A FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

by

RIO HASHA

THESIS

submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

in the

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

(School of Education)

at the

UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO

SUPERVISOR: Prof. N. Wadesango

CO-SUPERVISOR: Prof. T.N. Mafumo

2020

DECLARATION

I declare that the **THESIS** hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY** in **EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT** has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other university; that it is my work in design and in execution, and that all material contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

HASHA, R (Mr) **2020.03.31**

ABSTRACT

Continuous professional development (CPD) embraces the idea that individuals aim for continuous improvement in their professional knowledge and skills beyond the basic training initially required to carry out the job. CPD is especially critical in schools where the kind of education that students receive is heavily dependent on the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of educators. The purpose of the study was to explore the influence of continuous professional development in promoting quality teaching and learning leading to enhanced student achievement in South African schools. The study was based on a qualitative research approach. The interpretive paradigm and case-study research design were adopted. The researcher employed three research methods of data collection namely; individual interview, focus group and documentary evidence. The population from which the study sample was drawn is defined as all Pietersburg Circuit secondary schools in Polokwane urban. Five schools were drawn from the population to make a sample for the study. Two subjects for the study were principals and educators. The sample consisted of 5 principals and 10 educators to give a total sample size of 15. The research engaged purposive sampling technique. The idea behind purposive sampling was to concentrate on participants with those particular characteristics ideal to supply relevant research data that best enabled me to answer research questions. The researcher chose thematic data analysis. Thematic analysis basically entailed arranging data according to themes evolving. Data was triangulated to determine if data results from different sources supported each other. Findings revealed that both principals and educators were well conversant with the concept of continuous professional development. Continuous professional development in schools was mainly put through school-based, educator-initiated and externally-initiated approaches. Additionally, the findings revealed that the educators were minimally consulted and involved in professional development needs-identification and analysis. Furthermore, study findings showed that evaluations of informal continuous professional development programmes prevailed in schools, but the majority response alluded to the total failure by schools to institute deliberate, planned and documented evaluations. The professional development of educators is regarded as crucial in developing professional skills. Furthermore, it is looked upon as a direct contribution to student achievement. Professional development of educators has long been a key and logically positioned undertaking for improving educator

satisfaction as well as hope for improved classroom instruction and student achievement. As a result, continuous professional development comes as both a big challenge as well as the best solution to effective teaching and learning in schools. On the basis of the findings of this study, some recommendations were made and possible areas for further research suggested. The primary recommendation of this study is for continuous professional development to match and attempt to address the identified needs of the educators and students alike. That would likely have the desired consequence of a more empowered and enriched educator with the capacity to efficiently and effectively raise student achievement. It could be assumed that, by allowing educators a voice in their own professional development, they would embrace a more vested interest and feel compelled to contribute more.

Key concepts

Continuous professional development, needs-identification and analysis, educator consultation and involvement, monitoring and evaluating professional development programmes, school-initiated professional development, educator-initiated professional development, externally-initiated professional development, student achievement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I am deeply grateful to my principal supervisor, Professor Newman Wadesango, for his unlimited advice, guidance, support, his valuable insights and encouragement throughout my study. I also would like to express my sincere thanks to Professor T.N. Mafumo, my co-supervisor, for his valuable contribution.

My heartfelt appreciation goes to the principals and educators from the schools involved, who not only gave their time, but also selflessly opened up to me, providing an insight into their thought processes and their views of the experience of professional development. I am truly indebted to my participants. Their contribution was immensely beneficial.

The cooperation I received from Department of Basic Education Head-Office and Pietersburg Circuit Manager cannot go unnoticed. I sincerely offer you my gratitude. I am especially indebted to my school Head-Office Director for the moral and financial support.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my daughters Tendai and Rumbidzai, and my son, Mufaro.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENTS **PAGE**

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

CHAPTER 4 DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

.

