PEER OBSERVATION OF TEACHERS: EXPLORING TEACHING EXPERIENCES

Frederick Atienza Andal,
Azra Nayeem,
Noel Invento,
Amina Aslam Aga[i]
New World International School,
Prince Sultan Bin Fahad Bin Abdulaziz Road,
Al Imam Al Nawawie Street,
Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia

Abstract:
This paper examines teachers' experiences with classroom peer observation of teaching. Participating teachers shared their insights into teaching experience and skills, providing valuable perspectives on practices that could enhance the teaching and learning process. The results revealed both common strengths and areas where teachers can further develop their skills. Additionally, the study identifies critical success factors for ongoing peer observation. It proposes establishing a systematic approach to classroom peer observation for the school's teaching community, fostering continuous improvement in teaching and learning.

Keywords: peer observation, PoT, teaching experiences, explore, professional development, collaboration

1. Introduction

Peer observation of teaching (PoT) continues to reshape the current educational setting's dynamic teaching and learning experiences. It has been recognized as a means of monitoring and improving the quality of teaching, which is an essential aspect of teacher development. According to the Department of Education and Training (2018) in Melbourne, PoT is a structured and collaborative approach to enhance and refine teaching practices through which teachers identify and disseminate good practices and further develop their skills (Donnelly, 2007), provide space for professional dialogue and community building (Bell & Mladenovic, 2008), and promote learning, critical thinking, and reflection among educators and teachers (Gibbs, 2013; McCormack & Kennelly, 2011).

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[i] Correspondence: email erikaandalchoi@gmail.com

PoT has been a long-standing practice at New World International School (NWIS), making it an integral part of the school's culture and teaching environment. In fact, it was one of the school's strong points during the Cognia Accreditation, emphasizing the importance of supporting and engaging learning environments for students. Kemp and Gosling (2003) noted that enhancing the quality of teaching requires an evaluation of the quality of teaching itself. It is possible when teachers observe others, share insights, and provide mutual support for one another (Bell, 2005). At this point, PoT represents a promising tool for teacher development, improving the quality of teaching. However, the absence of established procedures hindered teachers from uncovering the potential of their skills. Thus, this study was conducted.

The study aims to explore teachers' experiences in conducting peer observation, investigating whether Peer Observation of Teaching (PoT) is rooted in the school's culture and teaching environment, its perceived impact on teachers, and the establishment of a standardized procedure for PoT to be adopted by the school's teaching community. Developing a PoT system will foster collective efforts and robust peer collaboration, ultimately enhancing teaching and learning practices.

2. Review of Related Studies and Literature

Peer observation of teaching (PoT) is a professional responsibility that contributes significantly to teaching quality. It provides a structured dialogue about professional practice. Researchers found varied perceptions about PoT's impact and implications on teaching practices. Ridge & Lavigne (2020) conducted a systematic review of existing literature, which indicates that peer observation is a promising practice for instructional improvement. However, there is a lack of sufficient evidence to fully support its effectiveness (Cosh, 2002), such as providing misleading or inaccurate feedback, which in turn diminishes the improvement's efforts rather than enhancing them (Ridge & Lavigne, 2020). Fletcher (2018) stated that teachers' participation is often obligatory rather than reflective, intrusive, and challenging to academic freedom (Lomas & Nicholls, 2005). Gosling (2009) agreed that it is possible that when teachers do not receive proper training, they are ill-equipped to provide constructive feedback on the effectiveness of others' teaching (Fletcher, 2018). Subsequently, these obstacles can be overcome if peer observation is nonjudgmental and developmental rather than evaluative and externally mandated.

The cross-institutional PoT conducted by O'Keeffe et al. (2021) emphasized the importance of creating structures and environments that allow reflection and dialogue to flourish. Teachers need to engage and connect with each other to facilitate professional conversation (McCormack & Kenelly, 2011) and develop openness, honesty, and trust to establish a learning alliance (O'Keeffe *et al.*, 2021). A systematic review of the tools used for peer observation should meticulously be done as part of its design phase so that it can be directed towards learning-oriented evaluation (Saborido *et al.*, 2024). Therefore, it is of utmost importance that teachers help to design observation tools that may be implemented to observe their performance. According to Gibbs (1995), as cited by

Donnelly (2007), the observer needs training since peer observation is particularly subjective, so it requires a clear framework. He stressed out several considerations in the implementation of PoT as to who is eligible to conduct the practices, the areas of concentration, the strategies and methods to be used, and the process of providing feedback for reflection. Further, he presented a model where the self-efficacy of the participants was enhanced by means of observing others, as evidenced by the evaluative comments from participants (Donnelly, 2007).

