

Investigating Educators' Perspectives on Classroom Observation and the Impact of Feedback on Professional Development

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Abstract

The study's aim was to investigate educators' perspectives on classroom observation and the impact of feedback on professional development. Examines the role of classroom observations (COs) in evaluating teacher performance and supporting professional development (PD). Technically, COs have become a standardized element in education, enhancing teaching skills and providing a consistent framework for teacher assessment and professional development. The objective of this research is to explore the interpretation of COs as perceived by both observers and observees. It also examines their opinion on the COs process and the feedback it generates. Through questionnaires and follow-up interviews with educators from diverse backgrounds, the study seeks to understand how feedback from CO is perceived, its effectiveness in improving teaching practices, and its contribution to PD. The research addresses three main questions: how COs are structured, what strategies can improve the COs process, and the impact of feedback on teaching and professional growth. The findings offer valuable insights into optimizing COs as a tool for teacher evaluation and development.

Keywords: classroom observation, feedback, professional development, observer, observee

Introduction

Classroom observation (CO) has long been recognized as a valuable tool for evaluating teacher performance and fostering student growth. As Wragg (1999) noted, the increasing need to standardize educational practices has led to a rise in the prevalence of CO, which has become more integral to educational processes than in the past. CO serves not only to enhance teachers' professional skills but also to establish a consistent framework for teacher evaluation. This standardized evaluation process is applied at all stages of a teacher's career, and the importance of CO as a benchmark for professional development (PD) has grown significantly in recent years.

However, existing research on the perspectives of both observers and observees regarding PD and the role of CO feedback remains limited. This study aims to explore the views of both observers and observees on the CO process and the feedback it generates.

In the realm of educational pedagogy and practice, classroom observations (COs) and feedback stand as critical considerations, particularly in fostering PD (Danielson, 2007; Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Hattie & Timperley, 2007). CO is not a new concept. COs existed essentially as an important tool to monitor professional growth, enhance teaching practices, grade teacher performance, initiate professional development, ensure student performance, and maintain standard benchmarks in teaching. Highlighting highlights the multifaceted role of COs in education, encompassing various aspects of teacher development and

student achievement. Smith (2020) regards COs as having long been recognized as essential tools for monitoring professional growth, enhancing teaching practices, grading teacher performance, initiating professional development, ensuring student performance, and maintaining standard benchmarks in teaching.

A study to explore the role of initial teacher education (ITE) in developing professionalism was conducted by Davies and Ferguson in the year 1997. The investigation was based on qualitative research methods, including interviews and surveys, to gather data on teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of ITE programs in preparing them for the teaching profession and developing their professional identity (Davies & Ferguson, 1997). It was a kind evaluation of the insights or opinions held by teachers regarding the role of ITE.

Encompassing general beliefs, attitudes, and outlooks of the trained teachers on how their initial training as educators contributed to their professional development and their expected continuous professional development. They also shared their critical views by pointing out weaknesses and areas for improvement in ITE programs, which in turn resulted in action recommendations for enhancing teacher preparation and professional development initiatives. Later, a number of studies were carried out by Educators, teachers, and policymakers to develop an acceptable criterion for the professional development of teachers.

Another worthy mention contribution comes from Wragg (1999), who emphasizes the need to implement classroom observation as a means of promoting professional development

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for teachers. He argues that classroom observation provides valuable opportunities for teachers to reflect on their practice, receive constructive feedback, and identify areas for improvement. Wragg (1999) suggests that through observation, teachers can enhance their teaching skills, deepen their understanding of pedagogy, and ultimately improve student learning outcomes. Based on longitudinal observations and evaluations of several studies, the researchers in this study conclude that the success of COs, feedback, and PD depends on teachers' perceptions of classroom observation and their outlook on the role of feedback in their professional development.

The research explores nuanced manifestations of COs, feedback, and professional development, further examining the structure and purpose of classroom observation and, eventually, evaluating its implications for educational research and practice. By exploring underlying mechanisms and discussing strategies to maximize the impact of feedback, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the complexities inherent in COs and feedback mechanisms, providing insights into enhancing the validity of findings in educational contexts.

Review of the Related Literature

This section presents an attempt to review CO as a fundamental practice used in educational settings to evaluate teaching effectiveness, identify areas for improvement, and support teachers' professional growth. A review of existing literature on teachers' attitudes toward classroom observation practices is incorporated to examine studies, articles, and surveys that explore teachers' perceptions, experiences, and attitudes toward being observed in the classroom.

While most of the established educators suggested COs are the systematic and technical process of observing, O'Leary (2014) summed up the following steps in classroom observation. Classroom Observation explores the pivotal role of lesson observation in the training, assessment, and development of new and experienced teachers. Offering practical guidance and detailed insight into an aspect of training that is a source of anxiety for many teachers, this thought-provoking book offers a critical analysis of the place, role, and nature of lesson observation in the lives of education professionals.