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACE : Advanced Certificate in Education

ANA : Annual National Assessment

BED : Bachelor of Education

CAPS : Curriculum and Assessment Policy Statements

CPD : Continuous professional development

CPTD : Continuing Professional Teacher Development

DBE : Department of Basic Education

DoE : Department of Education

EIP : Educator Improvement Plan

HOD : Head of Department

ICT : Information and communication technology

IQMS : Integrated Quality Management System

IT : Information technology

NGO : Non-Governmental Organization

PD : Professional development

PGCE : Post Graduate Certificate in Education

PGP : Personal Growth Plan

PPDPA: Personal Professional Development Points Account

SACE : South African Council for Educators

SGB : School Governing Body

SIP : School Improvement Plan

SMT : School Management Team

UNISA: University of South Africa

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Educators are expected to be knowledgeable of their profession, maintain high academic standards and be accountable for students' progress and achievements (Mizell, 2010; Vracar, 2014; Bautista and Ortega-Ruiz, 2015). Cooper (2016) concurs, adding that high priority must be given to educator continuous professional development. Continuous professional development (CPD) embraces the idea that individuals aim for continuous improvement in their professional knowledge and skills beyond the basic training initially required to carry out the job (Moonasar and Underwood, 2018). CPD is especially critical in schools where the kind of education that students receive is heavily dependent on the quality, efficiency and effectiveness of educators.

This research originates from the calls for more emphasis on educator professional development to support student achievement. The notion of educator CPD is part of a wider debate on educator professionalism. The South African education system is in dire need of competent educators with relevant knowledge, skills and abilities to manage and develop their learners (Boaduo, 2010). Much of the discussion on educational reform and concerns hinges on incorporating information and communication technology (ICT) into schools and also on generally enhancing student achievement.

This introductory chapter sets the scene for addressing CPD issues by providing background and motivation to the study, the research problem, the theoretical and conceptual framework, purpose of the study and research questions and research objectives, significance of the study and limitations of the study. Research questions as well as research objectives were essentially drafted to guide and centre the research by pinpointing exactly what the researcher intended to investigate. This study therefore, endeavours to contribute to developing knowledge in the field of educator CPD studies.

1.2 BACKGROUND AND MOTIVATION

Continuous professional development (CPD) for teachers is currently receiving global attention. Scholars such as Coolahan (2002); Fraser, Kennedy, Reid and Mckinney (2007); and Schwille and Dembele (2007) attribute this recognition to the wider policy agenda of lifelong learning as well as to the view of CPD as a means of improving learner performance and production of required skills. CPD embraces the idea that individuals aim for continuous improvement in their professional skills and knowledge beyond the basic training initially required to carry out the job (Gray, 2005; Selemani-Meke, 2011; Goldkuhl, 2012). Guskey (2002) describes professional development programmes as systematic efforts to bring changes in teachers' attitudes and beliefs as well as in their efforts in achieving learning outcomes in the classroom. This is also supported by Selemani-Meke (2011) who argues that the most immediate and significant outcome of any successful CPD for teachers is a positive impact in changing teachers' knowledge and practice. This in turn results in improved learner performance. Further, research by Bolam (2000) suggests that CPD is an essential part of improving school performance. It is also perceived as having a positive impact on the curriculum and pedagogy as well as teachers' sense of efficacy and their relationship with students (Talbert & McLaughlin, 1994).

Few would argue against the view that the most vital resource that any school has is the staff and thus attention therefore needs to be given to professional development. Educators play a key role in the functioning of a school and any effort towards improving their contribution is of great importance (Mizell, 2010; Vraca, 2014). In the same vein Bolam (2000) concurs, that high priority must be given to professional development generally but especially in times when economic factors restrict any improvements in buildings and facilities. The more difficult the situation the more vital is the need for educators of high calibre working to high standards (Langer, 2004). The accelerating rate of change within education is forcing schools to accept the need for improved efforts in staff training and development (Guskey, 2002; Gray, 2005; Sammons & Bakkum, 2011). Occasionally this may be a reaction to a crisis but one aspect of any well managed enterprise is the manner in which it plans, develops and adapts to avoid the crisis situation which may leads to ill-judged attempts at short term solutions. Clearly professional development should be part of a planned programme, which is essential for a functional school environment.

The creation of a vibrant institution that can enhance student achievement and well-being requires a strong and competent workforce that is able to deliver quality education and training to their students (Department of Education, 2007). Academic staff must be continuously trained to update their knowledge and skills such that they are in line with current technology and trends in teaching. This will enable them to adapt to perpetual curriculum changes. Steyn (2010) cited various authors who concur that the education system is in a dismal state due to the poor quality of teaching. To improve the quality of teaching the school must improve the morale (Huish, 2014) of academic staff, who will then give their best in class to improve the throughput rate at the school (Kosgei, 2010).

