Sustainability and Challenges of the Learning Action Cell (LAC) Implementation: Leadership, Support, and Capacity Building among Senior High School English Teachers

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the sustainability and challenges of the implementation of Learning Action Cell (LAC) among Senior High School English language teachers in District 1, Taguig City in terms of leadership, support and capacity building. The study was intended to determine the teachers' level of agreement on the sustainability of LAC implementation, the challenges faced by the teachers and the support provided to the teachers. This study employed a quantitative descriptive-survey method. Data were collected using a self-constructed questionnaire and were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, Pearson correlation and tests of difference. The results showed that the sustainability of LAC implementation got a grand mean of 3.37 (strongly agree) which indicates a positive assessment on the sustainability of LAC implementation. Leadership-related challenges (M = 2.25), support-related challenges (M = 2.06) and capacity-building-related challenges (M = 2.16) were generally rated as disagree, indicating that these were not considered major challenges. The findings also indicated that the relationships between leadership, support, capacity-building challenges and sustainability of LACs were not statistically significant. Overall results show that LAC implementation is generally sustainable among the respondents with existing support systems contributing to its continued implementation. The findings of this study provide information that can assist teachers and school administrators in sustaining collaborative professional development, addressing areas of concern, and enhancing LAC practices in their schools.

Keywords: Learning Action Cell; LAC sustainability; leadership, support, and capacity building; Senior High School English teachers; teacher professional development

INTRODUCTION

Teachers' continuous professional development is the foundation of improving the quality of teaching and learning. With the DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016, Learning Action Cell (LAC) was institutionalized as a school-based continuing professional development tool that helps strengthen instructional practices through collaborative learning [1]. The LAC gave teachers a structured pace where they can reflect their discussions, develop problem-solving strategies, share planning, and build competencies in the curriculum implementation, instructional materials, assessment, and classroom management within the K-12 Basic Education Program. Leadership also matters for sustaining LAC. The school heads and LAC leaders are also expected to provide administrative, academic, and motivational support so that trust, openness and shared knowledge as well as accountability are present, and when leadership engagement is strong, teachers are more likely to reflect on their practice.

The pandemic added new challenges to LAC implementation. The shift to online classes and blended learning, the adaptation to the new normal, and the need to learn how to use digital technologies, and LAC sessions, which were usually held face to face, had to adapt because of the pandemic. Some schools needed to move to virtual classrooms or asynchronous LAC meetings, and many experienced internet problems, limited access to internet and digital tools, and needed a little guidance on how to sustain online collaboration. The pandemic also showed that LAC platforms could support collaborative learning, innovation, and emotional support.

Studies in the Philippines show both the promise and problems of the LAC. School Learning Action Cells (SLAC) reported to help the professional isolation and out-of-field English teachers and foster collaboration [2], online LAC rated by Senior High School English teachers showed very high effectiveness that did not depend on teachers' demographic profiles [3]. Better teaching practices has been linked to school-based LAC participation but gaps in ICT integration and monitoring limit its effectiveness [4]. Some studies also reported problems in schedules, heavy workloads, limited resources, and weak monitoring [5], [6], [7], [8], and leadership competences have been tied to LAC implementation [9]. Some studies also see that leadership, support, monitoring, and professional growth is separated, so their effect on LAC sustainability is unclear. The professional role in communication and literacy development within LAC structure also remains underexplored.

This study is aligned with Pillars 5 (Empowered Faculty Members and Employees), 6 (Vigorous Research Production and Utilization), and 10 (Sustainable Social Development Programs and Projects) of the Polytechnic University of the Philippines (PUP), with Sustainable Development Goals 4 (Quality Education) and 17 (Partnerships for the Goals), with AmBisyon Natin 2040, and with DepEd Order No. 35, s. 2016.

