A STUDY OF PROFESSIONAL LEARNING COMMUNITIES AND TEACHERS' COLLECTIVE EFFICACY

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Abstract

The main purpose of this study was to study the professional learning communities and teachers' collective efficacy at Basic Education High Schools, Thanlyin Township, Yangon Region. In this study, a total of 224 teachers from Basic Education High Schools, Thanlyin Township were selected to participate by using simple random sampling method. Mixed method (qualitative and quantitative) was used. Two sets of questionnaires: Professional learning communities (PLCs) Questionnaire adapted from Olivier, D.F., Hipp, K.K., & J.B. (2003) and Collective Efficacy (CE) Questionnaire developed by the review of literature were used in this study. The reliability coefficients (Cronbach's alpha) of the instruments were 0.98 for PLCs and 0.96 for CE. For qualitative study, open-ended and interview questions were conducted. Descriptive statistics, Independent Samples *t* Test, One-way ANOVA, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to analyze the data. According to the findings, teachers at Basic Education High Schools, Thanlyin Township practiced professional learning communities at high level. There were no significant differences in teachers' practices on PLCs grouped by their age and teaching service. But, there were significant differences among teachers grouped by their position and educational qualification. Teachers in this study had high level of collective efficacy. Although there was no significant difference in teachers' collective efficacy grouped by their age, there were significant differences among teachers grouped by their teaching service, position and educational qualification. There was a positively moderate correlation between professional learning communities and teachers' collective efficacy (r=.567**, *p*=.000).

Keywords: professional learning communities, collective efficacy

Introduction

With the vision of creating an education system that will generate a learning society capable of facing the challenges of the Knowledge Age, the Myanmar government is implementing long-term and short-term plans of improving the nation's education system. Myanmar Education System has made educational reforms in recent years Ministry of Education Myanmar set the National Education Strategic Plan (2016-2021) with the help of UNICEF and tried to build quality education. Upgrading the quality of teachers in basic education is one of the main tasks of education promotion program in Myanmar. Advance in Education depends largely on the qualification and ability of a teaching professional generally, and on the human, pedagogical and technical qualities of an individual teacher. The environment of a PLC serves as a key factor in enhancing teachers' quality. PLCs provide teachers with opportunities to connect, engage, and collaborate with one another. When all teachers in the school engage intentionally and continuously in the learning process rather than in isolation, the capacity of a school is powerfully enhanced. Developing PLCs appears to hold considerable promise for capacity building for sustainable improvement. Therefore, the best hope for significant school improvement is transforming schools into PLCs.

Similarly, in the 21st century, collaboration has become a major trend. The need in society to think and work together on issues of critical concern has increased, shifting the emphasis from individual to group efforts, from independence to community. One of the major tenets of a learning community in a school setting involves the collaboration among professional educators willing to share responsibilities in an effort to address challenges targeting student learning (DuFour & Eaker,

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1998). Improving student achievement through collaboration networks is a current focus of schools in many countries. The belief that all teachers have the conjoint capacity to accomplish their goals is called collective efficacy. Research has shown that schools that have a high level of collective efficacy also have higher levels of student achievement (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2000). Collective efficacy and the professional learning community model positively impact student achievement; elements of both can be found in the characteristics of effective schools.

Objectives of the Study

General Objective

- To study professional learning communities and teachers' collective efficacy at Basic Education High Schools, Thanlyin Township

Specific Objectives

- To study the extent of teachers' practices on professional learning communities at Basic Education High Schools
- To find out the variations of teachers' practices on professional learning communities in terms of their personal factors
- To study the level of teachers' collective efficacy rated by themselves
- To investigate the variations in teachers' collective efficacy according to their personal factors
- To study the relationship between professional learning communities and teachers' collective efficacy

Research Questions

- To what extent do the teachers practice professional learning communities at Basic Education High Schools?
- Are there any variations in the teachers' practices on professional learning communities in terms of their personal factors?
- What is the level of teachers' collective efficacy rated by themselves?
- What are the variations of teachers' collective efficacy according to their personal factors?
- Is there any significant relationship between professional learning communities and teachers' collective efficacy?

Limitations of the Study

Due to time constraint, this study was geographically restricted to Thanlyin Township, Yangon Region. This study investigated the teachers' practices on professional learning communities and teacher's collective efficacy at Basic Education High Schools.

Theoretical Framework

The framework for this study developed based on the five dimensions of professional learning communities described by Hord (1997).