Continuous professional development of educators is a cornerstone for the provision of quality teaching and learning. Studies affirm that effective professional development programmes of educators stand at the centre of proposals for improving the quality of teaching and learning (Guskey, 2002; Steyn, 2010; Tsotetsi & Mahlomaholo, 2013; Burns, 2014). Guskey (2000:16) defines professional development as, *"…those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve students' learning."*

CPD in the National Policy as cited by Steyn (2010) in Department of Education (2007) attempts to appropriately equip teachers to meet the challenges and demands of a democratic South Africa in the 21st century. It is underpinned by the principle that teachers are the essential drivers of education (Department of Education 2007; Steyn, 2010). Its ultimate aim is to enable learners to, *"…learn well and equip themselves for further learning and for satisfying lives as productive citizens, for the benefit of their families, their communities and our nation.*" (Department of Education 2007:25). *"CPD is most successful when teachers are actively involved and reflect on their own teaching practice; when CPD is contextualised and school-based; when developmental activities are well coordinated and when sustained leadership and support are present"* (Department of Education, 2007 cited by Steyn, 2010:3). The CPD system essentially strives to contribute to the improvement of teachers' teaching skills by equipping them to effectively execute their essential and demanding tasks; to continually improve their professional competence and performance. In addition, to enable and empower them by improving their professional confidence, learning area/subject knowledge, skills and classroom management; to improve their

professional status; and to assist them in identifying suitable CPD programmes that may contribute towards their professional growth (Department of Education, 2007).

The continuous growth of professionals' skills is an essential part of improvement in all professions (Steyn, 2010). In education the emphasis and focus is particularly on the educator as the key to improving learner performance (McLaugh and Talbert, 2000; Boyle et al. 2005; Mizell, 2010). It is therefore necessary to find appropriate professional development approaches and programmes to ensure that all educators are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills for improving learner performance (Desimone et al., 2006; Steyn, 2010; Vraca, 2014; Cooper, 2016).

To transform education in South Africa it is necessary for educators to be appropriately equipped to meet its evolving challenges and needs (Department of Education, 2007). The Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) in the National Policy is underpinned by the principle that educators are the essential drivers of education (Department of Education, 2007; SACE, 2013). The South African Council for Educators (SACE), the statutory body for professional teachers, has an overall responsibility for the quality assurance, implementation and management of the CPTD (SACE, 2013). All educators registered by SACE have to earn Professional Development (PD) points by selecting PD activities that meet their development needs.

The importance of professional development is viewed in the context of the importance of educator knowledge, skills and positive attitude in executing their duties. Professional development is the strategy schools may employ to ensure that educators continue to strengthen their practice throughout their careers. Mizell (2010:3) asserts that, "*In education, research has shown that teaching quality and school leadership are the most important factors in raising student achievement."*

The person equally at the helm of the school is the principal who must demonstrate professional and organisational competence if continuous professional development programmes for the school are going to succeed. Although educators may know what is expected of them in their teaching career, they still need to be professionally developed in order to carry out their duties more effectively. School principals are confronted with the challenge of organising school-based CPD programmes. The principal should not haphazardly handle professional development of educators. The

principal requires being skilled and, therefore, should be conversant with issues pertaining to professional development such as professional development needs-identification, CPD models, planning CPD programmes and evaluating them as well as having knowledge of possible hindrances to effective implementation of CPD. Principals, therefore, need to be as effective as possible in the execution of their duties by continually expanding their knowledge and skills base.

Huish (2014) in Steinhardt School of Culture, Education and Human Development Newsletter stressed the importance of professional development workshops, seminars, academic and professional attendances or conferences in a formal manner, as well as informally through conversations, readings or even observations. Such platforms should introduce educators to new ideas, teaching methods or technology that would in turn benefit the learner. Ideally, professional development programmes should energise and excite educators about what it is that they are teaching.

To substantiate the above claim, (Vracar, 2014:4) quoted Edutopia (2008) in saying, "*To promote and nurture effective teaching, the profession should offer quality training, well designed career paths, time to work together on the best ways to help students, quality evaluations that help teachers in their development, professional development based on identified needs, and fair accountability process."*

Research on CPD in the last decade have shed light on effective CPD programmes that develop teachers' knowledge and skills, improve teaching practice and raise learners' performance (Teddlie and Reynolds, 2000; Wanzare and Ward, 2000; Desimone et al. 2006). In support of this, Hirsh's study on effective CPD reveals three important characteristics of CPD learning:

1. a deep understanding of specific subject content is a core component of effective PD;
2. the individual beliefs of teachers play an important role in the development process; and
3. a detailed plan for introducing new content and practices and facilitation of follow-up action is required (Hirsh, 2005:43).