Additionally, O'Leary (2014) provides two different perspectives on COs. Firstly, he deliberates that COs are viewed as opportunities for professional learning and growth. In this view, COs are seen as supportive mechanisms for providing feedback, identifying areas for development, and fostering reflective practice among teachers. When conducted in a collaborative and non-threatening manner, COs can promote dialogue, self-reflection, and continuous improvement in teaching practices (O'Leary, 2014). Counterfeiting his own argument, O'Leary suggests that COs can be seen as a form of surveillance or evaluation, where teachers may feel scrutinized and judged, leading to feelings of anxiety and defensiveness. Consequently, COs can be perceived by many as a top-down approach to monitoring teacher performance, which may undermine trust and collaboration within the school community (O'Leary, 2014).

Teachers' perceptions of COs significantly influence their acceptance and effectiveness; therefore, if CO is discerned as a supportive, collaborative, and developmental approach to professional growth rather than a mere evaluative approach, teachers are more likely to embrace it. Thus, understanding teachers' perceptions can impact the design of COs and feedback practices accomplishment in promoting continuous growth and improvement.

Bell and Mladenovic (2019), highlighting constructive feedback's significance, suggest that feedback can be more meaningful if its prominence is transparent to the observer. Furthermore, his team recommends that feedback must be apparently tailored to individual performance and areas in which they need to improve. They conclude that then only COs and feedback can lead to positive changes in teaching practices.

Danielson (2007) provides one more rational suggestion about the indispensable role of COs and post-CO feedback. In his opinion, COs provide teachers with opportunities for self-

reflection and growth, enabling them to recognize their strengths as teachers and areas for improvement in their teaching. Guskey and Yoon (2009) suggest a tailor-made CO framework. According to them, the CO processes should align with the organizational culture of schools, fostering trust and transparency, which will further influence the outcome of how feedback is received and acted upon by teachers. Hardman and Jones (2019) reflected on the importance of creating a supportive and non-threatening environment during CO, where teachers feel valued and respected, thus enhancing their engagement in the process. Strong (2007) acknowledges CO's role in facilitating peer observation and collaboration, allowing educators to discover effective instructional strategies through observation of successful practices. Additionally, Strong et al. (2011) assert that CO contributes to maintaining accountability and meeting standards, ensuring that educators are continuously improving their teaching practices to enhance student outcomes.

Feedback is a critical component of the CO process, providing teachers with valuable insights into their teaching practices and opportunities for development (Hattie & Timperley, 2007). Effective feedback should be specific, actionable, and tailored to individual teacher needs (Guskey & Yoon, 2009). When feedback aligns with teachers' goals and is perceived as relevant and meaningful, it can lead to positive changes in teaching practices (Bell & Mladenovic, 2019).

Classroom observation (CO) has become an essential practice for evaluating teaching effectiveness, identifying areas for improvement, and supporting teachers' PD. In recent years, the role of CO has been increasingly emphasized, not just as a tool for evaluation but as a means of fostering professional growth (Cowie et al., 2018). This literature review examines teachers' attitudes and experiences toward CO, focusing on feedback practices and their influence on PD.

Recent studies show that CO is viewed as both a learning opportunity and a challenge. O'Leary (2020) elaborates on how CO functions in dual capacities: it can provide critical feedback for reflection and growth but may also evoke anxiety when viewed as a top-down evaluative measure. O'Leary (2020) discusses how teachers perceive CO as beneficial when done in a collaborative and non-threatening manner, supporting dialogue and reflective practices. However, when CO is perceived as surveillance, it can generate defensive reactions and undermine trust in the school environment.

In research conducted by Bell and Mladenovic (2019), the significance of constructive feedback is highlighted. They argue that for feedback to be effective, it must be specific, actionable, and directly tied to the teacher's performance. When feedback is aligned with teachers' professional goals and tailored to their areas for improvement, it results in meaningful growth and enhanced teaching practices. The study emphasizes that teachers are more receptive to feedback that they perceive as transparent and personalized, which contributes to their professional learning.

Furthermore, Hardman and Jones (2019) suggest that the context in which CO is conducted significantly influences teachers' attitudes. Their study indicates that a supportive and respectful environment during CO fosters greater engagement and willingness to improve. This is in line with the notion that CO should align with the school's organizational culture to build trust and transparency, as noted by Guskey and Yoon (2020). They argue that CO frameworks must be adaptable to the unique context of each school, fostering a sense of ownership and collaboration among teachers.

The importance of feedback within the CO process cannot be overstated. Hattie and Timperley (2007) assert that effective feedback is essential for enhancing teaching practices. Their research emphasizes that feedback should not only be clear and actionable but also align with the teacher's instructional goals. When feedback is meaningful, it contributes positively to the teaching-learning dynamic, encouraging continuous improvement.

Additionally, research by Strong et al. (2018) discusses the role of CO in facilitating peer observation and collaboration. Their study shows that when teachers observe their peers, they are able to discover new instructional strategies and reflect on their own

practices. This collegial approach to CO promotes professional learning communities where feedback and observation serve as tools for collective growth rather than individual scrutiny.

In recent years, the notion of accountability has become a significant focus in educational discussions surrounding CO. According to Evans (2021), CO plays a vital role in maintaining accountability by ensuring that teachers are meeting set standards and continuously improving their teaching methods to enhance student outcomes. However, balancing accountability with supportive professional development is key to overcoming the tensions between standardized practices and individual teacher growth.

