, and so are most of your fellow attendees. Just do it.
		Interviewee 8	Leaving your workplace and "sharpening the saw" is investing in yourself, and you won't regret it. It's admitting that you still have things to learn. That you can get better. And don't we all? When you purchase that conference ticket and when you walk up to the registration desk or into that room, you're telling yourself and all those around you, that you're investing in your own growth. Now that is invaluable.
		Interviewee 9	Whether we are looking for a new opportunity or hoping to branch out where we are, attending, presenting at, and ultimately organizing international conferences are excellent opportunities to improve ourselves and our career in ELT.

The interview results generally suggest that ELT conferences offer an increased skill set, provide opportunities to network and help develop their professional self-assurance because have a valuable contribution to make to English teachers' sense of professionalism.

Table 5 states teacher participants' perceptions and experiences of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) provided by conferences.

Table 5

Teacher Participants' Perceptions and Experiences of the Continuing Professional Development (CPD) Provided by Conferences (n=41)

SN	Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	Interviewee	Discussion
1	Knowledge and skills	Interviewee 1	CPD is realized in many forms. For example, a teacher presenting a session and a teacher accessing a new classroom resource display different CPD behaviors, but there is evidence that the conference experience contributes to a transformation of values and beliefs and is non-trivial in the process of professionalism.
		Interviewee 2	I guess in a way they do [have an impact on CPD] for example if I think about [name of organization], when we had people who had attended conferences, they came back and they presented what they'd seen, etc. Then it obviously had, it was obviously good for professional development because we learned a lot.
		Interviewee 3	I mean Myanmar has its own conferences, we have local universities which have their own symposiums and conferences. They're much smaller and they tend to be sort of more focused-on

Table 5 (Continued)

SN	Continuing Professional Development (CPD)	Interviewee	Discussion
2	Resources	Interviewee 4	issues which relate to their context, but I think in an international conference you learn a lot more. I felt that international conferences were particularly potent in CPD.
		Interviewee 5	I bought a book [name of presenter] wrote and got her to sign it at the stand. I'll tell my students to download the app because it looked useful.
		Interviewee 6	The University has introduced guidance for the accreditation of CPD events. Events that require accreditation include conferences, symposia, short training courses, workshops and seminars organized locally, regionally, nationally, and internationally, long training courses, as well as degree/diploma and research projects.

According to the participants, the strongest and most dependable finding from Table 5 was teachers' belief that conferences represent an almost unparalleled CPD opportunity. Although the participants represented a large variation in teaching experience and worked in different contexts, most of them agree that conferences were effective providers of CPD across the board.

Table 6

Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences of Conferences as Opportunities for Community-Building (n=41)

SN	Category	Interviewee	Discussion
1	Bonding	Interviewee 1	You need to share ideas, to get something from other people, and sometimes when you just go to a conference, maybe you skip the talks and get to hang out with other people, even talk and realize, '[expletive], this person has fantastic ideas and I never thought about this.' And it's not the sort of networking to get another job, it's a real professional connection.
		Interviewee 2	When you go to a conference and everyone gives you a hug, 'I haven't seen you for years, that's our only contact with you'. I think that's the part most people really like.
		Interviewee 3	I'm sure [my colleagues]'re interested in their job, but they're not interested in the focus I have, so I can't talk to them, I can't bounce ideas off them, you know. My head of the department is very encouraging; he doesn't work in our department but he's seen my students at work. So, I don't mean that I'm completely isolated or something but if I want people to talk to me and listen, I have a great response from other teachers at conferences. What are these collaborations? What are the benefits an organization gets by partnering with an International Conference?

Table 6 (Continued)

SN	Category	Interviewee	Discussion
2	Collaboration	Interviewee 4	A smaller proportion of participants (four) referred to conferences as means of collaboration, i.e., working together on a project or issue demanding the sharing of expertise.
		Interviewee 5	A conference cannot be labeled as international for the mere fact that it contains presenters from all around the globe. But, it should have international collaborations too.
		Interviewee 6	International conferences can give us a wonderful opportunity to meet and interact with fellow researchers, attendees, and experts from the same or similar areas across the world. When we connect with scientists and academics, we can share views, create new relationships, learn new things and enhance our existing knowledge. It also seeds the link for scientific cooperation by meeting researchers from various countries. These connections can help us with our work to progress our research collaboration.