There are five theories that help with this study. Social Constructivist Theory states that learning occurs through social interaction, collaboration, and shared meaning-making [10]; in LAC, teachers build professional knowledge together through group discussions and problem-solving [11]. Distributed Leadership Theory states that leadership is not confined to school heads alone but it is also shared among administrators, LAC leaders, and teachers [12]. Adult Learning Theory states that adult leaders are self-directed, goal-oriented, and motivated by learning that is relevant to their professional needs [13]. Guskey's Model of Teacher Professional Development links effective professional development to teachers' attitudes and behaviors and to student learning outcomes and pointed out the importance of reinforcement with the support of leadership and school and finally, Social Learning Theory. It emphasizes observational learning and reciprocal relationships, which fits the LAC as a community of practice where teachers learn from one another through observation, demonstration, and feedback [14]. These five theories support leadership, support, and capacity building as core strategies for sustaining the LAC.

IV-DV or independent variable-dependent variable model was used in this study. The independent variables are the demographic profile of the teachers (age, sex, educational qualifications, and the LAC training attended) and the challenges associated with LAC implementation in terms of leadership, support, and capacity-building. The sustainability of LAC implementation, which also refers to the effective and continuous practice of LAC sessions, is the dependent variable. It also promotes collaboration, professional development, and improvement of teaching strategies.

This study examined the sustainability and challenges of the LAC implementation among Senior High School English teachers in District 1, Taguig City where it determined the following: (1) the respondents' demographic profiles, (2) the level of agreement of English language teachers regarding the sustainability of LAC implementation; (3) the challenges they faced in terms of leadership, support, and capacity building; (4) the forms of available support in their LACs and how it affects implementation in terms of administrative, technical, and peer support; (5) whether there is a significant relationship between the level of agreement on LAC sustainability and the leadership, support, and capacity building provided to them; and (6) whether there is a significant difference in leadership, support, and capacity building when respondents are grouped according to their demographic profile. The following null hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H01: There is no significant relationship between the level of agreement on the sustainability of LAC implementation and the levels of leadership, support, and capacity building provided to senior high school English language teachers in the Philippines.

H02: There is no significant difference between leadership, support, and capacity building when grouped according to demographic profile.

The study is limited to the sustainability and challenges of LAC implementation among Senior High School English teachers in District 1, Taguig City. It focuses on the organizational and professional development

aspects of LAC implementation and does not cover curriculum development in a wider context, student learning outcomes, or subject areas other than English.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A quantitative descriptive-survey design was employed in the study. The design enabled researchers to collect and quantify data on perceptions, challenges, and experiences of the educators without manipulating the environment and provided an accurate picture of the current state of the implementation of LAC in District 1. The descriptive component characterized the respondents' profile, their level of agreement on LAC sustainability, the challenges they encountered, and the forms of support available to them. Pearson r tested the relationship between the challenges encountered and perceived sustainability, and one-way ANOVA and the independent-samples t-test compared challenges among respondents grouped by demographic profile.

Respondents and Sampling

The population for this study comprised Senior High School English teachers in District 1, Taguig City, covering the barangays of Bagumbayan, Comembo, Ibayo Tipas, New Lower, San Miguel, Sta. Ana, and Ususan. Of the 41 respondents, they were distributed in eight public schools namely: Bagumbayan National High School (8), Benigno “Ninoy” S. Aquino High School (4), Tipas National High School (5), Taguig National High School (7), Taguig Science High School (1), the Stand Alone SHS within Taguig Integrated School (10), Gen. Ricardo G. Papa Sr. Memorial High School – Ususan Annex (3), and the Senator Renato “Compañero” Cayetano Memorial Science and Technology High School (3). All respondents were licensed Professional Teachers. Purposive criteria guided the identification of eligible respondents: LACs, range of years of experience, and position in terms of capacity building and leadership responsibility. Because the population was small, all 41 teachers were included all responded (100% of the identified population). The study once employed a raosoft formula to compute the sample size, but since all respondents was able to answer the questionnaire, it was removed by the panelist and the researchers, and the study is a census of this sampling frame and not a drawn sample drawn from it.