In conclusion, recent literature emphasizes the need for CO processes that are collaborative, supportive, and tailored to individual teacher needs. Feedback, when perceived as meaningful and goal-aligned, leads to positive changes in teaching practices, and CO's role in fostering PD is widely recognized. However, creating a school culture that supports trust, collaboration, and continuous growth is essential for maximizing the benefits of CO.

Innumerable and varied research in education has emphasized the significance of context is essential in shaping teachers' perceptions of CO. COs is like watching teaching in action (Vygotsky, 1978). It is an act in which an observer observes a teacher's performance in their classroom or teaching environment. Another popularly accepted notion about COs is that they provide a quantitative method of recording and measuring teaching and gauging its impact on the learning outcome of the learners. The challenges and tensions inherent in the professionalization of education, including issues related to accountability, autonomy, and the balance between standardized practices and individualized approaches, are challenging. This challenge can only be achieved by fostering a culture of collaboration, support, and shared responsibility, which is essential for the development of professionalism among education professionals (Evans, 2008).

Research Questions

To achieve the research objectives, educators from diverse backgrounds will be interviewed to assess their perceptions of feedback and to determine whether, in their opinion, COs effectively measure teacher performance and facilitate PD. The study will be guided by the following research questions:

1. According to observers and observes, to what extent do teachers accept feedback following classroom observations?
2. According to observers and observes, what strategies can be implemented to ensure the effectiveness of CO and feedback?
3. According to observers and observes, how does feedback influence their teaching practices and professional development?

Methodology

Research methodology refers to the systematic approach, techniques, and procedures used by researchers to conduct a study and gather data. There are three different types of research methodology researchers can plan depending on their research paradigm (Lambert, 2011).

It encompasses the overall design, data collection methods, and data analysis techniques employed to address research questions or objectives. When a researcher opts to collect both quantitative as well as qualitative data, the data methodology design is termed as Mixed Research Methodology. It is a combination of quantitative and qualitative approaches in a single study to enhance understanding, triangulate findings, and provide a more comprehensive analysis of research questions (Creswell, 2017).

Mixed research methodology is increasingly gaining popularity among researchers as it capitalizes on the strengths of both quantitative and qualitative methods, leading to enhanced validity, reliability, and depth of understanding (Teddle & Tashakkori, 2009). Many recent studies indicate a preference for

the use of mixed research methodology across various disciplines, highlighting its effectiveness in producing robust research findings and contributing to the advancement of knowledge (Creswell, 2017).

Following the popular practice of strengthening one's research, the researchers of the present research paper have opted for a mixed method. Data is collected by evaluative theoretical literature as a secondary source. Davidson et al. (2017) and Smith et al. (2019) observe that the quantitative data method is likely to generate comprehensive data.

For quantitative data, a meticulously designed survey administered via Google Forms was utilized. They consisted of English Language Instructors with diverse backgrounds in teaching, learning, and observational practices.

Qualitative Research Method: The research focuses on exploring and understanding complex phenomena through an in-depth examination of people's experiences, perspectives, and contexts as presented in available published literature (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The present research analyzes a pool of secondary data available to validate the credibility. Collecting data from published resources for research is commonly referred to as secondary data collection or secondary research. Smith (2018) observes that in secondary research, researchers analyze and interpret existing data that has been previously collected and published by other sources. This can include academic journals, books, government reports, statistical databases, and other published materials.

Ethical Consideration: Including ethics in research is essential as it safeguards the welfare and rights of, upholds the integrity of the research process, and fosters trust between researchers (Johnson & Williams, 2019). For the present research, we have followed the ethical guidelines of collecting secondary data from books, journals, and web-based resources. An informed consent has been obtained before sharing the link for the questionnaire.

Classroom Observation (COs) Structure and Procedure

According to Richards and Farrell (2005), COs involve systematically observing and recording teaching and learning interactions within an English as a second language (ESL) classroom to understand teaching effectiveness, student involvement, language learning progress, and classroom dynamics. Richards and Lockhart (1994) discuss a variety of aspects related to reflective teaching, including the importance of classroom observation in gaining insights into teaching practices and student learning. The book also provides practical guidance on how teachers, at their own level, can systematically observe and document classroom activities to enhance teaching effectiveness and promote language acquisition in ESL classrooms (Richards & Farrell, 2005). Wajnryb (1992) suggests a number of practical tasks and activities for classroom observation in her book titled, 'Classroom Observation Tasks: A ñs' (Wajnryb, 1992, p. 5-10). It is a valuable resource for language teachers and trainers seeking to enhance their observation skills and support teacher development. It also provides guidance on what to look for during observations and how to give helpful feedback to teachers (Wajnryb, 1992).

Richards and Farrell's 2005 published book, 'Observing English Language Classrooms: A ñs' (2005), is indeed a detailed guide that offers insights into observing English language classrooms (Richards & Farrell, 2005). It covers various aspects of classroom observation, including teacher-student interaction and classroom management techniques (Richards & Farrell, 2005). The guide is suitable for teachers looking to improve their observation techniques and enhance their teaching practices.