The journey for professional improvement in the teaching and learning process encompasses a continuous cycle of experiences. Several studies presented Kolb's experiential learning theory (1984), which provides insights on how people learn through the interplay between experiences, reflections, conceptualizations, and experimentation (Guy-Evans, 2024). Katal *et al.* (2012) inspire the teaching community to work collaboratively and share the best practices with others through reflection and feedback discussion. Reflection is an essential component of the teaching and learning process, in which practices are systematically reviewed to help teachers learn from the experiences of others. It is a repeated process that encourages individuals to collaborate with others and share best practices.

Reyes-Chua *et al.* (2019) and Shortland (2004) reported that the PoT is effective if the purpose is to improve the quality of the teaching and learning process, and the results will be used as the basis to enhance and support continuing professional development. Callahan and Sadeghi (2015), as cited by Reyes-Chua *et al.* (2019), reminded us that observation and evaluation should be a consistent process and provide timely and useful feedback to measure teachers' strengths and weaknesses. Several studies have noted that peer observation is a more systematic assessment of classroom performance (Reyes-Chua *et al.*, 2019) and that certain aspects of teaching can be assessed only by classroom observation (Yon *et al.*, 2010).

3. Methodology

The study is qualitative in nature to gain a thorough understanding of a problem and to generate new ideas. A self-made open-ended questionnaire was used to explore teachers' experiences in conducting peer observation. It further investigated PoT as it was rooted in the school's culture and teaching environment and determined the perceived impact of PoT on teachers' teaching and learning experiences.

This study had 30 teacher participants, including 11 teachers from 6th and 7th grades, 9 teachers from 8th and 9th grades, and 10 teachers from 10th to 12th grades. The coordinators assisted the researchers in the distribution of the survey questionnaires. If there were clarifications, the researchers clarified them to the participating teachers. The teachers were given a week to complete the survey questionnaires. The coordinators then collected the survey forms from the participating teachers and returned them to the researchers for analysis and interpretation. Only 70% of the survey questionnaires were returned safely. The study focused on teachers' experiences in conducting peer

observation and its perceived impact on their teaching and learning processes, and it proposed a PoT system to enhance teaching and learning experiences.

3.1 Peer Observation of Teaching Experiences
A. Culture and Teaching Environment

Peer observation of teachers plays a vital role in shaping the culture and teaching environment of the school. When the participating teachers' responses were analyzed, they revealed that PoT is rooted in the culture and teaching environment of the school, as they experienced learning from each other through collaboration. Other teachers emphasized empowerment, as they helped each other and displayed accountability and transparency. Most of them stressed professional development as they worked together for continuous improvement and enhanced effectiveness in the classroom.

Table 1: Culture and teaching environment as
experience by teachers through peer observation of teaching

Question 1: What are your thoughts on peer observation of teachers (PoT) as part of our school's climate and culture?
• Peer observation can be a powerful tool for professional development and growth, allowing teachers to learn from each other.
• Teachers share effective practices and receive constructive feedback on their teaching.
• It helps to connect dialogues with one another and enhances the teaching culture.
• Peer observation is about teachers observing each other's practice and learning from one another.
• It is a valuable component of a school's climate and culture. It promotes collaboration, professional development and a culture of continuous improvement among educators.
• Overall good, friendly and helping and career-oriented.
• PoT allows us to learn from each other, makes effective teaching practices and provides a good quality of teaching to the students.
• This, in real essence, provides quality education to the students. Ultimately, it provides satisfaction to the parents.
• It is essential to have regular and carefully outlined peer observation as it helps create a climate and culture of sharing and collaboration among peers.
• It fosters collaboration, professional growth and a sense of community among teachers.
• It promotes transparency and accountability, ultimately benefiting both teachers and students.
• It helps in the professional development of teachers.
• Teachers share and work on best practices to improve the overall teaching effectiveness and efficiency.
• It empowers every teacher.
• It brings forward the area that can be improved in a teacher.
• It provides opportunities for teachers to learn from one another.
• It offers a different perspective on teaching practices.
• PoT plays a valuable role in shaping the culture and climate of a school, fostering professional growth, collaboration and support among teachers.
• It is a reflective process that can lead to continuous improvement and enhanced effectiveness in the classroom.