Shared and Supportive Leadership: In this dimension, the attributes such as nurturing leadership among teachers; shared power, authority and responsibility; and broad-based decision-making for commitment and accountability are involved.

Shared Values and Vision: Espoused values and norms; focus on students; high expectations; and shared vision are included in this dimension.

Collective Learning and Application of that Learning: Shared information and dialogue; collaboration and problem solving; and application of knowledge, skills and strategies are included in this dimension.

Shared Personal Practice: By sharing personal practice, peer teachers visit to and observe with one another to provide constructive feedback and offer encouragement on instructional practices. In such a way, they can improve student achievement and increase individual and organizational capacity.

Supportive Conditions: This dimension includes relationships and structures. Collegial relationships include trust, respect, and positive and caring relationships among the students, teachers and principal. Structures include size of the school, communication systems, and the time and space for teachers to meet and examine current practices.

The research framework for teachers' collective efficacy developed based on the characteristics described by Megan Tschannen Moran and Marilyn Barr (2004).

School Practices: School practices are integrally related to collective and individual teacher sense of efficacy. School processes promote teacher ownership in school decisions (shared school goals, shared decision making, positively perceived school change history, and empowering principal leadership), provide support to parents and seek them out as partners in the students' education. Collective efficacy was related to teachers' commitment to community partnership by establishing frequent and productive communication between home and schools.

Teacher Behaviors: Schools with high collective efficacy consistently keep student learning at the forefront and as a whole, teachers create mastery instructional strategies for their students and foster their cognitive development. A collective sense of efficacy leads teachers to persist in undertaking challenges which include meeting the needs of all students. Teachers display persistence and resiliency when working with students who are having difficulty improving achievement levels, and help students think critically and foster student creativity. High efficacious teachers will show increased commitment to the organization and are likely to collaborate with their peers to ensure their actions lead to improved outcomes of students.

Principal Leadership Behavior: Leadership is also critical to the development and maintenance of effective schools. In schools with high collective teacher efficacy, principals have the skills to get their teachers to develop a collaborative effort to overcome the difficulties encountered in improving student achievement. Principals are instructional leaders who seek creative ways to improve instructions, listen to teachers, and promote innovative teaching. Supportive principal behaviors such as providing high quality professional development activities and helping teachers set goals to increase the likelihood of mastery experience; can create positive school climate that contributes to increase teacher efficacy.

Definitions of Key Terms

Professional Learning Communities: Professional learning communities (PLCs) refer to the environment created by educators that foster mutual cooperation, emotional support, and personal growth as they work together to achieve what they cannot accomplish alone (Dufour & Eaker, 1998).

Collective Efficacy: Collective efficacy refers to the beliefs that organizational members hold about their work groups' capability to reach desired goals (Goddard &Skrla; Tschannen Moran et al., 1998).

Operational Definitions

Professional Learning Communities (PLCs): Professional learning communities are groups of teachers with a shared commitment to reflect on their teaching practices and to learn collectively about the teaching practices that are the most effective for improving student learning to reach their shared organizational goals. In this study, the practices on PLCs were assessed according to the teachers' practices on five dimensions by Hord (1997).

Teachers' Collective Efficacy: Teachers' Collective Efficacy is the beliefs of teachers in the school that the effort of a faculty as a whole will have a positive effect students. It is about the collective capability of a faculty to influence student achievement.

Methodology

Population and Sample

Out of eleven schools, six Basic Education High Schools were chosen as the sample by simple random sampling method. 224 teachers were considered as a desired sample size for quantitative study. Twelve teachers were chosen to conduct interview questions.

Instrumentation

As a research instrument, two sets questionnaires were utilized to conduct this study. Professional learning communities (PLCs) Questionnaire was adapted from Olivier, D.F., Hipp, K.K., and J.B. (2003). Collective Efficacy Questionnaire was developed by the review of literature. First part of questionnaire consists of (45) items with five dimensions related to PLCs. These items were rated on five-point Likert scales ranging from 1 to 5 (1=Always, 2=Often, 3=Sometimes, 4=Rarely, 5=Never). The second part of the questionnaire included (20) items rated on four-point Likert scale ranging from 1 to 4 (1=Strongly Disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly Agree). Five open-ended questions and eight interview questions were also used as part of the study. As the instrument validation, nine expert teachers who are knowledgeable and experienced in this field from the Department of Educational Theory, Yangon University of Education reviewed the instrument. The reliability coefficients (Cronbach α) were 0.98 for professional learning communities and 0.96 for teachers' collective efficacy.

