Interventions to Enhance English Teachers' Participation in the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning: Kalahari Circuit English as a Second Language Teachers' Voices

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Abstract
The paucity of English teachers in Namibia's research output as well as practicing the scholarship of teaching and learning has been noticed and noted. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the views of English teachers in the Kalahari Circuit in the ||Kharas Region in Namibia on the effect of an intervention to enhance their willingness to conduct research and publish. The study used a questionnaire to collect qualitative and quantitative biographical data from the participants. The quantitative data were analysed using simple description while qualitative data were analysed using Renner and Tylor-Powell's five steps for analysing narratives. The study revealed that, after participating in the research workshop, English teachers showed confidence to conduct research and publish their work. Furthermore, the participants suggested that the workshop should

	include all teachers, who need support from the agents in education. It was also found that the duration of the workshop should be extended and resources should be availed to teachers to conduct research for publication. The study recommended that this training should be rolled out to other regions while broadening the target scope.

INTRODUCTION

Since Boyer's (1990) report titled "*Scholarship Reconsidered: Priorities for the Professoriate*", there have been investigations on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning (SoTL) across the globe (Shulman, 2011; Hutchings et al., 2011; Shawa, 2020). Shulman (2011) coined the concept of SoTL, which is an expansion of Boyer's (1990) scholarship of teaching. Some of the scholars who discoursed SoTL focusing on higher education latterly are such as Tierney (2020) who proposes that SoTL should be included in the United Kingdom's Research Excellence Framework. Canning and Masika (2020) also argue for better strategies to recognise SoTL as research based on its value and merits. Despite the focus being on the higher education phase, the SoTL has the potential to improve teaching and learning at every level of education including English teaching at the secondary school level.

In Namibia, the school curriculum was reformed on recommendation by the cabinet following the resolutions of the 2011 National Education Conference (MoEAC, 2016). Curriculum transformation aimed to provide learning that provides beneficiaries with functional skills in a knowledge-based economy. Continuous improvement of teaching and learning could be achieved through the last level of Boyer's (1990) category of scholarship, the Scholarship of Teaching. This is about conducting research, applying the outcomes of the research in the teaching and learning context, and finally putting the findings in the public domain. This aligns with the praxis, a Freirian (1970) concept that calls for educators to interrogate their practice. That is, educators should focus on the inquiring factors, values, and assumptions in their social setting. They should also act to transform their practice for better and more effective teaching and learning. There is a relationship between theory and practice, where practice informs theory which causes morphogenesis. The morphogenesis is the extent of change or transformation that occurs instead of the morphostasis or change that did not occur (Archer, 1996; Boughey, 2012; Slemming, 2019).

This study is a follow-up on the training interventions conducted to improve the teaching of English as a Second Language in the Karahari Circuit, ||Kharas Region in Namibia. According to the MoEAC's (2020) English as Second Language syllabus, learners' level should be taught and guided to develop abilities that tertiary institutions highly

value, including "independent learning and research" (p. 7). This could dispel the myth placed on research that it is only for the few in higher institutions of learning such as universities (Banda, 2016). Therefore, it is important that teachers conduct research and put the results in the public domain through workshops, conferences and journal publications. Furthermore, research is recommended by Kusuma et al. (2020) to explore the influence of blended learning method on the teaching of English reading, listening and speaking skills. This has the potential to enhance the teaching and learning of English through research that is published.

Statement of the problem

By discoursing the factors which hinder English teachers from conducting research for publishing and coming up with a befitting intervention, the research training workshop as well as the findings of this study may assist teachers in identifying answers to specific issues that may be occurring in their classrooms or schools. This supports knowledge, skills and understanding development in the workplace which will connect teachers to sources and networks of expert assistance. Teachers are key stakeholders in education and the closest to the data-rich field of information which are the schools and particularly the classrooms. That cannot happen without any enabling interventions such as workshops and training on how to conduct research for publication. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to evaluate teachers' views on the effect of intervention to enhance the English teachers' willingness to conduct research for publishing in Karahari Circuit, ||Kharas Region, Namibia.

Research objectives

The study seeks to fulfil the following research objectives:

1) to establish the extent to which the workshop has capacitated the English teachers to conduct research for publication.