Donnelly (2007) stated that a relationship between observer and teacher is based on confidentiality and a non-judgmental environment. This signifies a healthy learning

environment that influences the acts of the people in the learning community. It was supported by Celikten (2006) and Colley (1999) that climate and culture were formed from the life experiences and sharing of teachers, students, school management and staff, and parents. They collaborate to address the problems and unite the intellectual and emotional abilities, which leads to a positive culture within the organization (Pervez *et al.*, 2017; Grunert & Whitaker, 2015).

Table 2: Peer observation of teacher with its alignment to the school's mission and vision

Question 2: Is the observation of teachers by their peers aligned with the school's Mission and Vision?
• It provides teachers with dedicated time to work together, discuss their teaching, and share their expertise.   • It builds an image of every teacher positively so that they can provide a worthy education to the students.   • "I think so. Teachers must be flexible and committed to attaining this vision and mission. Observation can lead to the perfection of every teacher.   • Yes! It prioritized collaboration and professional growth.   • The alignment of peer observation depends on how the process is framed and how vision prioritizes collaboration and professional growth.   • Yes! Our school is 100% committed to achieving the mission and vision of the school.   • Yes, it helps us achieve the management goal.   • Yes! PoT helps achieve the mission and vision set by the management. This ensures that all teachers give their best input at an appropriate level.   • Somehow, it is!   • Yes! Teachers are working hard to provide quality education, but there is always room for improvement.   • Yes! There is a focus on continuous improvement that aligns with the school's mission and vision.   • It makes education imparting quality and fully aligns with the school's mission and vision.   • Peer observation can be aligned with its mission and vision when it is implemented thoughtfully and in a manner that supports the goals and values of the institution.   • Yes, it is. It fosters teamwork and collaboration, which the school deeply values and upholds.   • Yes, the PoT aligns closely with the school mission and vision.

When the participant's responses were analyzed, it appeared that most teacher participants agreed positively that PoT is aligned with the school's mission and vision. They effectively addressed the multidimensional aspects to continue to satisfy the stakeholders and supported all aspects related to empowering their students. Gurley *et al.* (2015) reinforced these results, noting that the school's program is designed to equip the teaching community to effect meaningful improvement centered on developing a shared mission and vision.

B. Teacher Participants' Experience during the Peer Observation of Teaching

a. Self-Reflection
Reflection is fundamental to the development of the peer evaluation process. Research shows that reflection and peer observation of teaching can become critical processes in

the professional learning of the teaching community (Askew, 2004; cited by Donnelly, 2007).
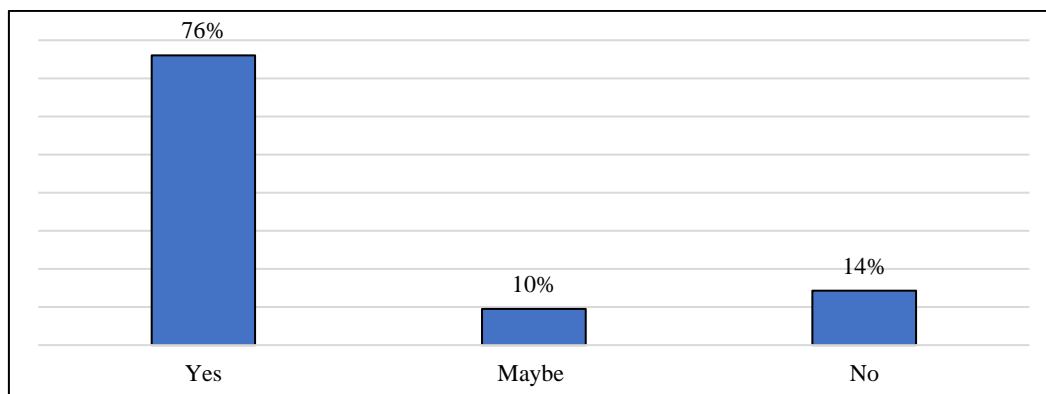

Figure 1: Percentage distribution of teacher's reflection before class observation

Figure 1 shows the percentage distribution of teachers who reflected before the class observation. The survey revealed that 76% of teachers said "yes" and that they reflected before the class observation, while 10% of teachers responded "maybe" and 14% of them said "no" and that they do not reflect. According to the teachers, they do not reflect due to limited time preparation; it is an additional task, and they fear being evaluated during observation. Sweeney *et al.* (2001), as cited by Davys and Jones (2007), supported these findings, stating that teachers have a fragile sense of professional competence, which could affect their willingness to engage in the peer observation process.