The process of professional development is therefore important in as far as it provides educators with the opportunity to expand their skills and knowledge base (Vracar,

2014). There is consensus in the literature regarding the importance of effective professional development programmes for educators (Guskey, 2000; Guskey, 2002; Mestry et al., 2009; Mizell, 2010; Steyn, 2010; Tsotetsi and Mahlomaholo, 2013; Vracar, 2014; Huish, 2014; Cooper, 2016). For South Africa, teacher professional development is an aspect of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) policy document (Department of Education (DoE), 2003). Although the IQMS policy has a programme of professional development, teachers in the study conducted by Khumalo (2008) showed that they did not experience the actualisation of the contribution of the IQMS on teacher development.

The researcher had basically two reasons for conducting this study, with the first being that a vibrant secondary school sector will improve skills and literacy levels in the country. The second reason is that in order to provide quality education, schools have to improve the working conditions of its staff members. Continuous professional development will improve the relationship amongst the school principals, educators, students and the community as a whole. It is against this background that the study was conducted in order to explore the influence of continuous professional development programmes in promoting quality teaching and learning in South African schools.

1.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Professional development of teachers is a focal point of school improvement initiatives (Steyn, 2010; Vracar, 2014; Huish, 2014). The National Framework for Teacher Education and Development (2007) attempted to address the need for suitably qualified educators in South Africa. Hence, it is on record that the Department of Basic Education (DBE) in the Republic of South Africa challenges schools to accelerate progress in student achievement to meet stakeholder expectations. The DBE (2017) analysis of the 2016 matric results for the Pietersburg Circuit in Polokwane indicates an average circuit pass rate of 78.4%; however, further analysis shows a worrisome low pass rate with some schools. For instance, Apple High School had 36%; Orange School 42.9%; Lemon School 36.4%; Grape High School 57.2%; Guava School 59.2%; and Mango Secondary School with 39.7% pass rate.

Huish (2014) emphasises that professional development is a key strategy available to schools for improving teaching quality and promote student performance. Wei,

Darling-Hammond and Adamson (2010) support the idea in asserting that effective teaching by educators is enhanced when educators are given opportunities to reflect on how their practice influences student learning, as well as be engaged in on-going improvement to address learning challenges in schools.

Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2002) research findings indicate that most of the CPD activities fail to achieve a positive impact in changing teachers' knowledge and practice regardless of this being the most immediate and significant outcome of any successful CPD. So far, it appears that no thorough and conclusive studies to investigate issues behind the apparent unsatisfactory implementation of the CPD programmes have been conducted in South Africa. Hence, this study was conducted to explore the influence of continuous professional development programmes in promoting quality teaching and learning in South African schools.

1.4 THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

1.4.1 The concept of theories

Leedy and Ormrod (2005:4) consider a theory to be, *"…an organized body of concepts and principles intended to explain a particular phenomenon."* Lodico et al (2006:5) agree, adding that, "*A theory is a knowledge base composed of the results of previous research studies. A theory is a well-developed explanation of how some aspect of the world works using a framework of concepts, principles and other hypotheses."*

Thus, theories explain how and why something functions the way it does. Klette (2011) views theorizing as the process of systematically formulating and organizing ideas to understand a particular phenomenon. The idea here is that a theory is defined by its ability to explain why certain things happen or why certain things do not happen, as well as provide a framework that researchers base their actions or findings accordingly. Simply speaking, theory refers to a particular (scholarly) kind of explanation. Thus, theories explain how and why something functions the way it does by systematically formulating and organizing ideas to understand a particular phenomenon (Darling-Hammond, 2006; Higgs, 2013). Research-related theory is often therefore, a structured set of concepts based on rigorous observations or findings which can be fundamentally relevant to pressing practical challenges or problems at hand (Huggins and Johnston, 2015).

