

Exploring the Role of Blended ELTeach Training and Institutional Support in Promoting the Professional Confidence of Indonesian Non-Native English-Speaking Teachers

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Abstract

In recent years, there has been a growing focus on the development of language teachers; however, how to effectively support and enhance their confidence remains largely under-researched and inadequately understood. This mixed-methods sequential explanatory study explores how a four-month blended teacher training program, combined with varying levels of institutional support, may enhance English

teachers' confidence in language use and understanding essential teaching methodologies. The training program integrated the ELTeach platform, a globally recognized online training resource, with in-person workshops. The study involved 250 Indonesian teachers from Islamic elementary and secondary schools; however, it primarily reports on the findings from 26 participants, divided into two equal groups based on their perceived institutional support. Participants self-assessed their confidence levels before and after training. Results from mixed ANOVA analyses indicate that ELTeach-based training significantly increased ELT professional confidence; however, perceived institutional support and the combination of training with support did not yield a significant impact. Interviews with six participants—involving three teachers before and after training and three principals after the training—showed the impact of personal factors and the dynamics within the training program. The alignment between the quantitative and qualitative findings underscored the training potential to promote teacher professional confidence, regardless of the level of institutional support. The study concludes with the implications for the development of teacher professional development, especially in promoting teacher confidence.

Keywords: blended teacher professional development, non-native english-speaking teachers, madrasah, pesantren, faith-based education

INTRODUCTION

Teacher professional development (TPD) has emerged as a focal point in English language teaching (ELT) for some years now. TPD entails the ongoing, career-long learning that teachers undertake after their formal training (Richards & Farrell, 2005), and is pivotal to enhancing educational quality and improving student outcomes (Ahmad, 2023; Crandall & Christison, 2016; Darling-Hammond et al., 2009). Although TPD can encompass a range of activities, from self-directed reading to ministry-sponsored workshops (Borg, 2018), surprisingly little is known about how specific TPD formats contribute to the development of teachers' professional confidence.

This study investigates whether a blended training program for non-native English-speaking teachers (NNESTs) in Indonesian Islamic schools enhances their professional confidence, and whether the presence of perceived institutional support amplifies these benefits. Guided by social-cognitive theory, we propose two hypotheses: first, that teachers will report increased confidence after the program; and second, that the growth in confidence will be more pronounced when institutional support is strong. An explanatory-sequential mixed-methods design is used to evaluate these hypotheses.

Teacher Professional Confidence in ELT

Professional confidence in ELT denotes teachers' self-efficacy in using classroom English and applying essential language-teaching methods (Freeman, 2017a; Freeman 2020; Freeman et al., 2019; Richards, 2017). High confidence predicts innovative practice, positive climate, and lower turnover (Cerit, 2013; Gordon et al., 2023; Jimenez-Silva et al., 2012; Tschannen-Moran & McMaster, 2009). Despite its importance, empirical work in ELT is sparse (Corry & Stella, 2018).

Blended Teacher Training and Institutional Support

Blended TPD integrates online modules with in-person coaching, pairing digital flexibility with immediate feedback (Huang et al., 2023; Wright, 2017). Online only and traditional formats have been linked to confidence gains (Drajati et al., 2023; Young et al., 2014). However, the specific contribution of the blended modality to TPD remains underexplored.

Institutional support, which include policies, leadership, and resources, shapes the impact of any TPD initiative (Guskey, 2000; Martin & Nuss, 2022). Robust support can magnify blended-program outcomes (Philipsen et al., 2022), whereas its absence may derail even well-designed interventions. Guskey (2002) points out that lack of "institutional support ... can sabotage any professional development effort, even when all ... are done right". (p. 46)

In the realm of ELT professional development, one of the standout platforms is ELTeach (Freeman, 2017b; Katz, 2017). As an online standards-based course, ELTeach has reached at least 24,000

teachers in 25 countries since 2012 (Freeman & Katz, 2019). ELTeach claims to help teachers 'teach English in English with confidence' (National Geographic Learning, 2022). Evidence for its effectiveness in blended, religious-school settings, however, is scarce.

