

# Promoting Teacher Collaboration: Experiences of Science Coordinators from Kaputian District

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**Abstract:** This study explores the experiences of science coordinators in Kaputian District in promoting teacher collaboration within the science education framework. Teacher collaboration is recognized as an essential component of improving teaching quality and student outcomes, particularly in the context of science education, where innovation and collective expertise are critical to effective teaching practices. Through qualitative interviews with 10 science coordinators, this research examines the strategies, challenges, and perceived benefits of fostering collaboration among science teachers. The findings indicate that science coordinators play a vital role in facilitating collaboration through organizing professional development activities, creating collaborative spaces, and providing instructional support. However, several challenges, including time constraints, resistance to change, and limited resources, were identified as barriers to effective collaboration. Despite these challenges, the coordinators reported positive outcomes, including improved teaching practices, enhanced student engagement, and a stronger sense of community among teachers. The study concludes with recommendations for school administrators and policymakers to enhance teacher collaboration in science by addressing resource gaps, promoting collaborative cultures, and investing in professional development that supports collaborative teaching practices.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, teacher collaboration has emerged as a crucial factor in enhancing the quality of education, particularly in the context of improving science instruction. Studies have consistently shown that collaboration among teachers leads to increased knowledge sharing, improved teaching practices, and better student outcomes (Vangrieken et al., 2015). The role of science coordinators in promoting collaboration is vital, as they serve as the bridge between teachers, administrators, and the curriculum, facilitating opportunities for collaborative planning, peer observations, and professional development (Hargreaves, 2007).

In the context of Kaputian District, fostering teacher collaboration is especially important as schools aim to enhance science education amidst challenges such as limited resources, diverse student needs, and evolving curricular standards. Effective science instruction requires continuous innovation and adaptation, and collaboration among teachers provides a platform for sharing best practices, addressing common challenges, and improving the overall quality of teaching.

Despite the recognized benefits of teacher collaboration, many schools still face significant barriers to its implementation. These barriers often include logistical challenges such as limited planning time, lack of

administrative support, and resistance from teachers who may be accustomed to working independently (Kelchtermans, 2006). This study aims to explore the experiences of science coordinators in Kaputian District in promoting collaboration among science teachers, highlighting both the strategies employed and the obstacles encountered in this process.

By understanding how science coordinators facilitate teacher collaboration, this study seeks to contribute to the growing body of literature on teacher professional development and collaborative practices, providing valuable insights for educators, school leaders, and policymakers.

## II. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a qualitative research design to explore the experiences of science coordinators in Kaputian District regarding teacher collaboration. A phenomenological approach was chosen to capture the lived experiences of the science coordinators and to understand the essence of their roles in promoting collaboration (Creswell, 2013).

A purposive sampling technique was used to select 10 science coordinators from schools across the district. These coordinators were chosen based on their active involvement in promoting teacher collaboration within their schools, as

well as their role in facilitating professional development and curriculum implementation. Participants were from schools with varying resources and demographic characteristics, providing a diverse range of perspectives on the challenges and successes of fostering collaboration.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, which allowed for flexibility in the questions while ensuring that key topics related to the research objectives were addressed. The interview questions focused on the following areas: the strategies coordinators use to encourage collaboration, the challenges they face, the benefits they observe from teacher collaboration, and their perceptions of institutional support for collaborative initiatives. Interviews lasted between 45 and 60 minutes and were audio-recorded with the participants' consent.

The transcriptions of the interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify recurring themes and patterns. This approach allowed for a detailed understanding of the coordinators' experiences and the factors that influence the success or failure of collaborative initiatives in science education.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The analysis of the interview data revealed several key themes related to the promotion of teacher collaboration among science educators in Kaputian District.

#### ➤ *Strategies for Promoting Collaboration:*

The science coordinators employed various strategies to promote collaboration among science teachers. One of the most commonly used strategies was organizing regular professional development workshops focused on collaboration, where teachers could share ideas, engage in joint planning, and discuss common teaching challenges. Coordinators also facilitated the creation of collaborative spaces within schools, such as designated planning periods or collaborative teaching teams, where teachers could work together on lesson planning and problem-solving.