Theories are characterized by reliability and dependability. A theory should be stable or unchanged over a longer cycle of time. It should be consistent in the sense that it should not be possible to arrive at contradictory claims by means of the types of derivation permitted in the theory (Johnson and Christensen, 2007; Klette, 2011). Some theorists add that all claims in a theory have to be testable. Additionally, a theory should be coherent in that the components of the theory have to be linked in a comprehensive and non-contradictory way (Klette, 2011). Theories are based on a combination of systematic research and deductive logic. Theories are usually presented in books and articles so that other scholars may evaluate, test or use them.

The theoretical framework is the structure that can hold or support a theory or a research study (Longo and Soto, 2016). Grant and Osanloo (2014) assert that the theoretical framework is the foundation from which all knowledge is constructed for a research study. It serves as a structure and support for the rationale for the study, the problem statement, the purpose, the significance and the research questions. Further, Grant and Osanloo posit that theoretical frameworks provide a grounding base, or an anchor for the literature review, the research methods as well as analysis of the research findings. A theoretical framework is derived from an existing theory (or theories) in the literature that has already been tested and validated by others and is considered a generally acceptable theory in the scholarly literature (Anderson et al, 2006). Stated differently, the theoretical framework is the “blueprint” for the entire thesis inquiry, serving as a guide on which to build and support the study. Thus, the theoretical framework consists of the selected theory (or theories) that undergirds the researcher’s thinking with regards to how the researcher understands and plans to research the topic (Lodico et al, 2006; Anderson et al, 2006). I support the belief that the theoretical framework for study must be identified at the inception of the thesis. I also believe that all research is theoretical, thereby highlighting the importance of theory-driven thinking and acting in research undertakings.

1.4.2 The role of theory in research

Theory helps researchers to understand how other scholars saw and experienced the research field they intend to investigate (Rasmussen, 2017). The researcher’s choice of a theory provides structure or a “blueprint” to the entire thesis. Theory provides a lens through which the researcher understands the research envisaged, and provides

a common world view from which to support one's thinking on the problem and analysis of data (Grant and Osanloo, 2014). Longo and Soto (2016:1) are quoted stating that, *"Theories organize knowledge and construct objectivity…*" Theories are formulated to explain, predict and understand phenomena, and in many cases, to challenge and possibly extend existing knowledge. Put differently, what is expected from a theory is a model capable of predicting future occurrences or observations. In that context, theories guide and give meaning to what researchers investigate. When a researcher investigates and collects information, the investigator needs a clear idea of what information is important to collect. Thus, valid theories validated by research are a sound basis for research undertakings.

Higgs (2013) argues that theory sought to emancipate researchers from possible dependency on literature that may be a product of unsubstantiated hearsay, ideological or political constructs. In such a scenario, theories would allow researchers to critically reflect on their research findings without bias. Theory thus guides research efforts in the sense that theoretical frameworks determine the problems that can be addressed by researchers, as well as the adequacy of proposed solutions to those problems (Higgs, 2013). This means that researchers need to be aware of, and familiar with the different theoretical frameworks that inform and shape educational theory and research in (this instance) continuing professional development of educators (Cheng et al, 2010; Darling-Hammond, 2006; Higgs, 2013).

In a nutshell, theories help researchers to make informed decisions around the research questions, research objectives, review of related literature and research methodology. A further task which theory performs is to summarize concisely what is already known about the research at hand. In the process of guiding, a powerful theory changes the researcher's perspective on what is important and what may be superficial. In a qualitative study, the aim is to understand the social phenomena through investigations and interpretations of the meanings attached to it (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011; Ormston et al, 2013; Crossman, 2017; Rahman, 2017). The primary objective is to make sense of the social world. Theory allows the researcher to make links between the abstract and the concrete as well as the theoretical and empirical. If the theory fits the available data, theory would ideally suggest ways for researchers to make sense of research data.

1.4.3 The nature of the Change Theory

The Professional Development and Change Theory inform the conceptualisation of a framework that was accountable for how the study unfolded and was reported upon. Thomas R Guskey originally presented a model that describes the process of educator change through professional development in 1986. Generally, professional development is geared towards enhancing the quality of teaching and learning. The outcome of effective professional development should result in specific changes in the teaching knowledge, skills, attitudes, beliefs or actions of educators in pursuit of their teaching endeavours (Guskey, 2000). Linked to this is the assertion by Guskey that improvements in schools require upgrading of the professional skills of educators.

The following by Guskey (2002: 381) captures this assertion, "Professional *development programmes are a systematic attempt to bring about change – change in the classroom practices of teachers, change in their beliefs and attitudes, and change in the learning outcomes of students*." A model of the process of educator change is illustrated in Figure 1.