One of the highly recommended and cited works is 'Classroom ñbservation: A guide to the effective observation of teaching and learning' by O'Leary (2014). Who provides a valuable resource for educators, trainers, and researchers interested in improving teaching and learning through observation. His book is the comprehensive guide to conducting effective classroom observations. It covers observation methods, data collection techniques, and strategies for providing feedback to teachers (O'Leary, 2014).

Classroom observation (CO) is a critical tool for systematically observing and recording teaching and learning interactions to understand teaching effectiveness, student engagement, and classroom dynamics. According to recent research by Cowie et al. (2018), COs offer valuable insights into teaching practices and contribute to professional development by allowing teachers to reflect on their instructional methods and student learning outcomes. Their study emphasizes the importance of structured observation frameworks that ensure consistency and reliability in the observation process.

Glickman and Gordon (2017) highlight the significance of feedback in COs, noting that effective feedback after observations can foster teacher reflection and improvement. Their work also points out that feedback is most effective when it is aligned with teachers' professional goals and presented in a collaborative, non-evaluative manner. This echoes earlier findings by Richards and Farrell (2005) on the role of reflective teaching, where systematic observation helps teachers refine their practices and support language acquisition, particularly in ESL classrooms.

More recently, O'Leary (2020) builds upon earlier contributions by proposing a comprehensive approach to classroom observation. His work details methods for data collection, including observation protocols and rubrics that ensure objectivity and relevance in feedback. O'Leary emphasizes the dual nature of COs: while they provide opportunities for professional growth, they may also evoke anxiety if perceived as purely evaluative. Creating a supportive observation culture is, therefore, crucial for fostering collaboration and continuous improvement.

Additionally, research by Hardman and Jones (2019) focuses on observation tasks and how they can be tailored to individual teacher needs. Their findings align with earlier recommendations by Wajnryb (1992), who outlined specific tasks and activities to guide teachers during observations. Hardman and Jones (2019) extend this by exploring how observation data can be used to offer tailored, actionable feedback that promotes reflective teaching and teacher development.

To conclude, recent literature emphasizes the evolving role of classroom observation in fostering reflective practice and professional development. COs, when structured properly and accompanied by constructive feedback, serve as powerful tools for improving teaching effectiveness and enhancing student learning outcomes (Bell & Mladenovic, 2019; Guskey & Yoon, 2020).

The Role of the Observer and the Observee in the Process of Conducting Classroom Observations (COs) and Feedback

The roles of both the observer—the individual responsible for conducting the observation and providing feedback—and the observee—the teacher being observed—are critical to the effectiveness of classroom observations (COs). To ensure alignment between observation objectives and instructional goals, a pre-observation meeting or discussion is essential. This meeting allows both parties to agree on the specific areas of focus, which may include pedagogical approaches, lesson planning, instructional objectives, assessment strategies, classroom management, and the use of materials and resources (Wajnryb, 1992). Recent studies have emphasized that this preparatory phase not only clarifies the objectives but also fosters a collaborative atmosphere that is conducive to professional growth (Peel & Wallace, 2018).

A standardized structure for COs is followed globally, reflecting widely used frameworks. For example, Danielson (2013) and Marzano et al. (2011) propose observation models that focus on evaluating effective teaching practices and instructional strategies. These frameworks emphasize the importance of structured, constructive feedback after observations, which contributes significantly to professional development (PD). Additionally, specific tools like the TESOL Classroom Observation Tool (TESOL-COT) provide detailed guidelines for ESL classrooms, ensuring that observations remain focused on language learning outcomes and teaching effectiveness (Peel & Wallace, 2018).

The integration of COs and feedback in teacher education programs, such as the CELTA course at Cambridge University, offers trainee teachers valuable insights into effective teaching practices. Cambridge University Press (2024) notes that during CELTA, trainees observe experienced instructors either in person or through video recordings, focusing on classroom dynamics, lesson planning, and student engagement. Following each observation, structured feedback is provided, highlighting strengths and areas for improvement, thus fostering reflective teaching and facilitating long-term professional development (Cambridge University Press, 2024). As a result, both observers and observees develop a deeper understanding of the COs and feedback process, which is essential for improving teaching practices in ESL classrooms (Danielson, 2013).

Bridging Classroom Observations and Feedback for Professional Development (PD)

Classroom observation is a systematic approach to observing and documenting teaching and learning activities, providing insight into instructional effectiveness, student engagement, language acquisition, and classroom dynamics. Marzano et al. (2011) and Danielson (2013) highlight the central role of COs in offering teachers opportunities for reflective practice, which enhances both instructional techniques and overall teaching efficacy. Smith (2020) emphasizes that the primary goal of COs is to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of teaching and learning through systematic evaluation and feedback. According to Johnson and Brown (2018), COs not only promote a culture of professional development but also contribute to accountability within educational institutions, facilitating strategic decision-making.

Perception of COs: Intimidation and Response

A key concern in implementing COs is the potential for teachers to feel intimidated or overly scrutinized. However, most recent studies indicate that this is not a widespread issue. In their research, Johnson and Brown (2018) found that the majority of respondents did not perceive COs as intimidating or overly critical. Rather, they viewed the observation process as constructive and essential for improving teaching practices. This aligns with findings by Peel and Wallace (2018), who noted that COs, when conducted within a structured and supportive framework, tend to be perceived positively by educators, enhancing their receptiveness to feedback and subsequent professional development.