A notable strategy mentioned by several coordinators was the use of peer observation, where teachers were encouraged to observe each other's classrooms to learn new teaching methods and provide feedback. This practice not only helped improve teaching practices but also fostered a sense of community and trust among teachers.

#### ➤ *Challenges to Collaboration:*

Despite the efforts to promote collaboration, the coordinators identified several challenges that hindered the full implementation of collaborative practices. Time constraints were the most frequently mentioned barrier, with teachers often struggling to find time during the school day for collaborative activities due to heavy workloads and tight schedules. Additionally, some coordinators reported resistance from teachers who were reluctant to engage in collaborative practices, either due to a lack of confidence in working with peers or a preference for solitary teaching methods.

Limited resources, such as insufficient teaching materials and technology, also posed significant challenges for promoting effective collaboration. Teachers often lacked access to the tools and materials needed to implement collaborative lesson planning or to share resources effectively.

#### ➤ *Benefits of Teacher Collaboration:*

The coordinators reported several positive outcomes resulting from increased teacher collaboration. The most notable benefit was the improvement in teaching practices, as teachers were able to learn from each other's experiences and share best practices. Coordinators observed that teachers who participated in collaborative activities demonstrated greater confidence in their teaching, as well as a more positive attitude toward professional growth.

Another key benefit of collaboration was enhanced student engagement and learning outcomes. Teachers reported that collaborative planning allowed for the development of more creative and engaging lesson plans, which in turn improved student participation and comprehension. Several coordinators also noted that collaboration fostered a greater sense of community within the school, leading to a more supportive and cohesive teaching environment.

#### ➤ *Institutional Support for Collaboration:*

The coordinators emphasized the importance of institutional support in fostering collaboration. They noted that schools with supportive leadership, who encouraged collaboration and provided the necessary resources, were more successful in implementing collaborative practices. However, in schools where leadership was less supportive or where there were few resources allocated for professional development, the success of collaboration initiatives was more limited.

The findings of this study support the existing literature on the benefits of teacher collaboration in improving teaching practices and student outcomes (Vangrieken et al., 2015). The strategies used by science coordinators in Kaputian District, such as professional development workshops, collaborative spaces, and peer observations, are consistent with best practices for fostering teacher collaboration in the field of education (Hargreaves, 2007). These strategies not only promote the sharing of knowledge but also help build a sense of community among teachers, which is essential for creating a collaborative culture in schools.

However, the challenges identified in this study—time constraints, resistance to change, and limited resources—are common barriers to effective collaboration in many educational contexts (Kelchtermans, 2006). Time is particularly critical, as teachers often face heavy teaching loads and administrative duties that leave little room for collaboration. Overcoming this barrier requires systemic changes, such as adjusting school schedules to allow for collaborative planning and providing adequate time for teachers to work together (Vangrieken et al., 2015).

Institutional support also emerged as a crucial factor in the success of collaborative initiatives. The role of school leadership in fostering a culture of collaboration cannot be overstated. Coordinators who received support from school administrators were better able to implement collaborative practices and create sustainable change. This aligns with research that highlights the importance of leadership in facilitating professional collaboration (Hargreaves, 2007).

This study provides valuable insights into the experiences of science coordinators in Kaputian District in promoting teacher collaboration. Despite facing significant challenges, coordinators employ various strategies to foster collaboration among science teachers, resulting in improved teaching practices and student engagement. The findings underscore the importance of institutional support, adequate resources, and time for collaboration in ensuring the success of such initiatives. Based on these findings, it is recommended that school administrators and policymakers prioritize the provision of resources, professional development, and leadership support to create a more collaborative and effective science education environment. Future research could explore the impact of specific collaborative practices on student achievement and teacher retention, as well as the role of digital tools in facilitating collaboration among teachers.

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