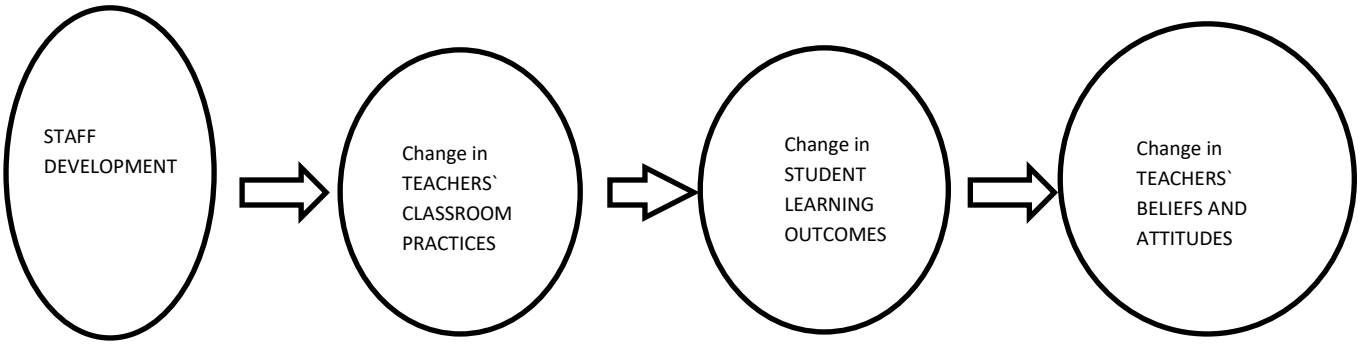

Figure 1.4.1.1 **A Model of the Process of Teacher Change**.

(Adopted from Guskey (2002: 383).

Continuous professional development sets out to promote change in educators so that they may grow as professionals. Guskey's model of the process of teacher-change is based on the idea that change is a learning process for teachers that is accumulative or developmental and primarily experience-based. On elaborating Guskey's teacher-change model, Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) state that significant changes in beliefs and attitudes are likely to take place only after changes in student learning outcomes are evident, that is, once teachers have 'field-tested' change proposals in

classrooms and experienced first-hand change in student outcomes. The importance of the need for teachers to attempt change in relation to the classroom context is emphasized.

Guskey (2002) succinctly stated that, in an ideal teaching/learning environment, practices that are found to work, that is, those that a teacher finds useful in helping students attain desired learning outcomes, are retained whereas those that do not work are abandoned or discarded. In consequence, a pertinent factor in the endurance of any change in instructional practices is demonstrable results in terms of the learning success of a teacher's students. Stated differently, activities that are successful tend to be repeated while those that are not successful, or for which there is no tangible evidence of success, are generally ignored or avoided (Guskey, 2002). Further claims from the model are that beliefs and attitudes about teaching are generally derived from classroom instructional experiences or practices. On the contrary, a teacher who has been consistently unsuccessful at assisting students reach a high standard of learning is much more likely to believe that they are incapable of academic excellence than a teacher who has experienced success in teaching these students. According to Guskey (2002) the key point is that evidence of improvement (positive change) in the learning outcomes of learners generally precedes and may necessary or be a prerequisite to notable change in the beliefs and attitudes of the majority of educators.

Guskey put forward the claim that, in the context of CPD, the most outstanding changes in teacher attitudes and beliefs come after teachers begin using a new practice successfully and see positive changes in student learning. Further clarification from the Guskey teacher-change model is that when teachers see that a new CPD programme or innovation enhances the learning outcomes of students in their classes, when, for instance, they see their students attaining higher levels of achievement or expressing greater confidence in their ability to learn, perhaps only then is significant teacher-change in beliefs and attitudes likely to occur.

1.4.4 Justification for Change Theory in CPD

According to the model, significant change in educators' beliefs and attitudes is likely to take place only after evident changes in student learning outcomes are positively identified (Guskey, 2002). For instance, an improved pass rate may trigger educator self-belief and attitude in the acquired professional development skill or knowledge. In

other words, the model posits that much change in the beliefs and attitudes of educators is contingent upon them gaining evidence of change in the learning outcomes of their learners.