Research Instrument

The items used in this study were generated using a self-constructed questionnaire comprising of four sections. The first section was designed to gather the respondents’ demographic information. The second section sought to ascertain the extent to which the respondents agreed with the sustainability of the Language Acquisition Centers (LAC) implementation. The third section comprised of items exploring the challenges experienced by the teachers in the implementation of the LACs including leadership, support, and capacity-building issues. The final section was used to identify the sources of support available to the teachers in their LACs and their influence on the implementation process. The items in sections II, III, and IV were scored on a four-point Likert scale without the neutral option. This was done to avoid ambiguity in responses where respondents could choose neutral because they do not have an opinion on a particular item. The four-point Likert scale was scored as follows: 4 = Strongly Agree (3.25-4), 3 = Agree (2.5-3.24), 2 = Disagree (1.75-2.49), and 1 = Strongly Disagree (1-1.74). The challenge items had been worded as problems to be addressed; therefore, a lower score was used to indicate fewer challenges.

Three professionals with relevant expertise reviewed the questionnaire to ensure that the items were clear, relevant, and aligned with the research objectives and the statement of the problem. The questionnaire was then pilot-tested to check its clarity and feasibility, and the pilot responses were excluded from the final analysis. Following the pilot test, a reliability analysis was conducted with the assistance of a statistician. Cronbach’s alpha was 0.798 for the sustainability scale (11 items); 0.919, 0.874, and 0.913 for the leadership, support, and capacity-building challenge scales, respectively; and 0.847, 0.892, and 0.858 for the administrative, technical, and peer support scales (6 items each), respectively. Using the conventional interpretation (0.90 and above, excellent; 0.80 to 0.89, good; 0.70 to 0.79, acceptable), internal consistency ranged from acceptable to excellent.

Each statement was scored 4 = Strongly Agree (3.25–4.00), 3 = Agree (2.50–3.24), 2 = Disagree (1.75–2.49), and 1 = Strongly Disagree (1.00–1.74). The weighted mean and standard deviation of each statement were

computed across the 41 respondents, and the area (grand) mean was the average of the item means within the area. Means were interpreted with these ranges. Direction differs by part. In Part II, a higher mean means stronger agreement with the statement. In Part III, all statements are worded as problems, so a higher mean means a greater perceived challenge and a lower mean is the more favorable result. In Part IV, a higher mean means stronger agreement that the form of support is available.

Three Part II statements (items 9 to 11) were worded as risks to sustainability. In the analyses reported here, their scores were not reverse-coded, so the Part II grand mean is the simple average of the eleven item means. For these three items, agreement signals a perceived risk, which should be kept in mind when interpreting the Part II grand mean and the correlations (see Limitations). For the correlation and group-comparison analyses, each respondent's mean across the six statements of each challenge area, and across the eleven Part II statements, was used.

Data Gathering Procedure

The researchers sent a letter along with their ethical clearance to all schools in District 1 that have a Senior High School department, requesting permission to conduct the study among its Senior High School English teachers. Having the school principals' permission, the researchers mailed a letter requesting survey questionnaire distribution and one asking the teachers to give them time to conduct the study. The researchers went around the schools personally distributing and administering the online survey while collecting the responses on the assurance of confidentiality for research and academic purposes only. The data were then tallied, tabulated, and interpreted in confidence.

Statistical Treatment

Frequency and percentage were used to describe the respondents' demographic profile. Weighted means and standard deviations described the levels of agreement on LAC sustainability, challenges encountered, and forms of support available. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe the respondents' demographic profile. Weighted means and standard deviations described the levels of agreement on LAC sustainability, challenges encountered, and forms of support available. Pearson r (two-tailed) was used to test whether each challenge score was related to the sustainability score (H01; $n = 41$, $df = 39$), and 95% confidence intervals were obtained using the Fisher z transformation. One-way ANOVA compared challenge scores among respondents grouped by demographic variables with more than two categories (age, sex, number of collaborative training attended, highest educational qualification, and school), and an independent-samples t-test compared the two rank groups (H02). For each test, the test statistic, degrees of freedom, and exact p-value are reported, along with η^2 for the ANOVAs and the mean difference with its 95% confidence interval for the t-tests. A null hypothesis was rejected when $p \leq 0.05$. No correction was applied for the 21 tests (3 correlations and 18 group comparisons); because none was significant, a correction would not have changed any decision. A non-significant result means only that the null hypothesis could not be rejected with these data. Given the small total sample and unequal subgroup sizes, it does not establish that no relationship or group difference exists.