Procedure

First of all, the relevant literature was explored. In order to find out the required data, the instrument was conducted under the guidance of supervisor. Next, the advice and guidance were taken from nine experts. The questionnaire was distributed to the teachers in selected schools. All the questionnaires were collected after two weeks and the response rate was 100%. Interview was conducted on the second week of January, 2020.

Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics, Independent Samples *t* Test, One-way ANOVA and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used to analyze the data.

Findings

Findings from Quantitative Study

Finding for research question (1) is presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Practices on PLCs Rated by Themselves (N=224)

Variables	Mean	SD	Remark
Shared and Supportive Leadership	3.84	0.85	High
Shared Value and Vision	4.18	0.72	High
Collective Learning and Application of that Learning	4.34	0.67	Very High
Shared Personal Practice	4.18	0.71	High
Supportive Conditions	3.93	0.63	High
PLCs practices	4.06	0.58	High

Scoring Direction: 1.00-1.80=Very Low 1.81-2.60=Low 2.61-3.40=Moderate 3.41-4.20=High 4.21-5.00=Very High

By mean value of PLCs practices, Table 1 showed that teachers at Basic Education High Schools, Thanlyin Township practiced PLCs at high level.

Findings for research question (2) are presented in the following Tables.

Table 2 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Practices on PLCs Grouped by their Age (N=224)

Variables	Age	N	Mean	SD	Remark
PLCs practices	21-30 years	52	3.95	0.51	High
	31-40 years	66	4.13	0.62	High
	41-50 years	42	3.99	0.61	High
	51-60 years	64	4.13	0.56	High

Scoring Direction: 1.00-1.80=Very Low 1.81-2.60=Low 2.61-3.40=Moderate 3.41-4.20=High 4.21-5.00=Very High

Table 2 indicated that teachers in all years of age groups practiced PLCs at high level.

Findings for research question (2) are presented in the following Tables.

Table 3 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Practices on PLCs Grouped by their Teaching Service (N=224)

Variables	Teaching Service	N	Mean	SD	Remark
PLCs practices	Less than 3 years	19	3.72	0.50	High
	4-6 years	33	4.10	0.60	High
	7-18 years	78	4.09	0.57	High
	19-30 years	51	4.08	0.64	High
	31-40 years	43	4.11	0.52	High

Scoring Direction: 1.00-1.80=Very Low, 1.81-2.60=Low, 2.61-3.40=Moderate, 3.41-4.20=High 4.21-5.00=Very High

Table 3 revealed that teachers in all years of teaching service practiced PLCs at high level, and among them, teachers with (31-40) years of service had the highest mean value.

Table 4 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Practices on PLCs Grouped by their Position (N=224)

Variables	Position	N	Mean	SD	Remark
PLCs practices	ST	73	3.83	0.56	High
	JT	104	4.22	0.53	Very High
	PT	47	4.08	0.61	High

Scoring Direction: 1.00-1.80=Very Low, 1.81-2.60=Low, 2.61-3.40=Moderate , 3.41-4.20=High 4.21-5.00=Very High

Table 4 indicated that junior teachers practiced PLCs at very high level and then, senior teachers and primary teachers practiced PLCs at high level.

Table 5 ANOVA Results of Teachers' Practices on PLCs Grouped by their Position

Variables		Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	F	*p*
PLCs practices	Between Groups	6.713	2	3.356	10.939	.000***
	Within Groups	67.809	221	.307		
	Total	74.522	223			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<0.001, ns= no significance

According to Table 5, there was significant difference in PLCs practices (F (2,221) =10.939, *p*=.000). Therefore, Tukey test was continued to analyze.

Table 6 Tukey HSD of Teachers' Practices on PLCs Grouped by their Position

Variables	(I) Position	(J) Position	Mean Difference (I-J)	*P*
PLCs practices	Junior Teachers	Senior Teachers	.395*	.000***
	Primary Teachers	Senior Teachers	.248*	.045*

**p*<.05, ***p*<.01, ****p*<0.001, ns= no significance

According to Table 6, there were significant differences among senior teachers, junior teachers and primary teachers in PLCs practices.