As allude to earlier on, the idea that forms the basis for this theory is that, in an ideal teaching environment, the practices that educators find useful in assisting students are retained, whereas those that do not work are abandoned. Guskey (2002: 385) underscores this claim by stating that, "…*it is not the professional development per se, but the experiences of successful implementation that changes teachers' attitudes and beliefs."* Put differently, educators would believe the professional development programme works because they witnessed it working. That experience would then shape their positive attitude and belief.

The implication for the theory is that planning effective professional development programmes would result in increased educational improvements. Schools must embark on professional development programmes directly relevant in addressing the teaching and learning shortcomings. The model was used in this study as a guide to determine the effectiveness of professional development programmes in South Africa.

The model appears to suggest that professional development is complex, thus needs to be orderly organised. The model offers direction and careful attention to professional development as opposed to being haphazardly handled. Educators need to receive regular feedback on student learning progress. Professional development programmes need to be evaluated to determine their worth or merit. An evaluation would keep in check if the programme addresses its desired intention to boost student performance. There must be tangible evidence that student achievement has increased, as in, for instance, improved pass rate.

Although teachers may generally be required to take part in professional development by certification or contractual agreements of some sort, most teachers report that they engage in CPD activities because they want to become better teachers (Guskey, 2002). It is also important to note that becoming a better teacher (for the majority of cases) means enhancing student learning outcomes. What attracts teachers to professional development is mostly their belief that it will expand their knowledge and skills base, and more importantly, contribute to their growth and in the process, enhance their effectiveness with students (Marcelo, 2009).

The ‘Model of Teacher Change’ illustrated in Figure 1 presents an alternative approach. This model suggests a different sequence among the three major outcomes of professional development. The following by Guskey (2002:383) captures this assertion:

> *…significant change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs occurs primarily after they gain evidence of improvements in student learning. These improvements typically result from changes teachers have made in their classroom practices to a new instructional approach, the use of new materials or curricula, or simply a modification in teaching procedures or classroom format.*

The pertinent point is that it is not the professional development in itself that changes teachers’ attitudes and beliefs, but the experience of successful implementation. Teachers believe that the CPD programme works because they experienced it work and that experience resultantly shapes their attitudes and beliefs. Consequently, according to the model, the crucial element in significant change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs is clear evidence of improvement in the learning outcomes of their students. The research findings on the teacher-change model established that teacher commitment was found to develop primarily after implementation took place. This explains that teachers became committed to new practices only after they had actively engaged in using the new practices in their classrooms (McDonough et al, 2010). This apparently supports the idea that change in teachers’ attitudes and beliefs takes place primarily after some change in student learning has been evidenced.

Results from Guskey studies further showed that teachers who witnessed improvements liked teaching more and believed that they had a more powerful influence or control on student achievement. Surprisingly, similar changes did not occur among teachers who used the new procedures but witnessed no improvements in student learning, or among those who took part in the training but never attempted implementation (Guskey, 2002). The study concluded that neither training alone nor training followed by implementation was sufficient for affective change. As a result, these particular attitude and belief changes occurred only when training and implementation were combined with evidence of improved student learning.

The model discussed herein offers a very positive outlook on the potential of CPD programmes. The process of teacher change through continuous professional development may be complex, but certainly not haphazard. Professional development

programmes will be much more effective and efficient if careful attention is paid to the sequence and order of change events described in this model.

1.5 PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND THE RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1.5.1 Aim of the study

To explore the influence of continuous professional development in promoting quality teaching and learning in South African schools.

1.5.2 Research questions

The guiding research questions were:

- What is the nature of professional development programmes prevailing in schools?
- How are educators, as intended beneficiaries, consulted and involved in identifying professional development needs appropriate for promoting quality teaching and learning?
- How are professional development programmes monitored and evaluated to check if they have attained the desired outcome on promoting quality teaching and learning?
- To what extent do professional development programmes influence student achievement?

1.5.3 Research objectives

- To explore the nature of professional development programmes prevailing in schools.
- To establish if educators as intended beneficiaries are consulted and involved in identifying professional development needs appropriate for promoting quality teaching and learning.
- To find out how professional development programmes are monitored and evaluated to check if they have attained the desired outcome on promoting quality teaching and learning.
- To establish to what extent professional development programmes influence student achievement.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is important that educators and principals become aware of the professional development programmes that may be embarked on to improve the quality of teaching and learning. The study sought to empower principals in terms of how they conduct supervision as well as the appraisal of educators in an attempt to identify professional development needs. Bowen (2009) in Elliot (2015:102) defines performance appraisal as, "…*the on-going process used for identifying, measuring and developing an individual's performance in accordance with an organisation's strategic goals*." It is at the classroom level that teaching and learning would ideally translate into pupil achievement (SACE, 2013). It, therefore, becomes paramount and critical to influence the teaching conditions to improve performance.