RESULTS

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Of the 41 respondents, most were female (68.3%), aged 26–31 (48.8%) or 32–37 (29.3%), who together made up 78.1% of the sample, had attended 1–5 collaborative trainings (48.8%), and held a bachelor's degree as their highest educational qualification (53.7%). Most (78.0%) chose not to disclose their rank, while 9 (22.0%) identified as Teacher I–III. The largest groups came from the Stand Alone SHS within Taguig Integrated School (24.4%), Bagumbayan National High School (19.5%), and Taguig National High School (17.1%) (Table 1).

Table 1. Demographic profile of the respondents (N = 41)

Variable	Category	f	%
Age	26–31 years old	20	48.8
	32–37 years old	12	29.3
	38–43 years old	5	12.2
	44–49 years old	2	4.9
	50–56 years old	2	4.9
Sex	Female	28	68.3
	Male	9	22.0
	Prefer not to say	4	9.8
School	Stand Alone SHS within Taguig Integrated School	10	24.4
	Bagumbayan National High School	8	19.5
	Taguig National High School	7	17.1
	Tipas National High School	5	12.2
	Benigno "Ninoy" S. Aquino High School	4	9.8
	Gen. Ricardo G. Papa Sr. Memorial High School – Ususan Annex	3	7.3
	Senator Renato "Compañero" Cayetano Memorial Science and Technology High School	3	7.3
	Taguig Science High School	1	2.4
Rank	Teacher I–III	9	22.0
	Prefer not to say	32	78.0
Collaborative trainings attended	1–5	20	48.8
	6–10	9	22.0
	11–15	6	14.6
	16–20	3	7.3
	21–25	2	4.9
	31–35	1	2.4
Highest educational qualification	Bachelor's degree	22	53.7
	Partial completion of Master's degree	4	9.8
	MA graduate	9	22.0
	Partial completion of Ph.D.	4	9.8
	Ph.D. graduate	2	4.9
Total		**41**	**100.0**

Sustainability of LAC Implementation

The respondents strongly agreed that LAC implementation in their schools is sustainable (grand mean = 3.37, SD = 0.31), verbally interpreted as Very High, and eight of the eleven statements were individually rated Very High (Table 2). The highest-rated statements concerned that LAC implementation is continuously improved to

promote long-term sustainability (item 3, M = 3.63, SD = 0.48), that sessions are implemented regularly and systematically to ensure continuity (item 2, M = 3.60, SD = 0.49), and that LAC goals are clearly defined and consistently sustained (item 1, M = 3.58, SD = 0.49). Monitoring and evaluation of session outcomes (item 8, M = 3.39, SD = 0.70) was closest to the grand mean. The three lowest means (items 9, 10, and 11) belonged to the three risk-worded statements, and all three were rated High. Because these statements describe conditions that would weaken sustainability, agreement with them indicates that respondents recognize these conditions as possible threats. A lower mean on a risk statement reflects weaker agreement that the threat applies, not lower sustainability. Item 10, on limited teacher commitment and participation, had the lowest mean (M = 2.85, SD = 0.88), and thus the weakest agreement among the three risk statements, but it also had the highest standard deviation, indicating the greatest variability in responses. Items 9 and 11, on follow-up mechanisms and monitoring, had means of 3.00 (SD = 0.70) and 3.19 (SD = 0.84), respectively.