ELTeach-based Blended Training in Indonesia

ELTeach was developed by 19 internationally recognized ELT experts from over 10 countries (Freeman et al., 2012; Roehr, 2015). Aimed at assisting education ministries and local authorities in training "a large number of English teachers to teach their (national) English curriculum in English" (National Geographic Learning, 2022), ELT has been globally accepted. The acceptance could be explained by the emphasis on the two core ELT elements (Katz, 2017). The emphasis has made "the course content ... both globally and locally relevant" (Roehr, 2015, p. vi) which, in turn, "give teachers the skills to teach English in English" (National Geographic Learning, 2015, p. vi) "with confidence" (National Geographic Learning, 2022) even if their national language education policy is still mixed such as in Indonesia (Kohler, 2019).

Teachers' professional confidence is one of the commonly discussed aspects in all stages of ELTeach. In the design stage, the content focused on specialized, not general, classroom English language skills, drawing from limited evidence indicating that general English language proficiency could provide teachers with professional confidence (Katz, 2017; Young et al., 2014). In the implementation stage, participating teachers self-assessed their confidence levels at the beginning of the course and then had customized learning paths consisting of lessons tailored to their needs (Katz, 2017; Young et al., 2014).

Furthermore, at the beginning and the end of each course unit, the teacher participants assessed and reassessed how confident they were in using English for specific teaching tasks, such as taking attendance (Roehr, 2015). In the final stage, the effectiveness of ELTeach was also measured in terms of teachers' professional confidence. Embedded throughout ELTeach, pre-and post-self-assessment can effectively monitor confidence gains. Large-scale

implementations report positive outcomes by 80% of about 2,000 Vietnamese teachers (Freeman, 2017b).

Yet, published evaluations largely focus on online-only deliveries (Freeman et al., 2012; Gu & Papageorgiou, 2016). How confidence is measured and supported in blended versions is unclear. Understandably, in the online mode, the self-assessment of teachers' confidence was integrated into an automated scoring system that provided certificates for individual teachers (Gu & Papageorgiou, 2016; Young et al., 2014). Limited information is available on how teachers' professional confidence was self-assessed in ELTeach-based blended implementations. For example, Freeman and Katz (2019) found that nearly 100% of the 120 participating teachers at Islamic schools in India reported improved professional confidence after the ELTeach-based blended training. However, the criteria or methods used for self-assessment were not specified. Understanding these factors is crucial for developing more effective professional development programs in similar contexts.

In Indonesia, ELTeach was implemented similarly to that in India. The training was delivered in a blended mode for teachers in Islamic schools, spanning approximately four months, and without an automated analytic system (Freeman and Katz, 2019). No study has quantified whether the Indonesian blended rollout improves confidence or how school-level factors mediate outcomes, a gap this research addresses.

Notably, within the context of Indonesian Islamic educational institutions, various institutional factors may hinder teachers' capacity building. Past research has highlighted a strong focus on Islamic religiosity and Arabic as the Quranic language (e.g., Farid & Lamb, 2020; Lie et al., 2022; Qoyyimah et al., 2023) and a lack of a supportive learning community (Husniyah, 2019). Nonetheless, the intricate relationship between blended NNEST training and institutional support in strengthening teachers' professional confidence remains largely unexplored.

Research Aims

Seeking to address the role of a blended NNEST training program and the levels of institutional support in promoting teachers' professional confidence, this study was designed as an explanatory sequential mixed-methods project (Creswell & Creswell, 2018) to assess five research questions (RQs).

The first three RQs focus on the statistical analysis of data to determine the relationships among three variables. The first RQ examines whether teachers develop greater professional confidence after participating in the blended ELTeach-based program. The second RQ2 investigates whether teachers who receive high institutional support report developing greater professional confidence compared to those receiving low institutional support. The third RQ explores whether changes in ELT professional confidence depend on the level of institutional support NNESTs receive.

In the explanatory follow-up phase, the last two RQs involve in-depth exploration of teacher training programs and perspectives of teachers and principals. The fourth RQ examines how the quality and content of a blended NNEST training program influence ELT professional confidence. It also looks at how their principals perceive the role of the training program in teacher development. The last RQ assesses the extent to which NNESTs attribute their ELT professional confidence to the institutional support, and how their principals view the effectiveness of the institutional support mechanisms in supporting ELT professional confidence.

Given the interconnected nature of the research design and RQs, this study aims to shed light on the transformative potential of blended teacher training and the pivotal role of institutional support in enhancing teachers' professional confidence.