Furthermore, Gan et al. (2021) argues that the nature of the observer-observee relationship significantly influences the perception of COs. When observers provide balanced feedback, emphasizing both strengths and areas for improvement, teachers are more likely to view the process as a learning opportunity rather than a punitive measure. In fact, O'Leary (2020) contends that the positive perception of COs is reinforced when the focus is placed on growth-oriented feedback, thus reducing anxiety and fostering a collaborative atmosphere for professional learning. Such a view suggests that the effectiveness of COs is not only in their structure but also in the manner in which feedback is communicated.

Purpose and Objectives of COs: A General Overview

The primary purpose of classroom observation is to improve teaching practices and student outcomes by providing feedback that is actionable and aligned with professional development goals. Observations can focus on various aspects, including teacher-student interaction, instructional strategies, and classroom management. Smith et al. (2009) highlight that the main purpose of COs is to enhance the quality of teaching and learning through systematic observation and constructive feedback. Furthermore, Johnson and Brown (2018) argue that COs are instrumental in cultivating a culture of professional development and accountability, ultimately supporting decision-making at both the individual and institutional levels.

Methods and Techniques for Conducting Cos

Classroom observations employ a range of methods and techniques, ensuring a comprehensive evaluation of teaching practices. These methods include:

1. **Structured Observations:** Using a predetermined observation protocol or checklist to systematically assess specific teaching behaviors and practices (Marzano et al., 2011).
2. **Unstructured Observations:** Allowing for open-ended, flexible observations without a specific checklist, providing a broader understanding of classroom dynamics and instructional strategies (Wragg, 1999).
3. **Video Recordings:** Recording classroom sessions for later analysis and reflection can provide a more in-depth review of instructional practices and classroom interactions (O'Leary, 2020).
4. **Data Collection:** Using both quantitative data (e.g., frequency counts, activity duration) and qualitative data (e.g., descriptive notes, reflective journals) to capture a well-rounded view of the classroom environment and teaching effectiveness (Danielson, 2013; Marzano et al., 2011).

These diverse methods allow observers to tailor their approach to specific teaching contexts, making COs a flexible and effective tool for professional development (Guskey & Yoon, 2020).

Data Analysis and Feedback

After the observation, collected data from the COs is analyzed to identify strengths and areas for improvement. Feedback is provided to teachers, focusing on actionable recommendations and strategies for enhancing teaching practices and student learning experiences. (Wragg, 1994). Various methods exist for providing feedback after classroom observation, each with its own advantages and considerations. Some common methods include:

1. **Verbal Feedback:** It can also be considered the traditional method as it is one of the earliest and most common forms of giving feedback. Verbal feedback involves providing feedback orally to the teacher immediately after the observation. Verbal feedback allows for immediate clarification and discussion, fostering a collaborative and interactive approach (Bell & Mladenovic, 2019).
2. **Written Feedback:** A technique which we can put as following the tradition of the phrase, the pen is mightier than the sword. Written feedback is provided in the form of a written report or summary of the observation. This method allows for detailed documentation and reflection, providing teachers with a written record of strengths and areas for improvement (Henderson & Hawthorne, 2018).
3. **Peer Feedback:** This type of feedback is based on the anecdote-Two heads are better than one- it follows the rhythm to embrace peer feedback for collective growth. Peer feedback involves teachers observing and providing feedback to their colleagues. Peer feedback promotes a supportive and collaborative learning environment, allowing teachers to learn from each other's experiences and perspectives (Darling-Hammond, 2016).
4. **Video-Based Feedback:** Capture, Reflect, and Evolve. Harnessing the power of video-based feedback for modern learning, this type of feedback involves recording classroom lessons and reviewing them with the teacher. This method allows for a detailed analysis of teaching practices and student interactions, promoting self-reflection and awareness (Hattie & Timperley, 2007).
5. **Coaching and Mentoring:** Coaching and mentoring as contemporary practices involve more direct guidance and support from a more experienced individual to a less experienced one. This method involves working one-on-one with a coach or mentor to discuss observation findings and develop personalized improvement plans. This method provides ongoing support and guidance, facilitating long-term professional growth (Kraft et al., 2018).

These methods can be tailored to suit the needs and preferences of individual teachers and schools, allowing for a

flexible and adaptive approach to professional development. The present research attempts to collect data on the type of feedback technique administered at their current organization and also an attempt to discuss and suggest a technique that can bring the best results of COs and feedback is made at the end of the research.

Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

Classroom observation is an ongoing process aimed at fostering continuous improvement in teaching and learning. Regular feedback and follow-up observations help track progress and ensure sustained professional growth. Danielson (2007) provides a comprehensive framework for understanding effective teaching practices and offers guidance on using classroom observation as a tool for professional development. More recently, Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) emphasize that ongoing feedback and coaching, as part of continuous professional development (CPD), play a critical role in ensuring teacher growth and student achievement. Research by Kraft and Papay (2014) also demonstrates that CPD activities, such as classroom observations coupled with consistent feedback, contribute significantly to teachers' instructional practices and student outcomes.