2) to assess if the workshop has provided English teachers with enough confidence to conduct their own research in their field.

3) to propose interventions that enable English teachers to conduct research for publishing in academic journals.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Framework

This project embraces Freirian views which advocate for education for liberation. In his book "*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*", Freire (1970) opposes education that treats students as "depositories" and teachers as "depositors" of knowledge. He used the "banking" concept to describe such pedagogy that follows a narrative view of education. Similarly, this project opposes one-way systems that inform teachers on how to teach. It promotes systems that avail opportunities for teachers to contribute to the body of knowledge of language pedagogies. In this project, the banking concept is paralleled with systems that turn teachers "into containers and receptacles to be filled", with knowledge and language

pedagogies (Freire, 1998, p. 72). In line with Freire's view, it is believed, in this project that teachers can be liberated if they are provided with the necessary support and opportunities to share their teaching experiences, research works and academic views in academic platforms such as academic journals, in order to contribute to knowledge in their respective disciplines.

The study is also underpinned by Boyer's (1990) model of SoTL which, according to Trigwell (2013), is adopted by educators who employ inquiry, reflection, peer reviewing approaches to the ways of teaching, and they are likely to enhance quality student learning. Boyer came up with four categories of scholarships. The first category is traditional or basic research called the scholarship of discovery. This discovery is done through basic scholarly inquiry. The second category is the scholarship of integration. Once discoveries are made through basic research, they should be put in perspective. This enables no specialist to learn from the discovery or findings. The third category is a scholarship of application. Once the discovery and meaning are established, they need to be applied to address the challenges in a social setting. For instance, this study seeks to address the challenges experienced by English teachers in their classes. The last category is a scholarship of teaching which goes beyond the first three steps to provide an opportunity for researchers to be learners.

The SoTL is an extension of the last stage of Boyer's (1990) Scholarship of Teaching that seeks to put the findings of research into the public domain to benefit others. This is above the 'scholarly teaching' because it has characteristics of sharing what is discovered through scientific research. The discoveries are put in the public domain through publications in peer- reviewed journals, conference presentations, posters or workshops. This, according to Ngulube (2021) enables knowledge sharing. Thus, the scholarship of teaching and learning, underpins this study.

Teachers Conducting Research for Publishing

The constant changes in the educational environment require teachers to be involved in research in their teaching settings to provide evidence-based solutions. For instance, Sudewi and Fadilah (2023) propose further researchers on the use of audio visual in teaching English listening skills topic. This promotes the importance of research in English teaching. Generally, research improves the lives of people and provides solutions to educational challenges (Kapur, 2018; Ahmad, & Rehman, 2023). For instance, the purpose of action research, according to Clark et al. (2022), is to improve educational practice by generating solutions from the context. The importance of teachers' engagement in research has made their participation in authentic research a widely accepted educational practice when they were in the pre=service teacher education (Pardede & Purnamasari, 2021).

One of the reasons why teachers may not participate in research activities and publishing could be linked to a lack of encouragement. Research has found, for example, that some school managers or principals tend not to participate in research activities; as a result, teachers' lack of encouragement and support from the school leaders may lead to poor involvement of teachers in research activities (Erba, 2013). Carter and Aulette (2016) assert that poor interest in research activities and publishing from the side of the

educational managers could result in researchers getting frustrated by certain bureaucracies that may not make the research processes run smoothly for the researchers, in this case, the teachers. Time constraints can also be some of the barriers to willingness to conduct research and publish it. The participants are also faced with a lot of administrative work and indicated that they would rarely find time to conduct research and publish.

Some teachers could also be the type of people who are perfectionists. In this case, they tend to have a fear of making mistakes, and as such they find themselves hesitant to share their research work with the public. Carter and Aulette (2016) caution that "negative thoughts about our writing capability can block our confidence" (p. 21).

Lacked of or limited resources could also be a challenge for teachers who want to conduct research and publish in academic journals. Some teachers, especially those in remote areas, may have limited or no access to journals. Even in the digital era, where resources are available online, some teachers tend to be located in areas where there is no internet coverage. In addition, they could also be computer illiterate, which could make it difficult to find the relevant resources on their own (Singhal, 2007). This means they may not be able to compose well-informed literature reviews (Carter & Aulette, 2016).