RESEARCH METHODS

Participants and Sampling

Of the 250 Indonesian NNESTs who completed the four-month blended ELTeach program, a purposive sub-sample of 26 teachers (10.4 %) consented to participate in the study. Inclusion criteria

were full course completion and the availability for pre-and post-surveys and follow-up interviews. Power analysis conducted using GPower 3.1.9.7 (Faul et al., 2007) confirmed that $n = 26$ yields $1 - \beta = .80$ for detecting a moderate effect ($f = .25, \alpha = .05$). Ethics approval (Indonesia EC, see Suppl. B) and written informed consent were obtained from the participants. In summary, the study's comprehensive participant demographics (Table 1) align with the research objectives and statistical requirements (Al-Hoorie & Vitta, 201).

Based on their institutional support survey rankings, the participants were categorized into high ($n = 13$) and low ($n = 13$) institutional support groups. Table 1 provides insights into the diverse backgrounds and contexts of these participants.

Table 1. Background Information of Participants based on the Levels of Institutional Support

Demographic data	Institutional support		Demographic data	Institutional support	
	High	Low		High	Low
Sex			School taught		
Female	12	11	Elementary	0	3
Male	1	2	Middle or high	13	10
Education			Grade taught		
BA in ELT	13	11	Different grades	13	12
Master in ELT	0	1	The same grade	0	1
Other	0	0	Non-ELT tasks such as head librarian and environmental education program coordinator		
Previous EFL teacher training			ELT task only	0	1
Never	10	13	Non-ELT tasks	13	12
At least once	3	0	Certification status		
Teaching (years)			Certified	1	1
0 to 5	9	10	Uncertified	12	12
11 to 15	3	0	Employment status		
16 to 20	0	1	Full-timer	12	11
6 to 10	0	2	Part-timer	1	2
>20	1	0	No. of other English language teachers at schools		
Weekly teaching sessions			0	0	3
0 to 5	0	1	1-3	10	10
11 to 15	1	0	4-6	3	0
16 to 20	0	3	School management		
21 to 24	8	8	Private	7	12
6 to 10	0	1	Public	6	1
>24	4	0			

Interview participants

After collecting quantitative data of pre- and post-training, the first author interviewed three participants. Table 2 provides a detailed overview of the purposive selection criteria used for the interview participants. Each criterion is detailed with the number of participants in each category, providing insight into the diverse backgrounds and qualifications of those involved.

Table 2. Criteria for Selection of Interview Participants

Criterion	Categories	<i>N</i>
Location	In-city	2
	Outside the city	1
School management	Public	1
	Private	2
Length of teaching	0-5 years	2
	Over 20 years	1
Sex	Female	2
	Male	1
Certification status	Certified	1
	Uncertified	2
School level	Elementary	1
	Secondary	2

After the training, the first author conducted three separate semi-structured interviews with the principals of the three teachers involved. These principals shared specific characteristics. All three were male and had over two decades of extensive teaching experience. Additionally, each principal held a teaching certification and had a major in Islamic religious education. Notably, two principals held bachelor's degrees, while one earned a master's degree. They had served as school principals for varying period, ranging from 5 to 10 years, showcasing their experience in school administration and leadership within educational institutions.

Data Collection and Analysis

In the quantitative phase, data were collected through pre- and post-training surveys, while the qualitative phase involved pre- and post-training semi-structure interviews. All quantitative data

were analyzed using JASP Version 0.17.1 (JASP Team, 2023) as explained by Goss-Sampson (2022). Effects were reported as significant at $p < 0.05$.

Survey data collection

The self-assessment comprises 46 items: (a) English for Teaching (EFT, 37 items) and (b) Professional Knowledge for ELT (PK, 9 items) (Freeman et al., 2012; National Geographic Learning, 2015). Each sub-scale is averaged separately (EFT-mean, PK-mean), and a composite score (Global-PC = mean of all 46 items) is also calculated. Primary analyses use Global-PC; exploratory analyses test sub-scales to detect domain-specific effects.

Prior to the training session, all participants were required to complete an online bilingual survey consisting of twelve 5-point Likert scale items. These items were adopted and translated from Guskey (2000) and assessed the participants' perceived institutional support. The 5-point Likert scale ranged from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). This survey (Supplementary Material D) was used to divide the participants into two equal groups based on their self-reported institutional support. Consequently, the participants were only required to complete the survey once before the training.