Stronge et al. (2008) discuss the characteristics and behaviors of effective teachers, offering insights into how classroom observation and feedback can directly contribute to professional development and enhanced student learning. Hattie (2012) synthesizes research on effective teaching strategies and emphasizes the importance of feedback and self-reflection in improving teaching practices. More recent studies confirm this view, with Kraft et al. (2018) stressing that feedback delivered in a constructive, specific, and timely manner leads to continuous improvements in teaching.

Critically Analyzing Teachers' Perceptions of COs and Feedback: Observee Outlook on COs and Feedback on their PD

Classroom observations and feedback tend to elicit mixed responses from teachers. Studies indicate that teachers often exhibit ambivalence due to concerns such as fear of judgment, criticism, or skepticism regarding the feedback process (Danielson, 2007). However, more recent studies (Yasir et al., 2023) reveal that most teachers view classroom observations positively when the feedback provided is constructive and aimed at professional development. According to Kraft et al. (2018), teachers are more likely to respond positively to feedback when it is framed as part of a supportive and collaborative professional development process.

Research suggests that the quality and nature of feedback are critical in determining how it is received by teachers. Constructive feedback that is specific, timely, and supportive leads to more positive outcomes in teaching practices (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017; Hattie & Timperley, 2007). As noted by Timperley (2008), feedback perceived as collaborative rather than evaluative fosters reflective practice and strengthens the teacher's commitment to improving their instructional methods. Additionally, the broader organizational culture, leadership support, and resources available for professional development have a significant impact on how teachers perceive and engage with feedback (Jones & Moreland, 2005).

In conclusion, while COs and feedback can elicit varied responses from teachers, the quality of the feedback, the relationships between observers and teachers, and the broader context in which observations take place are essential in shaping these perceptions. By focusing on high-quality feedback and creating a culture of trust and collaboration, educational leaders can ensure that classroom observations and feedback contribute positively to ongoing teacher improvement (Yasir et al., 2023).

Importance of Feedback in Teacher Performance and Motivation: An Observer and Observee's Outlook

Feedback is a critical tool that provides teachers with a clear understanding of their instructional strategies, strengths, and areas needing improvement, which in turn supports their

professional performance. As highlighted by Hattie and Timperley (2007), feedback serves as a benchmark that helps teachers refine their skills and increase their effectiveness in the classroom. When feedback is provided after classroom observations, it enables teachers to see what they are doing well and where they can improve, ultimately benefiting student learning outcomes (DeNisi & Murphy, 2017).

Kluger and DeNisi (1996) assert that feedback also plays a crucial role in maintaining teacher motivation. Teachers who receive affirming feedback are more likely to feel encouraged and continue working hard, while constructive feedback motivates them to focus on areas of improvement. More recent research by Kraft et al. (2018) supports this, suggesting that effective feedback significantly influences teachers' motivation to adopt new teaching practices.

Bandura (1997) adds that constructive feedback boosts teachers' confidence, which in turn contributes to professional development. Confidence enables teachers to experiment with new strategies and approaches, making them more adaptive to changing classroom dynamics. Darling-Hammond and Bransford (2005) also explore how feedback can foster professional growth by identifying areas for improvement and setting goals for educators. Furthermore, recent studies highlight the importance of feedback in professional development, with Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) emphasizing that high-quality feedback is essential in helping teachers continually grow in their instructional practices.

In sum, feedback is essential not only for improving teacher performance but also for maintaining motivation and fostering professional development. By providing actionable, supportive feedback, educational leaders can ensure that teachers remain engaged in their practice and committed to their professional growth.

Results and Discussion

The objective of this research was to evaluate teachers' perceptions and experiences regarding classroom observation procedures, as well as the efficacy of the feedback they receive. Administering a structured questionnaire based on a Likert scale, data was collected to gain insights into various facets of the observation process, encompassing pre-observation consultations, feedback utility, and peer evaluation. The key findings of the study are as follows:

1. Favorable Disposition Toward Classroom Observation Practices: Teachers exhibit a generally positive attitude toward classroom observation practices, recognizing them as a valuable tool for professional development.
2. Areas for Refinement: Areas for refinement have been pinpointed, notably the need to enhance the clarity of observation objectives and ensure uniformity in pre-observation discussions to facilitate a more focused observation process.
3. Significance of Feedback Mechanisms: The study underscores the importance of robust feedback mechanisms, highlighting that timely and constructive feedback is crucial for the continuous professional growth of teachers.
4. Peer Evaluation as a Supportive Tool: The pivotal role played by seasoned educators in fostering a supportive observation environment is emphasized, with peer evaluation seen as beneficial in enhancing teaching practices through shared experiences and insights.
5. Perceived Impact on Teaching Practices: A significant number of respondents reported that classroom observations, when coupled with constructive feedback, have a direct and positive impact on their teaching methods, leading to improved classroom management and instructional strategies.
6. Importance of Follow-Up: The findings indicate that teachers value follow-up observations and feedback sessions, as they provide an opportunity to track progress, reflect on improvements, and make necessary adjustments to their teaching approaches.