Table 7 Mean Values and Standard Deviations Teachers' Practices on PLCs Grouped by their Educational Qualification (N=224)

Variables	Educational Qualification	N	Mean	SD	Remark
PLCs practices	BA, BSc, MA, MSc	149	4.17	0.56	High
	BEd, MEd	75	3.84	0.54	High

Scoring Direction: 1.00-1.80=Very Low, 1.81-2.60=Low, 2.61-3.40=Moderate, 3.41-4.20=High 4.21-5.00=Very High

Table 7 showed that the mean values of BA, BSc, MA, and MSc degree holders were higher than that of BEd, MEd degree holders in PLCs practices, and it was indicated that all the teachers practiced PLCs at high level.

Table 8 Result of Independent Samples *t* Test of Teachers' Practices on PLCs Grouped by their Educational Qualification (N=224)

Variables	Qualification	N	Mean	SD	*t*	*df*	*p*
PLCs practices	BA,BSc, MA, MSc	149	4.17	.564	4.219	222	.000***
	BEd, MEd	75	3.84	.544			

**p*<.05, ***p*<.01, ****p*<0.001, ns= no significance

According to Table 8, there were significant differences (*t*= 4.219, *df*= 222, *p*=.000) in PLCs practices.

Finding for research question (3) is presented in Table 9.

Table 9 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Collective Efficacy Rated by Themselves (N=224)

Variables	Mean	SD	Remark
School Practices	3.35	0.44	High
Teacher Behaviors	3.53	0.40	High
Principal Leadership Behaviors	3.21	0.64	High
Teachers' Collective Efficacy	**3.39**	**0.39**	**High**

Scoring Direction: 1.00-2.00=Low, 2.01-3.00=Moderate, 3.01-4.00=High

Table 9 indicated that teachers at Basic Education High Schools in Thanlyin Township were at high level of collective efficacy.

Findings for research question (4) are presented in the following Tables.

Table 10 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Collective Efficacy Grouped by their Age (N=224)

Variables	Age	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Teachers' Collective Efficacy	21-30 years	52	3.29	0.41	High
	31-40 years	66	3.39	0.41	High
	41-50 years	42	3.38	0.35	High
	51-60 years	64	3.48	0.38	High

Scoring Direction: 1.00-2.00=Low, 2.01-3.00=Moderate, 3.01-4.00=High

Table 10 revealed that teachers' collective efficacy was high for teachers in all age groups.

Table 11 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Collective Efficacy Grouped by their Teaching Service (N=224)

Variable	Teaching Service	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Teachers' Collective Efficacy	Less than 3 years	19	3.17	0.36	High
	4-6 years	33	3.36	0.45	High
	7-18 years	78	3.38	0.38	High
	19-30 years	51	3.45	0.38	High
	31-40 years	43	3.48	0.38	High

Scoring Direction: 1.00-2.00=Low, 2.01-3.00=Moderate, 3.01-4.00=High

Table 11 showed that mean values of teachers' overall collective efficacy were high for all groups.

Table12 ANOVA Results of Teachers' Collective Efficacy Grouped by Teaching Service

Variable		Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	F	*P*
Principal Leadership Behaviors	Between Groups	8.667	4	2.167	5.740	.000***
	Within Groups	82.677	219	.378		
	Total	91.344	223			
Teachers' Collective Efficacy	Between Groups	1.468	4	.367	2.428	.049*
	Within Groups	33.089	219	.151		
	Total	34.557	223			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<0.001, ns= no significance

According to Table 12, there were significant differences in principal leadership behaviors ($F(4,219)=5.740$, $p=.000$) and teachers' collective efficacy ($F(4,219)=2.428$, $p=.049$).

Table 13 Tukey HSD of Teachers' Collective Efficacy Grouped by their Teaching Service

Variable	(I) Teaching Service	(J) Teaching Service	Mean Difference (I-J)	*P*
Principal Leadership Behaviors	4-6 years	Less than 3 years	.570*	.013*
	7-18 years	Less than 3 years	.544*	.006**
	19-30 years	Less than 3 years	.734*	.000***
	31-40 years	Less than 3 years	.729*	.000***
Teachers' Collective Efficacy	31-40 years	Less than 3 years	.307*	.036*

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<0.001, ns= no significance

According to Table 13, it was found that there were significant differences between teachers who have teaching service of 31-40 years and less than 3 years in teachers' collective efficacy.

Table 14 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Collective Efficacy Grouped by their Position (N=224)

Variable	Teaching Service	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Teachers' Collective Efficacy	ST	73	3.29	0.44	High
	JT	104	3.47	0.36	High
	PT	47	3.37	0.36	High

Scoring Direction: 1.00-2.00=Low, 2.01-3.00=Moderate, 3.01-4.00=High

In Table 14, it was indicated that teachers in all groups were high in overall collective efficacy.