Survey reliability

Test-retest reliability for the confidence survey between pre- and post-training (Supplementary Material C) was estimated using intraclass correlation coefficient (ICC) of a two-way mixed-effects model for consistency, ICC (3,1). The ICC (3,1) of English for teaching (the first dimension of ELT professional confidence), Professional knowledge for ELT (the second dimension), and ELT professional confidence was, respectively, 0.73, 95% CI (0.48, 0.87), 0.67, 95% CI (0.39, 0.84), and 0.54, 95% CI (0.20, 0.76). Separately and collectively, the survey exhibits moderate to good reliability (Koo & Li, 2016) or fair to good reliability (Cicchetti, 1994). Additionally, Cronbach's α for the 12 institutional support items (Supplementary Material D) was 0.92, 95% CI (0.87, 0.96). The result of unidimensional reliability indicated the satisfactory level of internal consistency of the institutional support survey.

Quantitative data analysis

This analysis combined both independent and repeated measures ANOVA, involving more than one independent variable known as factors (Goss-Sampson, 2022). Table 3 shows the mean pre- and post-training scores as a within-subjects factor for an original group of 26 participants, divided into high and low perceived institutional support groups as a between-subjects factor. For research question 1 (RQ1), we could apply an independent t-test, while for RQ2, a repeated measures t-test would be appropriate; however, the interaction between time and support (RQ3) could not be evaluated. The incorporation of both within-subjects and between-subjects factors aligns with the principles of mixed-design ANOVA. According to Yu et al. (2022), using the two *t*-tests instead of mixed ANOVA for our research design would overlook the interaction effect, underestimate population variance by considering only within-group variance, violate an independent assumption, and increase the risk of Type I error. To achieve a more comprehensive analysis, we submitted the quantitative surveys data to a two-way mixed ANOVA with repeated measures on ELT professional confidence, with the factors being 2 (ELT professional confidence: pre- and post-training) x 2 (levels of institutional support: high and low)

Table 3. Mean Pre- and Post-Training Scores by Perceived Institutional Support Groups

Within-subjects Between-subjects	Pre-Training Mean	Post-Training Mean
High Institutional Support Group (<i>n</i> = 13)	Mean_High_Pre1	Mean_High_Post2
Low Institutional Support Group (<i>n</i> = 13)	Mean_Low_Pre1	Mean_Low_Post2

Interview data collection

This study employed semi-structured interviews to collect qualitative data, guided by an interview protocol (Supplementary Material E). The questions related to ELT professional confidence were adapted from ELTeach modules (National Geographic

Learning, 2022), while those for institutional support were adapted and translated from Guskey (2000). Pilot testing involved four undergraduate students from an Islamic higher education institution where the first author is a faculty member. A total of five participants were interviewed individually in private settings using the Indonesian language. The interviews were tailored for each participant and accompanying field notes were recorded. Data saturation was achieved after nine interviews—six with teachers and three with principals—indicating the emergence of consistent themes.

Each interview lasted between 45 to 60 minutes, and they were audio-recorded and transcribed using freesubtitles.ai (Saint Technology, 2023), with English translations. Participants were given the opportunity to review and edit the transcripts, with minimal changes made by one participant. All identifying information was removed to ensure anonymity. The researcher, along with two research consultants experienced in mixed-methods studies, conducted multiple reviews to guarantee accuracy and rigor in respecting participants' perspectives.

Interview data analysis

This study operates within an interpretivist paradigm, with the qualitative phase focused on analyzing data through a hybrid thematic analysis. Preconceived themes were identified based on the literature related to ELTeach (Freeman et al., 2012; Freeman & Katz, 2019; Katz, 2017; Young et al., 2014) and institutional support (Guskey, 2000, p. 170). In addition to the theory-driven, deductive approach, some codes, or themes were derived directly from the interview data. The hybrid thematic analysis method is informed by the work of Xu and Zammit (2020), with specific modification applied.

Intercoder reliability

After coding separately, the edited interview data with no identifying information, was assessed by the two research consultants and the first author to evaluate how well they agreed on the assigned codes and themes for specific parts of interview data. All themes and code lists using a 5-point Likert scale

(Supplementary Material F) were used to show our agreements ranging from “Strongly Disagree” (1) to “Strongly Agree” (5). The agreement scores were then compared using the inter-rater reliability formula recommended by Cheung and Tai (2021). Three coders collectively examined 30 preconceived and 14 data-driven codes ($n = 44$ cases), resulting a total of 132 coding decisions across those cases. The overall agreement is substantial, as indicated by Fleiss' Kappa (Landis & Koch, 1977) = 0.67, with a 95% CI (0.56, 0.79). It was also acceptable, as suggested by Krippendorff's Alpha (Krippendorff, 2019) = 0.87, with a 95% CI (0.73, 0.95). These findings demonstrate a favorable level of intercoder reliability in the assessment of the themes and related codes.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Quantitative Results

The ELT professional confidence was a repeated-measures variable because it was measured before (pre-training) and after the training (post-training). In addition, Institutional support was included as a between-group variable (high and low). Table 2 presents the differences in the scores of ELT professional confidence between the high and low institutional support groups, both in pre- and post-training. It also shows the low coefficient of variation for each group, indicating a consistent response pattern (Goss-Sampson, 2022).