7. Varied Responses to Feedback: While most teachers found feedback helpful, a small percentage indicated that the feedback received was sometimes too general or lacked actionable steps, suggesting the need for more specific and tailored feedback.
8. Collaboration and Professional Development: Teachers expressed a desire for greater collaboration during the observation process, indicating that opportunities for joint lesson planning and collaborative reflections post-observation could further enhance their professional development and teaching efficacy.

Table 1
Demographic Information

Particulars	f	%
Age group		
20 and above	11	16.9
30 and above	34	52.3
40 and above	16	24.6
Does not want to say	4	6.1
Experience level		
Beginner	7	10.7
Mid-career	20	30.7
Advanced	38	58.4
Occupation distribution		
School teacher	38	58.4
College lecturer	14	21.5
University professor	13	20

Note. N = 65.
Data collected by author on the 2024.

Table 2
Attitudes towards Observation (Sample)

Response	f	%
Scale		
Strongly agree	11	16.9
Agree	22	33.8
Neutral	18	27.6
Disagree	13	20
Strongly disagree	1	1.5
Feedback reflectiveness (Sample)		
Strongly Agree	13	20
Agree	35	53.8
Neutral	17	26.1

Note. N = 65.
Data collected by author on the 2024.

Analysis of Each Response Based on the Feedback and Responses

Item 1: The high percentage of respondents (69.3%) who view classroom observation positively suggests a general consensus on the benefits of these practices for professional development. This favorable disposition indicates that teachers likely value the opportunity for growth and self-improvement that observations provide. The relatively low disagreement rate (15.4%) suggests that any negative perceptions may stem from specific aspects of the observation process rather than the practice itself.

Item 2: The combined 56.9% who agree that pre-observation objectives need refinement highlights a significant area for improvement. Clear and consistent communication of objectives is crucial for setting expectations and ensuring that both the observer and the teacher are aligned. The mixed responses also indicate that while some teachers may be satisfied with current practices, there is a clear call for better-defined goals and increased clarity.

Item 3: With 78.5% of respondents emphasizing the importance of robust feedback, it is evident that meaningful feedback is highly valued. This highlights the need for feedback mechanisms that are not only constructive but also delivered by experienced educators who understand the nuances of teaching. The low percentage of disagreement (9.3%) suggests that most teachers see feedback as integral to their professional growth.

Item 4: The high percentage (80%) of respondents who perceive feedback as reflective suggests that the feedback they receive is considered thoughtful and relevant to their teaching contexts. This is crucial for fostering a deeper engagement with the feedback and applying it effectively to improve teaching practices.

Item 5: The combined 78.4% of respondents who find feedback constructive underscores its value in providing actionable insights. Constructive feedback helps teachers address specific areas for improvement and enhances their overall teaching effectiveness. The low percentage of disagreement (7.7%) indicates that most feedback is perceived as valuable and practical.

Table 3
Perceptions of Educators on Classroom Observation and Feedback Effectiveness

Questions/Items	SA		A		N		D		SD	
	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
Not intimidated by the observation process	25	38.5	20	30.8	10	15.4	7	10.8	3	4.6
Refinement needed in pre-observation objectives	15	23.1	22	33.8	14	21.5	10	15.4	4	6.2
Significance of robust feedback mechanisms	28	43.1	23	35.4	8	12.3	4	6.2	2	3.1
Reflectiveness	25	38.5	27	41.5	8	12.3	4	6.2	1	1.5
Constructiveness	24	36.9	27	41.5	9	13.8	4	6.2	1	1.5
Clarity in observation goals	20	30.8	22	33.8	13	20	8	12.3	2	3.1
Classroom management	22	33.8	24	36.9	11	16.9	7	10.8	1	1.5
Student engagement	23	35.4	25	38.5	10	15.4	6	9.2	1	1.5
Instructional strategies	19	29.2	30	46.2	12	18.5	4	6.2	0	0
Professional responsibilities	18	27.7	22	33.8	15	23.1	8	12.3	2	3.1
Content knowledge	21	32.3	25	38.5	11	16.9	7	10.8	1	1.5
Observer's familiarity with content	16	24.6	23	35.4	15	23.1	9	13.8	2	3.1
Pre-observation meetings	12	18.5	20	30.8	16	24.6	11	16.9	6	9.2
Influence of experience on observation	22	33.8	25	38.5	12	18.5	5	7.7	1	1.5
Feedback enhancing teaching quality	20	30.8	28	43.1	10	15.4	6	9.2	1	1.5
Focused observation for effective feedback	21	32.3	26	40	12	18.5	5	7.7	1	1.5
Provision of observation goals	18	27.7	22	33.8	15	23.1	7	10.8	3	4.6

Note. SA = strongly agree; A = agree; N = neutral; D = disagree; SD = strongly disagree. N = 65.

Item 6: While 64.6% of respondents agreed that observation goals are clear, the 15.4% who disagreed highlight a need for refinement in the goal-setting process. Clear goals are essential for effective observations and ensuring that all are aligned on expectations. One major suggestion was to improve goal clarity to enhance the effectiveness and transparency of the observation process.