The data confirm that conferences are rare opportunities for teachers to express themselves. Furthermore, at conferences, feelings and views can often be more open than in the workplace because there are no consequences for teachers' jobs. This was a shared sentimentality to the extent that we coded this category "bonding" to indicate the degree of attachment. The results also suggest that conferences have a valuable contribution to make to English teachers' sense of professionalism because they provide a strong sense of community. This is in line with the results of the study "Teaching Professionals' Opinions and Views on Experiences of Attending Academic

Conferences”. attending conferences is commonly the greatest way to create opportunities of mutual benefit, knowledge development and forms the main motivation for networking, conducting the newest work, and presenting their own findings.

Table 7

Teachers’ Perceptions and Experiences of the Ways Conferences Contributing to their Professional Identity (n=41)

SN	Professional identity	Interviewee	Discussion
1	Self-efficacy	Interviewee 1	I thought [name of presenter]’s talk would be over my head, but I got almost all of it. I put the conferences I’ve been to on my resume.
		Interviewee 2	Conferences revitalized participants’ confidence and even pride in their knowledge and skill set.
		Interviewee 3	In general, whether or not we presented at the conference, the experience was relevant to and useful for our education and goals. We increase long-term self-efficacy and motivational benefits as a profession.
2	Status	Interviewee 4	I was at dinner with some scientists and they were talking about a conference, so it’s not just us who do this kind of thing.
		Interviewee 5	Attending a conference is definitely something that should go on your CV, especially if you have given a talk or poster presentation. It shows potential employers or grant-awarding bodies that you’re engaged with your field and is taking an active part in communicating with other academics. If you have done it, flaunt it!

Table 7 (Continued)

SN	Professional identity	Interviewee	Discussion
			<p data-bbox="393 268 1013 611">Interviewee 6 There are few things better for developing our ideas than a good-spirited debate. Listening to and participating in lively discussions at conferences can give us new ideas, help refine our existing concepts, and maybe even change our minds about some key issues in our field. In a conference setting, one should always retain a certain level of humility and be receptive to it.</p>
3	Motivation	Interviewee 7	<p data-bbox="393 624 1013 1110">The conference is the best place to get motivated! Need some motivation in your career? Go to the annual conference. You will see lots of people just like you who are making a success of their businesses. You can learn what they did to get where they are and what they doing to stay on top. Meeting the top achievers and realizing that you are just like them (or maybe even better than they are) will give you the drive you need. You will be coming home with an attitude that if they can do it, so can I! This is a huge takeaway.</p>
		Interviewee 8	<p data-bbox="393 1118 1013 1287">Attending conferences has numerous benefits, including improving communication skills, gaining expert knowledge, networking with others, and renewing motivation and confidence.</p>

Table 7 (Continued)

SN	Professional identity	Interviewee	Discussion
		Interviewee 9	Most conferences feature a motivational keynote speaker who will give us insight and inspiration to conquer the world. A live motivational speech is by far the most impactful way to directly impact someone's thoughts, words, and behaviors.

Observations relating to self-efficacy reveal that conferences energized participants' confidence and even conceit in their knowledge and skills set. Some teachers who had presented at conferences particularly pronounced Self-efficacy. Several participants mentioned that their funding was provisional on presenting but on the other hand the two least experienced teachers in the sample aspired to have a presentation accepted at a conference. Conferences were viewed by participants as a stage for professionalism where their role could be highlighted, leading to self-justification, external acceptance by the ELT community, and personal fulfillment.

Discussion

The findings from the questionnaire survey activist that English language teachers highly value conferences, especially international conferences, as vehicles for CPD and hence indicators of professionalism. Win et al. (2020) also pointed out that attending conferences is commonly the greatest way to create opportunities of mutual benefit, knowledge development and forms the main motivation for networking, conducting the newest work, and presenting their own findings. In this research, our data also point to the fact that teachers are obsessive about conferences as often rare, opportunities to feel part of a collective characterized by warmth and openness. Lastly, the findings indicate that teachers express a sincerer professional identity because of attending, and particularly presenting at, conferences because

they confirm themselves as competent practitioners with a valuable role to play in a job that brings them personal gratification. Because ELT as a field is susceptible to indictments of unprofessionalism, one prominent functionality of conferences is to reinforce teachers' status and sense of self-worth.