Table 4. Comparison of Pre- and Post-Training ELT Professional Confidence across Institutional Support Levels

ELT professional confidence	Institutional support	<i>N</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>SE</i>	Coefficient of variation
Pre-training	High	13	116.62	6.06	1.68	0.05
	Low	13	115.69	3.73	1.03	0.03
Post-training	High	13	185.00	4.69	1.30	0.03
	Low	13	183.85	2.70	0.75	0.01

As highlighted in Table 3, the NNEST training program appears to have a positive effect on the ELT professional confidence after the training. The mean of the ELT professional confidence

scores for both institutional support groups increased from pre-training to post-training. Overall, the results suggest that the NNEST training program was effective in improving ELT professional confidence. However, to answer the first three RQs, inferential statistics should be performed (Al-Hoorie & Vitta, 2019; Goss-Sampson, 2022). A mixed ANOVA was used with ELT professional confidence as the dependent variable, institutional support as the between-subjects factor, and pre-training vs. post-training as the within-subjects factor.

In terms of normality, all ELT professional confidence scores in pre- and post-training across levels of institutional support did not exhibit significant deviations from normality, $p > 0.05$ (Table 5).

Table 5. Normality Test Results for Pre- and Post-NNEST Training ELT Professional Confidence across Institutional Support Levels

		Valid	SD	Shapiro-Wilk	P-value
Pre NNEST training					
Professional confidence	High	13	5.96	0.91	0.18
Professional confidence	Low	13	3.55	0.97	0.93
Post NNEST training					
Professional confidence	High	13	4.84	0.97	0.93
Professional confidence	Low	13	2.96	0.97	0.91

The assumption of equality of variances appears to be met for the ELT professional confidence variable at both pre-training ($F(1, 24) = 0.8, p = 0.38$), and post-training time points ($F(1, 24) = 3.20, p = 0.09$). However, Levene’s test indicates that the variances across the groups are not significantly different. Additionally, the test of sphericity cannot be performed because there are only two levels of the repeated measure factor (Goss-Sampson, 2022). Overall, the assumption checks for a 2 (pre- vs post-training ELT professional confidence) x 2 (low vs high levels of institutional support) mixed ANOVA have been met.

Research question 1

As expected, the results of the mixed-ANOVA indicated a significant effect of the blended NNEST training duration on ELT professional scores, with $F(1, 24) = 6,230.64$, and $p = 1.39 \times 10^{-30}$. Contrasts revealed that ELT professional confidence after the

training was significantly increased, with a mean difference of 67.81 ($t(1, 24) = 79.50, p < .001$). The main effect demonstrated a very large effect size. Therefore, the response to research question 1 (RQ1) is affirmative.

Research question 2

Unexpectedly, no significant main effect of institutional support was observed, $F(1, 24) = 0.53, p = 0.48, \omega^2 = 0.00$. The results indicated that participants with high institutional support did not show differences in their ELT professional confidence. The effect size suggests that the proportion of variance in the ELT professional confidence explained by institutional support was negligible. Contrary to expectations, the analysis indicates a negative response to RQ2.

Research question 3

Surprisingly, there was no significant interaction effect between the blended NNEST training and organization support, $F(1, 24) = 2.03 \times 10^{-3}, p = 0.96, \omega^2 = 0.00$. The results suggest the changes in ELT professional confidence did not depend on whether the level of institutional support was high or low (see Figure 1).

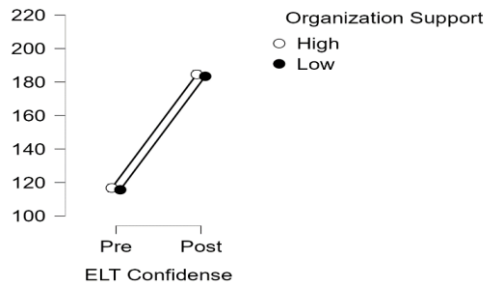


Figure 1. Descriptive Plot of Interaction Effect of the Blended Training and Institutional Support on ELT Professional Confidence

Qualitative Findings

Research question 4

The analysis of interview data revealed valuable insights into the impacts of the quality and content of blended NNEST training on ELT professional confidence, as well as the perspectives of principals regarding the role of these programs in TPD.