Table 3: Teacher participants' reflections during peer observation of teaching

Observer	Observed
• I am worried about the reactions of the teacher I am observing.	• It is an opportunity to undertake individual reflection before engaging with your observer.
• I reflect on things where I feel I am strong and how to share it with peers.	• It is beneficial to seek other's input during my self-reflection.
• I am thinking of ways for him not to feel humiliated or embarrassed.	• Ensure that observers approach the process with clear objectives and an open mindset.
• The evidence to provide that supports the effectiveness of teaching.	• Consider the specific goals of the observation, such as focusing on instructional strategies, classroom management techniques, or student engagement. The strategy to be used.
• I always want a teacher to use strengths and adopt methods that make teaching more effective and interactive.	• I reviewed the lesson plan for the day, considering the objectives I have set the activities I have planned, and how I intend to engage my students.
• I always see it in myself first and then expect it from others.	• Reflections on how to improve and grow professionally.

We have outlined the participant's reflections before the class observation, which are presented in Table 3. The teacher participants thought peer observation was useful, and

they could offer insights into what they found valuable about the teaching process. The results further provided an insight into the different levels of reflection as a consequence of an established relationship with colleagues. Pattison *et al.* (2012) supported this result, stating that teachers reflect on their own teaching due to observing others. On the contrary, some teachers reflect negatively, thinking colleagues might be subjective during peer observation, which is understandable. This argument is given credence by Shortland (2004), who says that peer observation of teachers was compulsory, and teachers did not engage with it thoroughly with a desire to change their teaching practices.

b. Pre-observation

Pre-observation is a phase when peer observation is planned. Before the classroom observation, it is essential to consolidate the participating teachers' trust (Department of Education and Training, 2018).
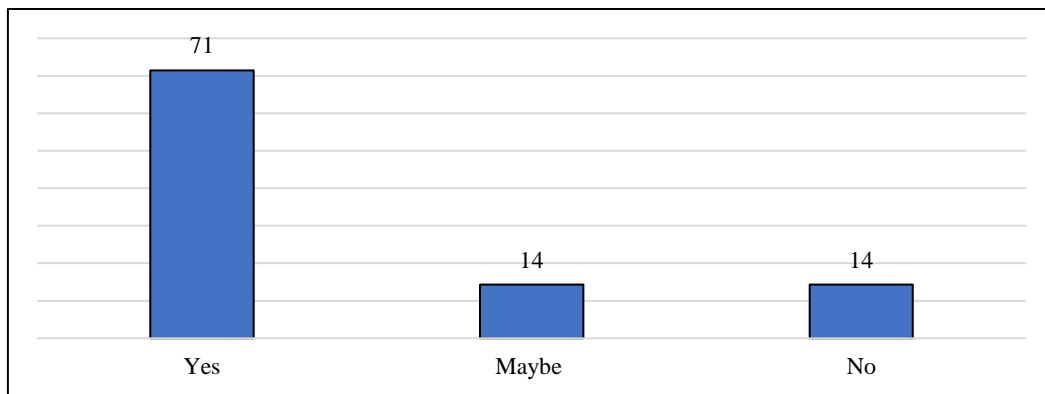

Figure 2: Pre-observation: Teacher's consolidation of trust before the classroom observation

Figure 2 revealed that 71% of teacher participants said "yes"; they established each other's trust before the class peer observation, while 14% of the participants responded "maybe" and "no." Shortland (2010) emphasized that a relationship with trust, empathy, and respect is built through peer observation. Despite the view that we are unqualified to criticize our peers' teaching, we still know what to offer (Gosling, 2002).

Table 4 presents the percentage distribution of pre-observation agreements among the participating teachers. Fletcher (2018) emphasizes how the peer observation course will be documented. He added that note-taking and audio recording were the most efficient forms of collecting data to capture the essence of pedagogy techniques and form a basis for reflection.