Item 7: The high percentage (70.7%) of respondents receiving feedback on classroom management indicates that this aspect of teaching is thoroughly covered during observations. Effective classroom management is critical for a productive learning environment, and the comprehensive feedback in this area suggests a well-rounded observation process.

Item 8: The 73.9% agreement rate on receiving feedback about student engagement suggests that observations effectively address how teachers engage their students. This feedback is crucial for understanding and improving classroom dynamics, and the low level of disagreement indicates general satisfaction with this aspect of the feedback.

Item 9: A total of 75.4% of respondents reported receiving feedback on instructional strategies, highlighting a strong focus on teaching methods. This suggests that observations prioritize evaluating and improving instructional techniques, which is key to enhancing teaching effectiveness.

Item 10: The 61.5% of respondents who received feedback on professional responsibilities beyond the classroom indicates a holistic approach to teacher evaluation. This comprehensive feedback supports professional development in areas such as administrative tasks and overall contributions to the school community.

Item 11: With 70.8% of respondents agreeing that feedback on content knowledge is provided, it is clear that subject matter expertise is a focus of observations. Ensuring that teachers have accurate and relevant content knowledge is essential for effective teaching.

Item 12: The 60% agreement rate on observers' familiarity with content suggests that while many teachers feel observers are knowledgeable, there is still concern about variability in content expertise. Ensuring that observers have adequate subject-specific knowledge is important for providing relevant feedback.

Item 13: The mixed responses on pre-observation meetings highlight an inconsistency in their conduct. Effective pre-observation meetings are crucial for setting clear expectations and ensuring alignment on goals. Improving the consistency of these meetings could enhance the observation process.

Item 14: The 72.3% agreement rate indicates that experience is seen as positively influencing the observation process. Experienced educators are likely to provide more nuanced and relevant feedback, which is beneficial for professional development.

Item 15: The 73.9% agreement rate suggests that feedback is effective in enhancing teaching quality. This reinforces the value of feedback in improving instructional practices and overall teaching effectiveness.

Item 16: The high percentage (72.3%) believe that focused observation leads to more meaningful feedback, emphasizing the need for targeted feedback areas. Focused observations can provide more actionable insights and improve the effectiveness of the feedback process.

Item 17: The mixed responses indicate that while many agree that observation goals are provided, there is room for improvement in communication consistency. Ensuring that goals are clearly communicated and consistently applied across observations can enhance the effectiveness of the observation process.

These enhanced analyses provide a deeper understanding of the responses, identifying key areas for improvement and reinforcing the value of various aspects of the observation and feedback process. Top of Form The findings elucidate that the majority of respondents concur with the notion that feedback plays a pivotal role in augmenting the quality of their teaching endeavors. This underscores the overarching efficacy of the feedback mechanism as a catalyst for professional growth and development. Hattie and Timperley (2007) noted that these insights stem from a meticulous analysis of questionnaire responses, which have been meticulously scrutinized to unveil noteworthy patterns and implications (Danielson, 2007). Moreover, these observations offer valuable recommendations aimed at refining classroom observation and feedback protocols.

Suggestions for Further Studies

1. Comparing and Contrasting the Effectiveness of Observation Models: We have observed that the process of COs is a multi-dimensional process involving mutual acceptance of everyone involved. It is, therefore, recommended that a study to evaluate the impact of peer, administrative, and external observation models on teaching practices and feedback quality in diverse educational settings.
2. Assessing the Influence of Observer Training/Commitment on Feedback Quality: One of the key outcomes of this research is the importance of recognizing and maintaining the confidence and self-respect of everyone involved in COs. Organizations must provide and keep track of the training programs for observers nominated for conducting COs and Feedback. Focusing on developing and improving observer skills and techniques will affect the quality and effectiveness of the feedback provided.
3. Encouraging Self-Reflection in Enhancing Teaching Practices: In order to maintain the purpose of PD via COs and feedback, it is suggested that Educational institutes promote observers (the quality of feedback produced) and observees (the quality of feedback received) to explore different self-reflection strategies to be employed by them before and after COs.
4. Exploring the Use of Technology in Classroom Observation and Feedback: Finally, it is recommended that a continuous/regular study can be conducted at the institutional level. The purpose of this study is to examine the effectiveness of digital tools and platforms in facilitating observation processes, providing feedback, and supporting teacher growth in diverse educational contexts.

Conclusion

This research highlights the significant role that classroom observations (COs) and feedback play in professional development (PD) for educators. The findings emphasize that teachers generally view COs positively, especially when the process is collaborative, structured, and supported by clear objectives. Effective feedback, particularly when specific, actionable, and aligned with professional goals, is seen as a critical element in improving teaching practices and fostering continuous growth. However, the research also underscores the need for refining observation practices, particularly in clarifying goals, providing tailored feedback, and ensuring follow-up sessions for sustained improvement.

The study offers valuable insights into the perceptions of educators regarding the effectiveness of COs in enhancing teaching quality and underscores the importance of creating a supportive and non-threatening environment during the observation process. This research suggests that fostering a culture of trust and collaboration within educational institutions

is key to maximizing the benefits of COs and feedback. Future research should explore the use of technology in COs, assess the impact of observer training, and encourage self-reflection among teachers to further enhance the professional development process.

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