Table 15 ANOVA Results of Teachers' Collective Efficacy Grouped by their Position

Variable		Sum of Squares	*df*	Mean Square	F	*P*
Teachers' Behaviors	Between Groups	.952	2	.476	3.116	.046*
	Within Groups	33.767	221	.153		
	Total	34.720	223			
Principal Leadership Behaviors	Between Groups	5.801	2	2.900	7.493	.001**
	Within Groups	85.543	221	.387		
	Total	91.344	223			
Teachers' Collective Efficacy	Between Groups	1.550	2	.775	5.189	.006**
	Within Groups	33.007	221	.149		
	Total	34.557	223			

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<0.001, ns= no significance

According to Table 15, there were significant differences in overall collective efficacy ($F(2,221)=5.189$, $p=.006$).

Table 16 Tukey HSD of Teachers' Collective Efficacy Grouped by their Position

Variable	(I) Position	(J) Position	Mean Difference (I-J)	*P*
Teachers' Behaviors	JT	ST	.149*	.035*
Principal Leadership Behaviors	JT	ST	.368*	.000***
Teachers' Collective Efficacy	JT	ST	.188*	.005**

*p<.05, **p<.01, ***p<0.001, ns= no significance

According to Table 16, it was found that there were significant differences between senior teachers and junior teachers in overall collective efficacy.

Table 17 Mean Values and Standard Deviations of Teachers' Collective Efficacy Grouped by their Educational Qualification (N=224)

Variable	Educational Qualification	N	Mean	SD	Remark
Teachers' Collective Efficacy	BA, BSc, MA, MSc	149	3.43	0.36	High
	BEd, MEd	75	3.31	0.45	High

Scoring Direction: 1.00-2.00=Low 2.01-3.00=Moderate 3.01-4.00=High

Table 17 showed that mean value of BA, BSc, MA, and MSc degree holders was higher than that of BEd, and MEd degree holders. And then, teachers in all groups were high in overall collective efficacy.

Table 18 The Result of Independent Samples *t* Test of Teachers' Collective Efficacy Grouped by their Educational Qualification (N=224)

Variables	Educational Qualification	N	Mean	SD	*t*	*df*	*p*
Principal Leadership Behaviors	BA,BSc, MA, MSc	149	3.32	.504	3.044	103.480	.003**
	BEd, MEd	75	3.00	.813			
Teachers' Collective Efficacy	BA,BSc, MA, MSc	149	3.43	.359	1.991	123.473	.049*
	BEd, MEd	75	3.31	.447			

*p<.05, ns= no significance

Table 18 revealed that there was significant difference in overall collective efficacy between groups.

Finding for research question (5) is presented in Table 19.

Table 19 Relationship between Professional Learning Communities and Teachers' Collective Efficacy

Variable	Professional Learning Communities	Teachers' Collective Efficacy
Professional Learning Communities	1	.567**
Teachers' Collective Efficacy	.567**	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

According to the data presented in Table 19, the result showed that professional learning communities and teachers' collective efficacy at Basic Education High Schools, Thanlyin Township were positively moderate correlated (r =.567**, *p* =.000).

Finding from Qualitative Study

Teachers' Responses to Open-ended Questions

Q-1: Describe the principal's actions in creating PLCs at school?

Their principals provided teaching learning materials (n=128), instructed to conduct CPD (n=62), and discussed about teaching difficulties and gave advice for professional Development (n=27).

Q-2: Do you think collaboration is important for improving the professional development of teachers? Why?

Through collaboration, they can share their experience and discuss strength and weakness of teaching (n=145), and positive relationship with their colleagues can increase (n=65).

Q-3: What kinds of values and visions are described in your school?

The school value their vision of focusing on all round development of the students (n=105), teaching students to become good-tempered, well-disciplined and outstanding students (n=95), and creating the effective learning environment for students (n=20).

Q-4: Do you believe teachers in this school have the capabilities to attain their goals? Why?

Teachers showed their professional value and accountable for their work (n=160), are good at teaching (n=45), and communicate each other with trust and respect (n=15)

Q-5: Do you believe teachers in this school can teach the difficult students? How do they do?

They do extra-hour teaching, repeated and remedial teaching (n=125), care about student needs (n=65), and used various teaching strategies to draw their attention (n=18).