Table 4: Percentage distribution of pre-observation
agreement between the teacher observer and the observed

Pre-observation	Yes	Maybe	No
1. Focus on classroom observation.	86	5	10
2. Type of observation evidence.	57	33	10
3. Collection methodology.	71	19	10
4. Influencing the focus of classroom observation.	57	24	19

The survey revealed that the teacher participants have a pre-observation agreement with their observer and the observed. 86% of them agreed on the focus of classroom observation, 71% considered the method of data collection, and 57% agreed on the type of evidence that will be collected during the observation. Meanwhile, 57% of the teacher participants also agreed to consider influencing the focus of classroom observation. The findings were supported by several studies stating that pre-observation is the stage where the observer and the observed get an opportunity to discuss how the observation will be organized (Katal *et al.*, 2021; Pattison *et al.*, 2012; Siddiqui *et al.*, 2007; Donnelly, 2007; Peel, 2005). However, the Melbourne Department of Education and Training (2018) emphasized that peer observation is not about influencing the observation focus or passing judgment.

c. Observation

Martin & Double (2005), p. 164, as cited by Fletcher (2018), relate the importance of observation and are quoted as saying, "*Peer review is most useful as a formative process: recognizing strengths and suggesting possible areas for attention or alternative approaches, rather than simply judging.*"

Table 5: Percentage distribution of observation
agreement between the teacher observer and the observed

During the Observation:	Yes	Maybe	No
a. Focuses on the teacher's needs.	67	29	5
b. Aims to support the sharing of the best practices.	86	10	5
c. Builds the impact of teacher's practices.	86	10	5
d. Gather evidence to give critical feedback and reflection.	62	33	5
e. Makes judgments about the teacher's effectiveness.	67	10	24

The survey shows that 86% of the teacher participants aim to support the sharing of their best teaching practices to build an impact on each other; 67% of them focus on the needs of the teachers; and 62% of teacher participants gather evidence to give critical feedback and reflection. Meanwhile, 67% of the teacher participants judge the teacher's effectiveness. Katal *et al.* (2021) clarified that the observer was not observing to judge the teacher's performance but to gain insights into the teacher's teaching skills as well (Department of Education and Training, 2018). Pattison *et al.* (2012) added that taking notes during observation is highly encouraged so that specific feedback can be facilitated, as it is essential in improving the skills of the observed teachers (McKimm, 2009).

d. Post-observation

This is the part where peer observation of teaching is to be productive — the stage where discussions need to be truthful and constructive (Fletcher, 2018). This should be done right after the observation, but if not possible, both the observer and the observer can decide and agree to do it another time.

Table 6: Percentage distribution of post-observation agreement between the teacher observer and the observed

Post-observation:	Yes	Maybe	No
a. Considers the opportunity to discuss and reflect on the instructional practice.	62	19	19
b. Discusses based on factual, evidence-based conversation.	57	29	14
c. Conversations support the sharing of best practices.	71	14	14
d. Helps build awareness about the impact of teaching strategies.	71	14	14
e. Conversation is structured.	48	33	19
f. Conversation is superficial and/or lacking in an evidence-based.	38	33	29
g. Is judgmental and emotive.	33	24	43

The survey revealed that 62% of the teacher participants consider the opportunity to discuss and reflect on the instructional practices. 71% of them believed that the observer helps build awareness about the impact of teaching strategies and supports the sharing of teaching's best practices. 57% of the teacher participants stated that the post-observation discussion is factual and evidence-based, while 48% of them stated that the conversation during the post-observation is structured.

According to Daniels *et al.* (2013), structured conversations resulted in reflections on practice and suggestions for specific teaching strategies. Meanwhile, 43% of the teacher participants did not believe that the post-observation discussion was judgmental and emotional. The Department of Education and Training (2018) concurred with the results and clarified that peer observation is not judgmental, emotive, unstructured, superficial, or lacking in an evidence-based manner.

e. Perceived Impact of Peer Observation of Teaching

According to the teacher participants, peer observation of teachers is meaningful and effective. It helps improve their teaching practices, allows for self-reflection, and provides quality feedback that helps them enhance and improve their teaching skills. Reese-Durham (2005) cited that participants were very cautious of their comments to their peers.