Table 2. Level of agreement of English language teachers on the sustainability of LAC implementation

Statement	*M*	*SD*	Interpretation
1. The goals of the LAC sessions are clearly defined and consistently sustained throughout the school year.	3.58	0.49	Very High
2. LAC sessions are implemented regularly and systematically to ensure continuity.	3.60	0.49	Very High
3. The implementation of LAC sessions is continuously improved to promote long-term sustainability.	3.63	0.48	Very High
4. LAC sessions contribute to sustained instructional improvement over time.	3.53	0.50	Very High
5. Teachers demonstrate consistent commitment and active participation in LAC activities.	3.43	0.63	Very High
6. The LAC framework is institutionalized and does not depend solely on individual initiatives.	3.41	0.66	Very High
7. The administrators prioritize and support the continuous implementation of LAC sessions.	3.46	0.67	Very High
8. The outcomes of LAC sessions are regularly monitored and evaluated to sustain their effectiveness.	3.39	0.70	Very High
9. The lack of consistent follow-up mechanisms weakens the sustainability of LAC implementation.	3.00	0.70	High
10. Limited teacher commitment and participation hinder the sustainability of LAC sessions.	2.85	0.88	High
11. Insufficient monitoring of LAC activities affects their long-term sustainability.	3.19	0.84	High
Grand Mean	**3.37**	**0.31**	**Very High**

Challenges Encountered in LAC Implementation

The respondents generally disagreed that leadership, support, and capacity building were major challenges (Table 3). In leadership, the only statement rated Agree was that weak leadership reduces the overall effectiveness of LAC meetings (M = 2.87, SD = 0.92); the lowest means were for unclear or overlapping leadership roles and difficulty encouraging participation (M = 1.97 each). In support, financial and material resources had the highest mean (M = 2.24, SD = 0.83), followed by minimal encouragement or recognition (M = 2.21), while insufficient technical assistance had the lowest (M = 1.90, SD = 0.70); inadequate time was rated M = 2.07 (SD = 0.75). In capacity building, all six statements were rated Disagree. The highest mean was

for capacity-building programs not being consistently sustained beyond initial sessions (M = 2.46, SD = 0.77), and the lowest was for LAC activities not significantly enhancing teachers' professional competencies (M = 1.90, SD = 0.76).

Table 3. Challenges encountered by English language teachers in LAC implementation

Area	Grand Mean	SD	Interpretation
Leadership-related challenges	2.25	0.61	Disagree
Support-related challenges	2.06	0.53	Disagree
Capacity building-related challenges	2.16	0.64	Disagree

Forms of Support Available in the LAC

Peer support received the highest rating among the three forms of support, followed by technical and administrative support (Table 4). For administrative support, the highest-rated statement was that administrators give timely assistance in addressing concerns (M = 3.21, SD = 0.65), and the lowest was that administrative support is consistent and well-coordinated (M = 3.00, SD = 0.77), which also had the widest spread of responses in that table. For technical support, technical support services ensuring the smooth conduct of LAC sessions (M = 3.29, SD = 0.60) and the ready availability of ICT tools and platforms (M = 3.26, SD = 0.67) were both rated Strongly Agree, while school-provided training on technical aspects of LAC implementation and the view that technical support enhances collaboration were the lowest (M = 3.19 each). For peer support, the highest-rated statements were that peer collaboration contributes to professional growth (M = 3.46, SD = 0.55) and that there is a strong culture of teamwork and mutual assistance (M = 3.41, SD = 0.54); the lowest was that peer support encourages active participation (M = 3.09, SD = 0.73).

Table 4. Forms of support available to English language teachers in the LAC

Form of support	Grand Mean	SD	Interpretation
Administrative support	3.15	0.59	Agree
Technical support	3.23	0.48	Agree
Peer support	3.27	0.49	Strongly Agree

Relationship Between Challenges and Sustainability

All three Pearson correlation coefficients were negative, but none reached statistical significance (Table 5). Leadership-related challenges had the weakest association with perceived sustainability ($r = -0.058$, $p = 0.717$), while support-related ($r = -0.207$, $p = 0.194$) and capacity building-related challenges ($r = -0.232$, $p = 0.144$) showed low negative correlations. Because all p-values were above 0.05, H01 was not rejected.