Teachers' responses to Interview Questions

The interviewee teachers responded that the most principals at BEHS Thanlyin Township supported to become PLCs at their schools by instructing to conduct continuous professional development activities, discussing teaching difficulties and giving advice for professional growth. They visited our classes, supervised the teaching-learning process and gave feedback to teachers if necessary. They provided old questions, teaching aids, educational journals and other reference books, facilities and learning materials for building a positive learning situation and then encouraged teachers to attend seminars, workshops, beginning teacher assistant programs, etc. for professional development .

Novice teachers observe experienced teachers' teaching. Teachers do peer observation, coaching, and providing feedback to each other. But, accepting constructive criticism is needed. There exists a family-type relationship within school and also with parents and community. They show respect to one another and collaborate for student achievement.

Conclusion, Discussion and Recommendations

Conclusion and Discussion

By total mean value 4.06, teachers at Basic Education High Schools in Thanlyin Township practiced the five dimensions of professional learning communities at high level. In line with the teachers' responses to the test items, collective learning and application of that learning practiced at very high level. As a result of the qualitative research study, teachers from selected schools tried to become as life-long learners, actively involved in CPD activities and subject-wise team discussion, created a quality lesson plan to achieve learning objective, demonstrated their commitment to shared practices, and found the ways to solve problems of students with low academic achievement.

Shared and supportive leadership was practiced at high level. Based on the data analysis and research findings, the researcher concluded that the majority of the teachers felt that leadership, power and authority were shared with them. In making decisions, they discussed with subject leaders and experienced teachers and shared power and authority to their respective actions. Teacher leadership was promoted and nurtured at their schools.

Besides, teachers practiced shared values and vision a high level. Teachers' responses to the questionnaire survey highlighted that the principals and teachers in this study created the school visions together that focused on the success of student learning and used the visions as guideposts in decision making about teaching-learning process in the schools. However, the involvement of stakeholders in creating high expectations of student learning was a bit weakness.

Teachers in this study practiced shared personal practice at high levels. The data analysis of the findings from this study revealed that the teachers actively engaged in professional development activities, shared the results of their instructional practices, and provided with constructive feedback related to instructional practices. However, time just did not allow for teachers to observe each other. So, the school principals should plan time for effective visitation and review of each teacher's classroom behaviors in order to improve school's functioning.

In shaping PLCs, the dimension of supportive conditions is also important. The research findings showed that the majority of teachers contended that positive caring relationships exist among their entire school community. There was a family-type relationship between the principals and teachers, as well as between students. They could build a culture of trust and respect each other and when facing difficulties, they believed that they did their best and overcame with these beliefs.

Teachers from Basic Education High School in Thanlyin Township had high level of collective efficacy. Among them, teacher behaviors dimension had the effect on teachers' collective efficacy at most. Goddard, Hoy & Hoy, 2000 stated that collective efficacy may positively affect numerous teacher behaviors that tend to increase student achievement. In this study, teachers in Basic Education High School, Thanlyin Township tried to know the needs of students, used strategies to draw their attention and to motivate them, and provided extra instruction for students who were not mastering the lessons.

Professional learning communities (PLCs) have moved toward the forefront as a viable process for consideration in addressing school improvement needs. With the help of professional learning communities practices, the principals and teachers should try to enhance the teachers' collective efficacy to get the better result of student achievement.

Recommendations

Every **principal** should

- Try to convince teachers the benefits of PLCs on teachers and learners through modeling in the schooling.
- Foster a culture of collaboration that can build teachers' competencies leading to improve behavioral and social outcomes of students.
- Reduce time constraints, their disagreements with other teachers on teaching methods and strategies, teachers' independence and isolation that can hinder creating PLCs at schools.
- Be provided with opportunities of learning how to create PLCs effectively and efficiently in their schools such as PLCs workshops, seminars and conferences, etc.
- Provide structure and guidance for time to create their schools as professional learning communities.

Every **teacher** should

- Observe other teachers' teaching and provide with positive feedback related to instructional practices.
- Share their teaching experiences and encourage and support diverse approaches to teaching and learning.

The **stakeholders** should

- Be aware of the importance of their role as a coordinator in creating professional learning communities.
- Cooperate and give support to the principal and the teachers for student learning as possible as they can.

Need for Further Study

This study tried to study the teachers' practices on professional learning communities at Basic Education High Schools, Thanlyin Township. Therefore, it cannot be generalized to any wider population. This study should be conducted in other elementary and middle schools or states or regions extensively and deeply. In addition, conducting research on how professional learning communities impact on teaching practices and student learning and relationship between professional learning communities and teacher well-being are necessary to further study the concept.

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