Table 7.1: Perceive the effectiveness of using peer observation of teachers

Question 3: How effective and meaningful is the feedback received from peer observation?
• It is a powerful tool for improving teaching practice and fostering professional learning communities.
• It helps teachers improve their teaching practice and foster professional learning.
• It helps teachers internalize what to improve in their teachings and what to remain and enhance.
• It is effective and meaningful! It improves the teaching and learning process in the classroom!
• It is more helpful and meaningful to mention equality and providing quality education to students of different nationalities. Peer feedback is very effective; it helps to maintain a uniform level of quality education for students of diverse nationalities and provides equal information and opportunities.
• The feedback is effective and meaningful as it helps teachers self-reflect on their practices.
• If PoT is conducted thoughtfully with clear objectives, structured protocols, and constructive dialogue, it can be highly effective and meaningful.
• It is effective, especially when experienced teachers observe and provide descriptive feedback to others for improvement.

- Observation obviously will focus on the points that should be improved and will enhance teaching skills.
- Teachers can receive constructive feedback from their peers, which can help them reflect on their teaching methods.
- The PoT feedback is significant and effective for teachers' professional growth as it provides teachers with valuable insights into improving teaching practices and student outcomes.
- It is not focused on criticisms but rather on growth and improvement.

Table 7.1 presents the perceived effectiveness of teacher peer observation. The findings concur with Daniels *et al. (*2013), who stated that peer observation provides space for reflection, opens the door to discussing specific teaching practices, and focuses on teaching attitudes about teaching and learning. Donnelly (2007) stressed the role of design in facilitating teachers' ongoing professional development through peer learning integration. He highlighted the iterative nature of designing and delivering peer observation processes, emphasizing its role in constructing personal meaning.

Table 7.2: Perceive lessons learned from peer observation of teachers

Question 4: What lessons do peer observers learn from observing teachers?
• We see techniques we want to try, and we also see and hear things. We realize we need to avoid it. Walking into another teacher's classroom as a student pushes us to think about our own classrooms and students.
• An observer can have valuable feedback and learn new techniques and methods.
• It enables teachers to build their individual capability and develop a shared understanding of effective classroom practice.
• Preparedness, optimism and goal-oriented.
• Instructional strategies, classroom management, differentiated instructions, assessment practices, reflection and self-assessment.
• I learned from experienced teachers who inspired me to enhance my teaching capabilities!
• Classroom management, sharing effective practice and collaborative learning.
• Classroom management, sharing ideas and ways of imparting knowledge to the students.
• It tells the peers to gain from collaborative learning.
• In peer observation, the observer always self-reflects on their own practices, affirms and verifies their effectiveness, and identifies their own practices to continue or the peers' practices to avoid.
• Observing teachers can teach valuable lessons about instructional strategies, content knowledge, engagement techniques, classroom environment, reflective practice, professional growth, and several other areas.
• Learn new teaching strategies, the use of technology, and classroom management.
• Peer observers learn the method of dealing with myriad students.
• Peer observers can gain valuable insights into teaching and learning by observing their colleagues in action.
• Peer observers can learn valuable lessons about effective teaching practices, professional growth, collaboration, and the importance of reflective practice by observing teachers.

In Table 7.2, the participating teachers revealed that the insights gained from peer observation encompass effective classroom management strategies, self-reflection techniques, and promoting collaborative learning among their students. Katal *et al.* (2021) agreed that peer observation helped the observer reflect on his teaching style and may incorporate the observed good practices into their teaching (Bell, 2002). Fletcher (2018)

added that peer observation expands teachers' capabilities and approaches to teaching, improves morale and motivation, and increases teacher collaboration.

Table 7.3: Perceived improvement on teaching
and learning experience through peer observation

Question 5: To what extent does the process of peer observation result in an improved teaching and learning experience?
• It helps me to revisit and re-assess my teaching practices. I increased my time and effort in evaluating the needs of my students.
• It helps with current knowledge but also helps build confidence and thus enhances teaching self-efficacy.
• It is essential to the development of teaching practice. Rich feedback and constructive peer criticism raise teachers' awareness of their performance.
• Peer observation raises teacher awareness of their performance.
• When the teacher gets the feedback, he will be guided on the following strategy: internalize whether it will be effective.
• It can significantly improve the teaching and learning experience in several ways.
• PoT helps develop communication skills. It allows for discussion, teaching, and learning.
• PoT helps to a great extent to improve one learning at such an international level of teaching. In this way, we share the ideas of the diverse nations.
• Regular peer observation impacts learners' academic performance and teachers' overall teaching practices. It helps teachers create a habit that improves their practices.
• Peer observation catalyzes continuous improvement in teaching and learning, ultimately leading to a more effective and fulfilling educational experience for both teachers and students.
• It improves teaching effectiveness, especially by helping teachers use feedback constructively.
• Continuous evaluation will help them improve and develop confidence and contribute to professional development.
• Peer observation helps the teacher to know the areas he can work on or his strengths that he can use more and more.
• The peer observation process can profoundly impact the teaching and learning experience by promoting professional growth, collaboration and accountability.
• It improved the teaching and learning experiences by providing the teachers with feedback and fostering professional growth and collaboration.
• Teachers enhanced instructional techniques and classroom management.