In Namibia, it seems educational research is mostly conducted for obtaining graduate qualifications and there is not much evidence of research made by teachers to address educational challenges in classrooms. The research conducted seems to collect dust in the repositories while the challenges continue unhindered. Generally,   some scholars found that capacity development initiatives such as training and workshops have a positive impact on the practice of the recipients (Özgenel & Mert, 2019; Perines, 2021). This concurs with the findings by Iitula and Hamakali (2017) that the teachers' low level of motivation to conduct research is due to the lack of in-service training of teachers on research and publishing which leads to the lack of knowledge and skills in conducting research and publishing. Hawke et al. (2020) found that participants from various career levels indicated that they were satisfied with the workshop interventions. The recipients of the training or workshop changed their beliefs and practices. This concurs with the findings of scholars such as (Talvio et al., 2016; Sopandi & Handayani, 2019; Sopan & Handayani, 2019) who found that workshops improve teachers' pedagogic competence.

On the other hand, the study by Talvio et al. (2016) reveals that workshops improve teachers' social and emotional intelligence. For instance, Beane et al. (2020) confirm that workshops have shifted the early career teachers' beliefs on the use of a learner-centered approach to teaching. The findings of the studies discussed suggest that workshop interventions have a positive impact on the practice of the recipients. It is, therefore, expected that the research workshop for the English teachers in Kalahari Circuit in Namibia may improve the teachers' understanding and practice of research for publication, and promoted the SoLT among the teachers.

METHOD

This study is positioned in a pragmatic paradigm and employs a mixed methods approach. The pragmatic worldviews use more than one complimentary philosophical assumption to understand a phenomenon (Shikalepo, 2021). A questionnaire was used to collect data and it comprised two sections namely: demographic data and open-ended questions prompting the participants to evaluate and reflect on the workshop. The sample of the study was ten (10) purposively selected English as a Second Language secondary school teachers in the Kalahari circuit who attended the two-day workshop from 4-5 December 2023. This circuit was purposively selected because it has more senior secondary schools compared to the other circuits in the ||Kharas Region. Also, all the secondary schools are close to or are located in the main town of Keetmanshoop.

Instrument and data collection

After the workshop, the researchers administered the questionnaire to the participants. The researchers were present to answer any questions and offer clarification before and while the teacher responded to the questionnaire. The questionnaire took about 20 minutes to complete.

Data analysis

The data were analysed using thematic analysis. The collected qualitative data were analysed using Renner and Tylor-Powell's (2003) five steps for narrative data analysis. One of the researchers typed the responses organised per questions (Renner & Tylor-Powell, 20023). First, the data were read three times from the typed document, and a read-out-loud computer programme was also used to read the data. Second, the analysis focused on identifying consistencies and differences in participants' responses. Third, the analysis was aimed at categorising information by identifying themes or patterns, and then identifying patterns and connections within and between categories. The last step was the interpretation of themes and connections which were also brought together to explain the findings.

Pilot study

This study embraced guidance from Bertram and Christiansen (2014) by piloting the open-ended questionnaire which was administered to a sample of three participants taken from the population. These participants were excluded from the actual study. The researchers identified questions that did not elicit the necessary information that respond to the objectives of the study. This process improved the quality of the questionnaire (Brink et al., 2018). The open-ended questionnaire provided depth to the responses unlike the closed-ended questionnaires (Kumar, 2014).

Ethical considerations

The researchers obtained an Ethical Clearance Certificate from the University of Namibia Expedited Research Ethics Committee in accordance with the University of Namibia's Research Ethics Policy and Guidelines (University of Namibia, 2013). This aimed to ensure that ethical concerns were adhered to in this study. All participants signed a Consent