Furthermore, the interview results in Table 3 suggest that conferences have a valuable contribution to make to English teachers' sense of professionalism because they provide a strong sense of community, they offer a rich source of scholarship accepted by the scientific community and help develop the professional identity that they later produce cooperative works, for example, publications than scientists in the same field who have not attended together. This leads to the acknowledgment of the special role of the conference experience that can be maximized. The strongest and most reliable finding from the data was teachers' conviction that conferences represent an almost unrivaled CPD opportunity. Even though the participants represented a large variation in teaching experience, and worked in different contexts, conferences were effective providers of CPD across the board. While professionalism is an individual responsibility, knowledge, and values must be spread across the field. The majority of participants also emphasized resources as an important takeaway form of CPD. These comments referred to the resources demonstrations that are common to international and local conferences alike and complementary materials disseminated by publishers, often in sessions they sponsored. The term resources also include technology that teachers intended to use in class. By seeking to maximize the learning experience through resources, regardless of how effective these materials are in practice, teachers are representing professionalism. The results suggest that conferences have a valuable contribution to make to English teachers' sense of professionalism because they offer a rich source of CPD. Win et al. (2020) also highlighted one of the major reasons why one should attend an academic conference. When one attends an academic conference, he or she is sure to meet people of his or her same stature, mindset, and goals. This is a motivational factor as one aspires to overcome fears and achieve one's dreams. Concerning teachers' perceptions and experiences of conferences as opportunities for community-

building, a key message was that teachers experienced conferences as an opportunity to interact and share a sense of professionalism. The teacher sees community as something more enthusiastic than networking, which is somewhat despised as being functional in that it exploits a conference as a convenient venue for self-promotion. Community, in contrast, is not self-interested and works on relationships and mutual gratitude. This was a shared sentiment to the extent that we coded this category “bonding” to indicate the degree of attachment. A smaller proportion of participants referred to conferences as means of collaboration, i.e., working together on a project or issue demanding the sharing of expertise. One participant met a contact by prior arrangement over a publishing opportunity and the other decided to follow research with a corresponding presenter. Only the latter seems a genuine of collaboration due to the conference itself, perhaps reinforcing the point made earlier that the community created by conferences is instinctive rather than telic.

Moreover, confirming Borg (2015) and Motteram (2016), conferences were perceived as instrumental in professional identity. The majority of teacher participants viewed attending a conference as confirmation of their self-efficacy and status, and they reported increased motivation. Furthermore, the data suggest (seven comments) that the conference experience is not only inherently but also possibly extrinsically motivating because the increased professional figure was connected to tangible rewards such as promotion. It should be added that there is often pressure on teachers to present. Scientists, unlike ELT teachers, hardly ever need to defend their status, so this participant is arguing that the conference is universal in professionalism. The sense that ELT has characteristics similar to recognized fields is crucial for perceptions of professionalism. Individual reactions aside, conferences were viewed by participants as a stage for professionalism where their role could be highlighted, leading to self-justification, external acceptance by the ELT community, and personal fulfillment. The results of the study do suggest that conferences have a valuable contribution to make to English teachers’ sense of professionalism because they help develop their professional identity.

Recommendations

The indication from this study recommends that ELT conferences may have a valuable role to play in teachers' professionalism because they offer a rich source of CPD, as they provide a strong sense of community and develop teachers' sense of professional character. Overall, this offers a strong justification for teachers to attend conferences and thus establish their professionalism.

1. Implications

For accepting this conclusion, three facts need to be considered. It is likely that a large number of teachers do not go or rarely go to conferences. It cannot simply be assumed that such teachers are uninformed or that they avoid professionalism. They may lack the financial means to attend (the cost factor was referred to several times in this study), they may doubt the advantages of conferences or they may even have had negative experiences. The second issue is that the findings reported are perceptual rather than authentic. In other words, the gains participants claim from conferences may not be real or maybe of limited duration.

2. Further Studies

This research has included both international and local conferences, and future research could usefully address both. As emphasized, this research would ideally be larger-scale and include a mechanism for evaluating the impact of conferences on individuals' teaching. In response to ever-advancing technology, online conferences must also become part of the research agenda. Definitely, through financial restrictions for some teachers, logistics or personal preference, online will be the only feasible alternative to face-to-face conferences

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