The participating teachers revealed in Table 7.3 that peer observation enables them to revisit and re-assess their teaching practices for teaching enhancement and improvement. The results concur with the study by Fletcher (2018) promoting teaching observation as a means for teacher to develop their skills in their colleagues' pedagogy. Observing peers not only expands current knowledge but also boosts confidence, increases self-efficacy for teaching, inspires others to try new strategies, and adapt and modify classroom techniques that work best for them (Katal *et al.*, 2021).

Davys & Jones (2007) supported the findings presented in Table 7.4 and agreed that the opportunity to be observed and receive feedback helps develop a sense of professional competency. It may also be used to promote reflection upon practice, enhance self-awareness, and meet developmental needs (Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2005). They added that PoT recognizes work standards and fosters a supportive environment, helping to meet the requirement for enhanced skill supervision

and mentoring. Whipp & Pengelley (2017) cited that PoT helps teachers gain confidence as educators, while Sullivan et al. (2012) pointed out that observers learn and reflect on the observation, too. Hence, PoT contributes to the development of collegiality among teachers.

Table 7.4: Perceived advantages and disadvantages of conducting peer observation of teaching

Advantages	Disadvantages
• Demonstrate the school's commitment to professional development	• Time-consuming and may involve a large amount of inactivity.
• Contributes to the development of the whole school by creating a professional learning community.	• Observations may lack depth and qualitative richness.
• Working or learning can be exciting	• Observers may record subjective and unsubstantiated judgements of peers.
• It helps prevent pedagogical solitude by making teaching more visible.	• It is the source of anxiety and lack of confidence.
• It can figure out weaknesses and strength	• Inappropriateness since we are at the same level.
• It can improve teaching style and innovations	• Time-consuming, planning, conducting and providing feedback for peer observation.
• It provides a valuable opportunity for teachers to receive	• Copying other styles is time-consuming!
• Improve teaching skills and build up confidence!	• A high tendency for the feedback to be subjective, especially when there is no carefully written policy or guidelines.
• Share information that different teachers of different ages have in their knowledge.	• Impact on relationships, time and resources, lack of proper training of observers and teachers, and peer observations may not result in meaningful feedback or professional development opportunities.
• When done with utmost sincerity, it is credible.	• Some teachers are reluctant to assess their peers.
• Professional development, collaboration, improved teaching practices, and accountability	• Some teachers are not experienced enough to assess their peers.
• Self-reflection and empowering teachers.	• Teachers could be disturbed by an observer in their class.
• Specifying a weaker or less enhanced feature in a teacher.	• Time and resources, impact on relationship and subjectivity
• Professional growth, feedback and reflection, support and collaboration	• Challenges on trust and validity of the peer observation.
• It helps boost teacher's confidence.	• Bias, time-consuming and lack of expertise.

Meanwhile, various studies have validated the challenges the participating teachers met. Davys & Jones (2007) noted that the provision of feedback should be managed with sensitivity; therefore, it needs to be objective and constructive and requires careful planning (Swain, 2007). In addition, the fear of receiving negative feedback from colleagues or being deemed incompetent, increased anxiety (Sweeney *et al.*, 2001), and the power balance issue between individuals were also considered (Hammersley-Fletcher & Orsmond, 2005). Ellis (2001) emphasizes that clear guidelines and support are

necessary to reduce anxiety among teachers and enable them to reap the maximum benefit of peer observation. Although time and resources are the most mentioned barriers, it is important to set achievable short-term targets (Warne, 2002).

f. Implications for professional development

This study explored the potential of peer observation of teachers as one of the key indicators of professional development. It highlighted the challenges and support experienced by the participating teachers, thus offering numerous implications for professional development and instructional improvement.

Peer observation of teachers appeared to ensure feelings of trust and comfort and an established support system from colleagues. The teachers provided constructive feedback that focused more on essential strategies to continue or adjust their teaching practices. They share excellent practices while raising understanding of the effects of their own teaching. Finally, they share decision-making and responsibility, working together and contributing ideas to achieve educational goals. As such, the role of teachers in establishing and nurturing professional growth warrants collective participation and collaborative commitments.