Impact of blended NNEST training programs on ELT professional confidence: The teachers' responses illuminated several facets of how the quality and content of blended NNEST training programs played a pivotal role in shaping their ELT professional confidence. The following sub-themes emerged within this major theme:

Relevance of training content (Code 1.1.1): Teachers consistently highlighted that the relevance of the training content to their actual teaching contexts greatly influenced their confidence. An interviewee stated,

the training content being super relevant to my actual classroom stuff. That's what really boosted my confidence. It was like having the perfect tools for the job, and it made a real difference in how I tackled teaching. (Teacher 1)

Practicality of training content (Code 1.1.2): The practicality of the training content was another key factor. Teachers expressed that when training materials were practical, addressing real-world teaching challenges, it contributed significantly to their increased confidence levels. In this case, an interviewee highlighted,

It wasn't just theory; it was stuff I could use right away in my classroom. Like, for example, we learned phrases for giving quiz and test instructions, things like "You have ten more minutes to finish the test." That kind of real-world, practical stuff really boosted my confidence as a teacher. (Teacher 3)

Pedagogical approach (Code 1.2.1): The pedagogical approach employed in the training programs, such as active engagement and interactive sessions, was perceived as beneficial in boosting teachers' confidence in their teaching abilities. An interviewee admitted,

Being in the ELT teacher training program has been, like, really awesome. They engage us well and have these interactive sessions. It's totally boosted my confidence in teaching. (Teacher 1)

Engagement and interaction (Code 1.2.2): The extent to which training encouraged teacher interaction and engagement with

fellow participants and trainers emerged as an important element in building confidence. An interviewee elaborated,

...what I loved about the training...they [peer-trainees and the trainer] encouraged us to interact and engage with everyone. We had this WhatsApp chat...we discussed course stuff, tasks, and even tech issues. And the workshops were just fantastic – it was like a big ol' fiesta! It really amped up my confidence. (Teacher 2)

Flexibility of training (Code 1.2.3): Flexibility in the training schedule and content allowed teachers to tailor their learning experience, which positively impacted their confidence. An interviewee acknowledged,

The training was incredibly flexible. Started online, of course, so that was a given. But even for the in-person workshops, we'd discuss where and when. We even had one at a cafe once. (Teacher 2)

Principals' perspectives on training programs: The principals' perceptions of the training programs reflected their recognition of these programs as valuable tools for teacher development. The following sub-themes emerged within this major theme:

Principals' expectations (Code 2.1.1): Principals clearly articulated the expectations for the training outcomes, emphasizing the need for improved teaching effectiveness and the contribution of trained teachers to the school's overall performance. A principal commented,

...we had very clear expectations regarding the objectives of the training. We were really looking for improvements in teaching effectiveness. How our teachers could contribute to the overall performance of the school was important to us...that the training aligned with these goals. (Principal 2)

Principals' feedback and monitoring (Code 2.1.2): Principals actively monitored the progress of the teachers who underwent training. They acknowledged the positive impact of the training on the teachers' confidence and instructional practices.

As school leaders, we actively monitored our teachers' progress after the training. We didn't just send them off. We made sure to provide constructive feedback and closely monitored their development. We were pleased to see these improvements firsthand. (Principal 3).

Institutional support - Financial focus: All three principals primarily viewed financial support as the primary form of institutional support. One principal acknowledged,

It's quite interesting, really. When it came to institutional support, I was pretty focused on the financial aspect. I might've overlooked some other important things, like giving credit where it's due. So, it looks like the financial side really took the spotlight during my approach to teacher training. (Principal 1)

Research question 5

NNESTs' attribution of ELT professional confidence to institutional support: NNESTs' perspectives on the role of institutional support in enhancing their ELT professional confidence revealed several key insights. The following are sub-themes emerged from this major theme:

Teachers' perception of support (Code 3.2.1): All interviewees acknowledged the importance of institutional support in their confidence-building process. They credited their increased confidence to various forms of support provided by the organization, such as training opportunities. A participant explained,