Form and were informed that they could withdraw from the research at any time without consequences of any kind. In order to maintain anonymity and confidentiality during and after the study, pseudonyms were used in the research report. All essential information about the research was disclosed to the participants. Lastly, to exercise integrity, there was no disclosure of information to any unauthorised agents who were not involved in the study. The research data have been secured on the researchers' computers and a backup drive, both of which are password protected; only the researchers have access to these passwords. The research raw data is stored for five years before they are permanently deleted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
Demographic Information
Ten English teachers participated in the study. The sample is made up of three male and seven female teachers. Eight teachers are in the age category between 30-39 while age categories 20-29 and 40-49 have one teacher each. Seven teachers hold a Bachelor of Education as their highest teaching qualification, two have master's degrees and one a postgraduate diploma in education. Four teachers each are in the categories of 0-5 and 6-10 years of teaching experience while two are in the 11-15 category. These details of participants are summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: *Participants' demographic data*

Name	Gender	Age (category)	Highest Teaching Qualification	Years of teaching experience (category)
Teacher Capricorn	Female	30-39	Postgraduate Diploma in Education	0-5
Teacher Tseib	Male	30-39	Bachelor of Education	6-10
Teacher Blagte	Female	30-39	Bachelor of Education	6-10
Teacher Keetmans	Female	40-49	Bachelor of Education	11-15
Teacher Hope	Male	30-39	Bachelor of Education	0-5
Teacher Nxara	Female	20-29	Bachelor of Education	0-5
Teacher Koes	Male	30-39	Bachelor of Education	11-15
Teacher Grunau	Female	30-39	Master of Education	0-5
Teacher Aus	Female	30-39	Bachelor of Education	6-10
Teacher Aroab.	Female	30-39	Master of Education	6-10

The analysis of demographical data shows that more female teachers participated in the study than male teachers. More participants fall in the age category of 30-39 while categories 20-29 and 40-49 all have only one teacher each. More teachers have a Bachelor of Education degree as their highest teaching qualification, two participants have master's degrees in education while one participant has a postgraduate diploma in education. This signifies that all English teachers are appropriately qualified. Four English teachers each have teaching experience ranging between 0-5 and 6-10 years while only two have teaching experience ranging between 11-15 years.

The Extent of Capacitating Teachers to Conduct Research for Publication

The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which the workshop has capacitated them to conduct research for publication in their context. They were also asked to elaborate, and their response is presented thematically as follows:

Educational

Some participants felt that the workshop has had capacitated them to a great extent. They singled out that it was educational. Thus, they feel it has boosted their interest in educational research as well as their willingness to go back to the university to study again. One of the responses is as follows:

> *"Highest or greatest extend. It was very educational to such an extent that it had opened my eyes and boosted my interest in conducting educational research. I now have an idea on how to go about it."* (Teacher Capricorn)

Reminding

One participant considers this workshop as a platform to remind her about research. That is, the workshop served as a refresher for educational research. The participants indicated that:

> *"I have learned quite a lot. This workshop has opened myself up more to the possibility of future research in teaching. It was informative, detailed, well-structured and presented. I believe I have a firm foundation to build on after this."* (Teacher Hope)

Educational Problem solving

Some of the participants reported that the workshop has taught them the need to identify problems in teaching and learning and find possible solutions. They indicated that:

> *"I understand very well now. I understand the concept of educational research and action research. I can conduct research now because I know the different components of a research paper, and understand the process of publication."* (Teacher Grunau)

Enlightening

One of the participants reported that the workshop was enlightening regarding the types of journals and manuscript outlines. The participant indicated that:

> *"It has enlightened me on different journals to publish in, also it outlines the aspects of manuscript or article that catches reviewers' attention."* (Teacher Aroab)

It can thus be deduced from these responses that the workshop was effective. The workshop has capacitated the participants with the concepts of research as well as how to practice what they acquired from the workshop. Further, they believe they can take on the task of publishing their research findings once they are provided with the

necessary support to carry out research activities. The workshop has refreshed their memory about research that they were taught in their undergraduate degree programme.

Participants' Satisfaction with Research Areas Covered in the Workshop
The participants were asked to share their level of satisfaction regarding the areas covered in the workshop, as well as point out the areas that are not fully covered. While some of the participants indicated that they felt all the areas were covered, some of them thought there was still a need for more detailed training in research methodologies and referencing styles. Some of them also expected some sort of assessment by the end of the workshop, on top of the reflective and discussion approach that was used in the workshop. The participants who felt that all the areas were fully addressed responded as follows:

> *"All areas were fully covered. However, I feel like there is a need to keep repeating or having similar workshops to keep refreshing our minds."* (Teacher Capricorn).