With this, the researchers have devised a proposal for the cycle of peer observation of teachers to be adopted by the school's teaching community. This PoT system will foster collective efforts and robust peer collaboration, ultimately enhancing teaching and learning practices.
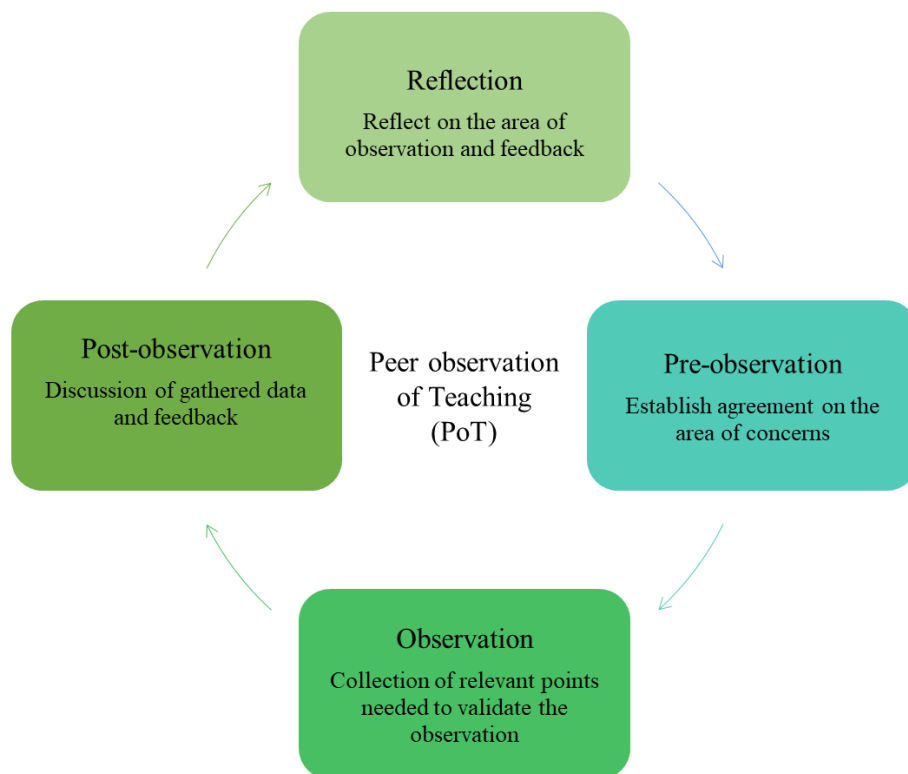
Figure 3: Adopted cycle of peer observation of teachers by Andal, *et al.* (2024)

5. Conclusion

The participating teachers claimed peer observation of teaching experiences as effective, meaningful, and beneficial. It has enabled teachers to improve their learning in action while also reflecting before and throughout their instruction. Furthermore, the teachers' experience in offering feedback allows them to reflect on their performance, gain confidence, and create an action plan for improving their teaching. Another valuable experience gained from peer observation is evaluating and reassessing one's teaching approaches. This may boost observed teachers' confidence and allow observers to incorporate best practices into their work settings.

To encourage professional growth and development, dedicated teachers must be willing to assess their practices, engage in meaningful reflection, and develop holistically. They should be properly guided to better guide the goal of peer observation.

Conflict of Interest Statement
The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

About the Author(s)
Frederick A. Andal is a faculty member under the Biology Department at New World International School, Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia. His main research interest includes topics related to methodology and evaluation, humanities and social sciences, and environmental sciences.
E-mail address: erikaandalchoi@gmail.com
ORCID: orcid.org/0000-0003-2341-4604
Azra Nayeem is the Academic Director at New World International School, Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia. Her main research interest includes topics related to leadership and supervision, curriculum and policy development, methodology and evaluation.
E-mail address: azra@newworldschool.com.sa
Noel M. Invento is a faculty member under the Computer and Technology Department at New World International School. His main research interest includes topics related to data analysis and technology integration in education.
E-mail address: nminwis@gmail.com
Amina Aslam Aga is the Academic Coordinator at New World International School, Al Khobar, Saudi Arabia. Her main research interest includes classroom management, methodology and planning.
E-mail address: amn_aga@yahoo.co.uk

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