Well, in my perspective, school support played a huge role in building our confidence. The resources they gave us, the training opportunities, they all really, contributed to boosting our confidence in our teaching roles. (Teacher 3)

Factors beyond support (Code 3.2.1): While only two NNESTs identified institutional support as a contributing factor to their confidence, all of them emphasized personal growth, motivation, and the content quality as significantly influential factors in their

confidence development. A teacher with low institutional support concluded,

Well, when it comes to feeling confident, it's pretty interesting. Unlike a couple of my friends from other schools, I didn't actually get any financial help from the school for the training. But ... I totally get it. ... So, it was more about my own growth as a teacher, staying motivated, and how good the training material was. But what's really clear is that, for me, the training played a big role in making us feel better and more confident about teaching. [emphasis added] (Teacher 1)

Principals' perspectives on institutional support effectiveness: Principals' viewpoints on the effectiveness of institutional support mechanisms in supporting ELT professional confidence shed light on their recognition of the importance of such support. A principal remarked,

Let me give you our take on how we see the effectiveness of institutional support in boosting our teachers' ELT confidence. It's pretty clear that this kind of support is absolutely vital for our teachers. It really makes a difference in how they perform. (Principal 2)

Limited mention of other support forms (Code 3.2.2): Principals' primary focus remained on financial support, as previously indicated. Although financial support was highlighted, the interview data did not reveal specific discussions or sub-themes related to other forms of institutional support, such as mentorship or peer collaboration. A principal confirmed,

We may not have paid enough attention...An area that needs improvement and attention moving forward. Even at the district level and provincial level, as well as within the Ministry of Religious Affairs, including school supervisors, there was not much mention of the wide range of school support. It's an aspect that seems to require more attention and recognition across the board. (Principal 3)

Alignment with quantitative results: Qualitative findings corroborate quantitative results, indicating an overall improvement

in teachers' ELT professional confidence after the training, regardless of the type of institutional support. While interviewees acknowledged the role of institutional support in their confidence development, they also recognized the significance of personal factors and training content quality. Principals emphasized the importance of financial support in fostering teachers' confidence.

Discussion

While previous research has shown the potential of online and offline NNEST training programs to improve ELT professional confidence (e.g., Drajadi et al., 2023; Freeman et al., 2012; National Geographic Learning, 2014, 2016; Young et al., 2014), this study provides further insights into blended NNEST training programs and an external factor that could contribute to this enhancement. The findings reveal that participants expressed significantly improved ELT professional confidence. This improvement was largely attributed to the relevance, practicality, interactivity, and flexibility of the blended NNEST training.

Although institutional support was a contributing factor, it was not the primary driver of increased confidence. This study therefore sheds light on the complexities of the interplay between NNEST training programs and institutional support in the context of ELT.

Table 6 highlights the reasons behind the significantly improved ELT professional confidence among participants, irrespective of the levels of institutional support they received. The key factors contributing to this enhancement were the blended NNEST training program's relevance, practicality (Freeman, 2020; Freeman et al., 2019; Katz, 2017), interactivity, and flexibility (Huang et al., 2023; e.g., Wright, 2017; Zagouras et al., 2022). Regarding the first two characteristics, the training content focused on practical language skills for effective classroom communication (Katz, 2017) and provided essential domain- and subject-specific knowledge, facilitating participants' adaptation to ELT dynamics. Meanwhile, the interactivity and flexibility contributed to their engagement with the training, resulting in better content comprehension.

Surprisingly, the study did not find a significant main effect of institutional support on the professional confidence of ELTs, nor did it reveal a significant interaction effect between blended NNEST training and institutional support. This result contradicts the common belief that institutional support positively influences TPD programs and their outcomes (e.g., Goodman et al., 2022; Guskey, 2000, 2002; Philipsen et al., 2022). Several factors may contribute to this unexpected finding. Firstly, NNESTs in Indonesian Islamic educational institutions encounter unique challenges. As highlighted in related mixed-methods research (e.g., Farid & Lamb, 2020; Husniyah, 2019; Lie et al., 2022; Qoyyimah et al., 2023), these institutions often lack a robust learning community and place with significant emphasis on Islamic religiosity and the use of Arabic, another foreign language in Indonesia. Such factors may divert attention and resources away from the professional development of ELT.

Another possibility is that the blended NNEST training program itself was particularly effective in promoting confidence, possibly due to its content, pedagogical approach, and personalized support as noted by Freeman and Katz (2019). Some participants seemed to have been more motivated to engage in this training, leading to greater confidence gains.