Table 5. Pearson r: Relationship between challenges encountered and sustainability of LAC implementation

Variables	r	Interpretation	p	Decision on H0
Leadership-related challenges and sustainability	−0.058	Negative, negligible	0.717	Failed to reject H0
Support-related challenges and sustainability	−0.207	Negative, low	0.194	Failed to reject H0
Capacity building-related challenges and sustainability	−0.232	Negative, low	0.144	Failed to reject H0

Differences in Challenges by Demographic Profile

None of the 18 comparisons of leadership-, support-, and capacity building-related challenges across age, sex, number of collaborative trainings attended, highest educational qualification, school, and rank was significant (Table 6), so H02 was not rejected in every case. The smallest p-value was 0.228 (leadership-related challenges by school). Some descriptive differences were observed. Respondents aged 50–56 (n = 2) had the highest mean for leadership-related challenges (M = 2.83) among the age groups, and Tipas National High School had the highest mean among the schools (M = 2.86), while Gen. Ricardo G. Papa Sr. Memorial High School – Ususan Annex had the lowest (M = 1.72). The one respondent who had attended 31–35 trainings reported the highest means in all three areas (M = 3.16, 2.83, and 3.00). Respondents who had partially completed a Ph.D. had the lowest mean for capacity building-related challenges (M = 1.70) and Ph.D. graduates a higher one (M = 2.33). Teacher I–III respondents had higher means than those who did not disclose their rank for leadership (M = 2.50 vs. 2.18) and capacity building (M = 2.35 vs. 2.11). None of these differences was statistically significant.

Table 6. Comparison of challenges encountered in LAC implementation by demographic profile

Grouping variable	Test	Leadership	Support	Capacity building
Age	One-way ANOVA	F = 1.209; p = 0.324	F = 1.348; p = 0.271	F = 0.641; p = 0.637
Sex	One-way ANOVA	F = 0.100; p = 0.905	F = 0.195; p = 0.824	F = 0.011; p = 0.989
Collaborative trainings attended	One-way ANOVA	F = 0.564; p = 0.727	F = 0.903; p = 0.490	F = 0.763; p = 0.582
Highest educational qualification	One-way ANOVA	F = 0.544; p = 0.705	F = 0.475; p = 0.754	F = 1.015; p = 0.413
School	One-way ANOVA	F = 1.426; p = 0.228	F = 1.354; p = 0.257	F = 1.247; p = 0.306
Rank	Independent-samples t-test	t = 0.979; p = 0.353	t = −0.542; p = 0.599	t = 0.825; p = 0.427

Note: Every comparison failed to reject H0 at the 0.05 level of significance.

DISCUSSION

Sustainability of LAC Implementation

The respondents' strong agreement that LAC is sustainable was driven mainly by continuous improvement, regular and systematic implementation, and clearly set goals. This is consistent with Guskey's emphasis on continuous, sustained support for the lasting effects of professional development [13]. It also fits evidence that professional development models implemented with high fidelity can sustain the quality of instruction even after formal support has ended [15], and that well-designed and well-implemented programs such as the National Learning Camp tend to work across contexts [16].

The three risk-worded items (items 9 to 11) were rated High, indicating that respondents recognized lack of follow-up, limited teacher commitment, and insufficient monitoring as conditions that could weaken sustainability, even as they rated sustainability itself very high. Item 10 obtained the lowest mean among the three, which, for a risk statement, denotes the weakest agreement, and it also exhibited the greatest variability. Taken together with the high agreement that teachers demonstrate consistent commitment (item 5, M = 3.43), this pattern suggests that commitment is perceived as present yet also as a potential vulnerability. The variability in responses is consistent with Adult Learning Theory, which posits that self-directed adult learners engage when learning is responsive to their needs [12], and with a report that early enthusiasm for the School

LAC may diminish when teachers' engagement is insufficiently supported [17]. A similar pattern emerged for monitoring. Agreement that outcomes are regularly monitored and evaluated (item 8) aligns with Guskey's treatment of evaluation as an integral component of professional development [13]. Nevertheless, monitoring gaps have been reported in other studies [4], [8], and respondents in this study likewise agreed that weak follow-up (item 9) and insufficient monitoring (item 11) could undermine sustainability. Monitoring, like commitment, is therefore perceived as both present and in need of attention.