> *"No area was not covered. All is made cleared and I appreciate this."* (Teacher Aroab)

The participants who felt that there is a need for more training on methodology, different referencing styles, and data analysis indicated that:

> *"The methodology part was still not fully covered because I am still confused (Teacher Grunau). Data analysis methods – I would have appreciated an in-depth discussion on it (Teacher Aus). … although I would have loved to know more about the different referencing styles."* (Teacher Koes)

One participant felt that they could have been assessed if there was enough time. The participants indicated that:

> *"The assessment part, if we had enough time, I think we should have been assessed just to make sure that we really get something from this educative project."* (Teacher Tseib)

The assessment ought to measure if the participants achieved the expected learning outcomes of the workshop.

It appears that the participants felt that most of the areas were covered in the workshop. However, some areas may have been covered with more depth. Hence, some participants suggested that the duration of the workshop could be extended from two days to three or more. Another participant felt that the workshop should be regularly repeated so that teachers can grasp the content.

Teachers' Suggestions to Improve the Workshop
The participants (teachers) were asked to share their opinions on how the workshop could be improved. There were divergent positions provided by the participants. Some feel the workshop does not need any improvement. They indicated that:

> *"I am satisfied on how they have conducted it and I am not requiting anything better than what they have done."* (Teacher Blagte)

On the contrary, some participants provided some shortcomings experienced provided suggestions on how the workshop can be improved. Their responses were as follows:

> *"I suggest this workshop to be done during school holidays so that presentations do not have to be rushed and shortened. Also, it could not be wise to accommodate all other teachers."* (Teacher Capricorn)

> *"The workshop was helpful and it can be improved by either increasing the number of days to three so that participants get a chance to practice what they were taught."* (Teacher Aroab)

The responses revealed that some participants expressed concerns about the time selected for the workshop and suggested that it could have been done during the school holiday. This could enable other teachers to attend the workshop as well. The suggestion to conduct the workshop during the holiday could have attracted more English teachers because some were marking the national examination while others were handling examination administrative work. Furthermore, the data revealed that there was a rush to cover the outline of the workshop. They felt that more days could be dedicated to this kind of workshop.

Teachers' Confidence to Conduct Research in their Context

One of the objectives of the workshop was to improve the teachers' confidence to conduct research in their work environment. One of the participants felt that the workshop did not provide enough confidence. The participant (Teacher Nxara) responded "*Not entirely, for now it is just a thought."* However, other participants seem to have benefited from the workshop regarding the improvement of their confidence to conduct research. They reported that:

> *"With the help that the research workshop conductors have promised to give, I would say yes."* (Teacher Tseib)

> *"It has to a great extent. During the undergraduate not a lot of attention was given to the importance of research and process involved. With this new knowledge I believe that I am more equipped to conduct my own research."* (Teacher Hope)

It can be construed from these responses that the participants felt that the workshop had boosted their confidence in conducting research and were eager to start the process. It has also provided a feeling of going back to school again. To some, the workshop provided an opportunity to participate in finding solutions to educational problems.

Challenges that may Hinder Teachers to Conduct Research

The participants were asked about the possible challenges that may prevent them from conducting research in their field of work. Some of them felt that time was a challenge. They indicated that "*due to tight schedule at work, time can be really a challenge. Also, lack of participants who are interested*" (Teacher Capricorn). There was also a concern regarding the "*The division of time with [their] work and the research. …* (Teacher Tseib). One of the participants (Teacher Hope) also indicated that *there was no "… leave/time made available to conduct research …"* which does not allow the teacher as a researcher to factor in some of the research activities such as "*… being on the road, school visits*" (Teacher Koes).

Some of the participants also indicated that the availability of resources is one of the challenges. For example, resources such as "*copy papers if there is a need to print questionnaires*" (Teacher Capricorn) as well as "*equipment and finances*" (Teacher Hope). Other than the funds and resources, one of the participants indicated that they "*do not think there are things that are going to hold [them] back* (Teacher Blagte).