Furthermore, the level of institutional support provided may not have been sufficient to significantly impact ELT professional confidence. It is possible that more comprehensive, or targeted support, as proposed by Guskey (2000, 2002) and Philipsen et al. (2022), was needed throughout the training process. It is noteworthy that the institutional support in this study was primarily perceived as financial support.

The unobserved interaction effect suggests that blended teacher training and institutional support likely did not complement each other effectively. Support appeared to have been provided independently, without integration or alignment (Philipsen et al., 2022). While institutional support was considered a contributing factor, it did not emerge as the primary driver of participants' confidence improvement.

Table 6. Integrated Results Matrix

Institutional support	Quantitative findings		Summary	Qualitative findings		Meta inference
	ELT Confidence (M, SD)			Exemplar Quote	Summary	
	Pre	Post				
High	116.69, 5.96	184.54, 4.84	Irrespective of the levels of institutional support they received; participants showed improved ELT professional confidence after the ELT-based NNEST training.	<i>"I didn't actually get any financial help from the school more about my own growth as a teacher, staying motivated, and how good the training material was."</i> [emphasis added] (Teacher 1)	Relevance, practicality, interactivity, and flexibility	While institutional support is a relatively contributing factor, personal growth, intrinsic motivation, and the quality of training content play significant roles in confidence development.
Low	115.62, 3.55	183.38, 2.96		<i>"We may not have paid enough attention to TPD and its implementation in our school programs. ... an area that needs improvement and attention moving forward."</i> (Principal 3)	Principals mainly perceived Institutional support as financial one.	

Examining the interaction effects may be considered to weaken our research because both the interaction effect between time and support and the main effect of support are not significant. However, Gbobaniyi et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of examining perceived institutional support even when effects are not statistically significant. This is because it contributes to a nuanced interpretation of institutional influences on outcomes. Furthermore, Malureanu et al. (2021) argue that non-significant results can still provide valuable insights and identify areas for further investigation, thereby enhancing the robustness of the research. Aarts et al. (2014) further highlights that investigating both significant and non-significant effects enable researchers to construct a more comprehensive model, leading to better-informed instruction and policies. Finally, Boisgontier and Cheval (2016) advocate for exploring interaction effects, even when they do not reach significance, as such exploration can reveal potential areas of influence that may not be immediately apparent. Regardless of these non-significant findings, exploring the role of blended teacher training and institutional support in fostering the confidence of ELT professionals is thus crucial for a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play and ensures a robust analysis that can better inform future training programs and institutional policies.

Strengths, limitations, and future research

This study rigorously followed the research standards proposed by Al-Hoorie and Vitta (2019) and Tong et al. (2007), effectively combining quantitative and qualitative methodologies as addressed by McCrudden and McTigue (2019). However, its generalizability may be a constraint due to its specific contextual focus. The study significantly relied on self-reported confidence. While self-reported ELT professional confidence holds value in predicting NNESTs' language proficiency (e.g., Gu & Papageorgiou, 2016), it presents inherent limitations such as socially desirable responses and over-reporting of normative behaviors (Brenner & DeLamater, 2016). Future research could explore the long-term effects of blended NNEST training, by dissecting specific

institutional support components, conducting cross-cultural studies, and examining the role of motivation in teacher development. These areas could provide deeper insights into TPD training and institutional support strategies.

Implications

The findings of this study hold significant implications for teacher preparation and development (TPD) programs for NNESTs, especially those designed to enhance the professional confidence of English Language Teachers (ELTs). Well-structured training programs that prioritize relevant and practical content, coupled with pedagogical soundness, can significantly improve confidence level. Additionally, the flexibility in training schedules and customization of content further contribute to the development of confidence. Educational institutions and principals should acknowledge the pivotal role of institutional support in bolstering teacher confidence. While financial support is undoubtedly important, a broader range of support mechanisms, including mentorship and peer collaboration, should also be considered.

CONCLUSION

This mixed-methods study highlights the interplay between blended NNEST training programs, institutional support, and ELT professional confidence. The results emphasize the importance of well-designed teacher training programs and institutional support in enhancing ELT professional confidence among NNESTs. These insights can guide the implementation of effective TPD initiatives that empower teachers and improve ELT quality in diverse settings, including faith-based educational contexts. These insights can also serve as a guiding principle for the implementation of effective TPD initiatives that empower teachers and improve ELT quality both locally and globally.

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