Challenges in Leadership, Support, and Capacity Building

Leadership, support and capacity building were not seen as major barriers, but some concerns do arise. Respondents agreed that weak leadership lowers the effectiveness of LAC meetings, so leadership remains a potential vulnerability even though roles and participation were viewed favorably. The report agrees with studies that tie LAC sustainability to leadership competence and to planning, monitoring, and evaluation [9] and that describe thriving communities of practice as depending on active and participatory leadership [18]. Distributed Leadership Theory offers a reading in which administrators, LAC leaders, and teachers share responsibility for the LAC [11]. Among the support-related items, financial and material resources raised the greatest concern, consistent with reports indicating that resource demands are an ongoing obstacle to LAC implementation [6], while time was rated close to the grand mean, suggesting it is not a primary barrier, even though scheduling and workload issues remain relevant [5], [6], [7]. In capacity building, the item closest to the midpoint of the scale concerned programs not being sustained beyond initial sessions. This aligns with Guskey's argument that professional growth is facilitated by continued support after initial training [13], and reflects reports of slow monitoring and follow-up [4], [5], [8]. The low level of disagreement with the statement that LAC activities do not improve professional competencies indicates that teachers perceive the LAC as contributing to their development, consistent with social constructivist and social learning theories [10], [14], and with research associating LAC mentoring and facilitation with teacher self-efficacy and professional growth [19], [20].

Forms of Support

Peer support was the most strongly rated form of support, and respondents credited collaboration with colleagues for their professional growth. This is what Social Constructivist and Social Learning Theories predict, because both place relationships among teachers at the center of professional learning [10], [14], and it matches the finding that communities of practice rely on active leadership and shared vision [18]. Technical support was rated positively, especially the availability of ICT tools and platforms. This contrasts with a report that equitable access to online LACs remains a challenge [21], and online professional learning delivered through reliable platforms has been described as a sustainable form of expert coaching [22]. The lower rating for technical training shows that access to tools does not remove the need for training in using them. For administrative support, the lowest-rated item was consistency and coordination, which also had the widest spread of responses. This agrees with the finding that SLAC monitoring and support vary with teacher workload and school-level capacity [8], and with the view that supervision quality shapes teaching performance [23]. The lowest peer-support item, on whether peer support encourages active participation, may reflect the self-directed nature of adult learners, whose participation can depend on their own sense of relevance and motivation [12].

Challenges, Sustainability, and Demographic Profile

The challenges reported by respondents were not significantly associated with their agreement that LAC is sustainable, so these difficulties did not influence their belief in its sustainability. Guskey's model, which views leadership, support, capacity building, and sustainability as facets of one system [13], and Distributed Leadership Theory [11] provide possible reasons why: LAC appears to be a part of normal school operations, and shared responsibility means that a problem in one part does not negate the rest of the initiative. Challenges also did not vary significantly by age, sex, number of trainings, educational qualification, school, or rank. This is in line with a finding that the effectiveness of an online LAC was not predicated on teachers' demographics [3]. It contradicts a report that readiness for the School LAC varied with age and experience [17], though the small number of respondents in some age groups (n = 2 each for ages 44–49 and 50–56) prevents any

conclusions about age. These results suggest that the difficulties of LAC implementation are common working conditions that necessitate school-wide and division-level interventions rather than those targeted at specific groups of teachers. A study of English as a second language teachers found that younger, less experienced teachers were faced with more intense challenges, but no significant association with age emerged here.

LIMITATIONS

All the 41 identified teachers answered the questionnaire, so the findings describe the full identified population of Senior High School English teachers in public schools of District 1. They cannot be generalized to other districts of Taguig City, private schools, other subject areas, or other periods. The questionnaire was administered during the School Year 2025-2026, and the findings reflect conditions at the time. This study also had limits in size and balance. Respondents came from a single district and were few in number, so the analysis had little power to detect relationships or differences that might show up in a larger or more balanced sample. The subgroups were uneven: one school had only one respondent, several age, training, and qualification groups had two or fewer, and 78.0% of respondents did not disclose their rank, so the rank comparison was between groups of 9 and 32. We did not report whether the ANOVA and t-test assumptions (normality and equal variances) were met, so the ANOVA results for groups of one to three respondents should be treated as exploratory. Finally, the findings rest on teachers' self-reported perceptions, and we did not measure student learning outcomes directly.