Another participant added that the structural challenges could hinder their participation in research. This includes securing "*permission from the Director, School Principals, permission from parents …*" (Teacher Hope). In addition, there is also a concern about intangible results, such as "*…tangible rewards at the end:* (Teacher Nxara), for conducting research as a teacher.

Further, another challenge was the struggle with choosing appropriate research methods for a particular study. One of the participants mentioned "*I am struggling more with choosing methodology for my research. I need more information on how to choose the suitable methodology of the study*" (Teacher Aroab). On the other hand, another participant indicated that they "*… understand environmental research more than educational research*" (Teacher Grunau).

In summary, this study identified challenges that may hinder teachers from conducting research. It emerged that teachers may not have enough time due to the tight schedule of researching while teaching. Also, more time could be spent on the road visiting schools to conduct research. Other challenges are a lack of resources such as limited funds, equipment, and materials such as papers. Another challenge is the lack of tangible results from research as well as structural constraints from the educational agents such as directors, principals and parents. Lastly, another challenge is related to choosing the appropriate methodology for the research.

Enabling of Publication through Workshop

All the participants provided positive views on how the workshop enabled them to put the results of their research in the public domain. Their responses were as follows:

> "*I gained the right knowledge and direction on who to contact if I happen to be in need of putting my research in public domain.*" (Teacher Capricorn)

> *"It has made it clear for me on what I should emphasise more when sending out my manuscript for publication. Example, title, abstract, methodology, journal guidelines and work on reviewers' comments."* (Teacher Aroab).

The Impact of the Research Workshop on the Teaching of English
All the participants were asked to provide any comment about the impact of the research workshop on the teaching of English.

> *"It was eye-opening. I know all the steps to take when conducting research, methods and theories just because of the great impact that I have received during this workshop. The overall workshop is supper educational."* (Teacher Capricorn)

> *"This workshop will have a great impact on teaching English since now I am equipped to not only observe challenges in the classroom but ask investigative questions and collaborate on suggestions to possible solutions."* (Teacher Hope)

The responses above revealed that to a certain extent, the workshop has achieved its objectives. The teachers acknowledged that they are faced with enormous challenges in teaching English and it requires a scientific way to provide solutions. These solutions can be carried out in the teachers' context. This seems to suggest that teachers may not require more funds to travel to other schools to conduct their research. Rather, action research should be conducted through reflection on their context as well as using the data that is readily available at their disposal. This could improve the English-related teaching and learning challenges. In the quest for more, some participants have asked for similar workshops to be conducted.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
Conclusions
This study embraced guidance from Bertram and Christiansen (2014) by piloting This study sought to fulfil three objectives of the study. The first objective sought to establish the extent to which the workshop has capacitated the English teachers to conduct research for publication. From the data, the study found that the workshop has capacitated teachers with the skills to conduct research for publication. However, there are also concerns raised by the participants that state that there were some shortcomings with the organisation, timing and inclusivity of the workshop. Interestingly, the study revealed that formal assessment, perhaps in the form of quizzes, presentations or interviews, should have been conducted to establish if the expected outcomes of the workshop were achieved or not.

The second objective was to assess if the workshop provided English teachers with enough confidence to conduct their own research in their field. The study concluded that the workshop provided teachers with the confidence to conduct research in their context. However, some areas need further consideration such as the data analysis methods that need a more detailed coverage.

The last objective of the study was to suggest improvements for the intervention to enable English teachers to conduct research for publishing in academic journals. The study revealed that the first intervention was to extend the workshop time from two days to three or longer. There is also a need to include more teachers irrespective of the subjects that they teach. A formal assessment should be conducted to establish that the outcomes or objectives are achieved. The study further found that the teachers should have done more practical activities, provided there was enough time to do so. All stakeholders in education must support the teachers when researching to improve their practice. Thus, time and resources should be availed to teachers when conducting research.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made. First, the time should be allocated to the workload of the teachers to do research aimed at improving teaching and learning. Second, the ministry should make a budgetary allocation for teachers to conduct research for publication so that they can share their findings with the academic journal communities. Third, the importance of research and academic publications should be emphasised to all agents involved in education. Fourth, the workshop should be rolled out countrywide without excluding other teachers than just selecting English teachers only. Finally, in-service teacher training programs should include an aspect of research and publication.

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