CONCLUSION

The respondents were predominantly female English teachers aged 26 to 37 (78.1%) from eight public schools in District 1, Taguig City, most of whom had attended 1 to 5 collaborative training sessions. The respondents rated the sustainability of LAC implementation as Very High, with the highest ratings for continuous improvement, regular and systematic sessions, and clear goals. Items framed as risks to sustainability (follow-up mechanisms, teacher commitment and participation, and monitoring) were all rated High. Teacher commitment and participation drew the widest spread of responses, which suggests that teachers did not all see this risk in the same way. For this reason, teacher commitment deserves the closest attention when planning how to keep LAC sessions going. Leadership, support, and capacity building were not regarded as major challenges. Even so, respondents agreed that weak leadership reduces the effectiveness of LAC meetings, identified financial and material resources as the greatest concern among the support items, and gave capacity-building programs not sustained beyond initial sessions the highest challenge rating, although it remained within the Disagree range. Among the forms of support, peer support was rated highest, while the consistency and coordination of administrative support and the encouragement of active peer participation could still be improved.

The challenge scores were not significantly related to perceived sustainability, and they did not differ 11 significantly across the demographic profile, so H01 and H02 were not rejected. With a small census, uneven subgroup sizes, and wide confidence intervals, our data did not detect any relationship or group difference. That does not mean none exists. It only means this study could not show one, so the findings should be read with caution. The following recommendations are drawn from the findings. (1) Early-career teachers, who make up most of the respondents, may be paired with senior or master teachers in structured mentoring. (2) LAC leaders should receive continued professional development in facilitation, giving clear direction, and encouraging meaningful participation. (3) Administrative and technical support should be maintained, and resources, teachers' schedules, and workload should be considered when planning LAC activities; administrators may protect LAC time within teaching loads and provide a basic resource kit for every session. (4) Schools should schedule regular follow-up sessions after initial capacity-building activities and add classroom-based support such as coaching, peer observation, or demonstration teaching. (5) A coordinated, regularly reviewed LAC support plan with clear roles for administrators and LAC leaders, clear channels for raising concerns, and hands-on training in the digital tools used in LAC would address the lower ratings for coordination and technical training. (6) To lift participation, LAC groups may rotate facilitator roles and keep session topics tied to teachers' needs while maintaining regular resource-sharing and collaborative planning. (7) School heads and the Division may use a short feedback survey after each LAC cycle to monitor challenges, particularly in capacity building. (8) Future studies should use larger and more balanced samples,

include complete response options for rank, sex, and tenure, and consider interviews or a longitudinal design, to test whether the weak and non-significant associations found here persist.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical standards were strictly observed. The researchers submitted their ethical clearance together with request letters to the principals of the schools before data collection. Participation was entirely voluntary, and respondents were informed of their right to withdraw at any time without penalty. Informed consent was obtained before the survey questionnaires were distributed. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured, and all data were used solely for academic and research purposes.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflict of interest in this study.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon request. The data are not publicly available for the protection and privacy of the respondents.

DECLARATION OF AI USE

In accordance with Polytechnic University of the Philippines Executive Order No. 46, s. 2024, the researchers want to disclose that they have used OpenAI based generative tools as aids in compiling thoughts, developing, and structuring sections of the work, defining, clarifying, and improving the language and presentation, and finally, for shortening the initial thesis into the manuscript. The tools were used to help shorten and finalize the presentation of the study while still capturing the information and data collected. The researchers were not influenced to develop the research questions, theory, methodology, data gathering procedures, analysis, interpretation, and conclusions. The researchers undertake responsibility for reviewing and revising all material generated by artificial intelligence before submitting it for inclusion and accept responsibility for the accuracy, authenticity, and validity of the study.

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