This research also identified those areas in which further research may be necessary to enhance a better understanding of the intricacies of professional development. Furthermore, researchers may be prompted to conduct further related enquiry as a result of having construed shortcomings from this research.

The importance of this study stemmed from the fact that it attempted to identify professional development programmes that created opportunities for, "… *novice teachers to learn from best practices*." (Edutopia, 2008:1). Novice educators need to learn from veteran educators' years of experience and understanding about, for instance, how to manage their classes. However, veteran educators should also be afforded regular opportunities to learn from each other.

Therefore, the researcher hopes that the research is of significance and interest to educators and principals in particular, and to others who regard it as their business to improve upon their work performance through professional development. The research may motivate policy makers in education to consider rationalising compulsory professional development in schools, rendering it mandatory and an obligation for all educators to become better at their jobs.

On completion of this thesis, it is the researcher's desire to avail it on the internet for access by other scholars. The research findings will be published, thereby broadening the benefit of the study to a wider reading community. Information obtained from the findings of this study will be an addition to an already existing body of knowledge on

professional development. The findings of this study should, therefore, provide baseline data for further research on similar or related problems.

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

It is conceded that this study was bounded to a specific location, being Pietersburg Education Circuit comprising of a population of 19 secondary schools that was sampled to 5 schools. This raises questions whether investigations in rural or primary schools would give different findings. Although the researcher provided a rich, rigorous and thick description of data, the research sample of 15 participants limits the likelihood of generalisations of results to other persons. Generalisation of findings from such a study is limited and can only be made with extra caution.

The principal researcher came from the same circuit and viewed to some extent as a colleague by participants. The respondents may not have been as candid with their responses as they might have been if an outside party interviewed them.

1.8 CONCLUSION

Chapter 1 captured the essential features of the study and put the study into perspective. The background and motivation for the study, purpose of the study, research questions, research objectives as well as the significance of the study were highlighted, and thus conceptualised the problem that led to the pursuit of the study. Research questions, in a way, influenced the rest of the steps or procedures taken to conduct the research. By their nature, research questions helped the researcher to define exactly what he attempted to find out. On the other hand, research objectives were deliberately designed to concisely describe what the researcher was attempting to achieve by summarizing the accomplishments the researcher wished to achieve. As a result, research objectives guided the researcher by ensuring that the researcher gained insights that were relevant.

The chapter discussed the underlying theoretical and conceptual framework that has informed the research. Chapter 2 is concerned with the review of related literature to the study. The review presents studies and perspectives that provide theoretical aspects for the study.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a review of literature dealing with professional development. In order to have more insight into the problem under investigation, a review of the related literature that focuses on the key concepts used in the current study is necessary. The literature is based on what has been said by other authors about professional development. The purpose of the literature review is to acquire insight into the various literature based on professional development of the teaching personnel. The assumption being that the body of evidence accumulated over decades would ideally provide research-based conclusions that can guide this study as well as guide the development of effective continuous professional development programmes (McDonough et al., 2010; Salo & Ronnerman, 2013; Cooper, 2016).

This review of literature is structured around broad sub-topics namely; Introduction, Nature and concept of professional development, Importance of professional development, Professional development needs identification and analysis, Models of professional development, Evaluation of professional development programmes and Impediments on success of professional development. The educator professional development literature also serves to disseminate information and ideas for improving educators' and, by extension, schools' performance. It further provides the forum for discussion about the future of the teaching profession and the nature of teaching as a job (Evans, 2002; Shaha et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

2.2. THE NATURE AND CONCEPT OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

In order to avoid possible misconceptions by the readers, the term professional development is contextually defined below so that it is understood as used in this research. Professional development may mean different things to different people. Definitions would ideally add clarity and reduce confusion by establishing shared meanings. Kennedy (2009:41) defines continuous professional development as:

> *… the conscious updating of professional knowledge and the improvement of professional competence throughout a person's working life. It is a*

> *commitment to being professional, keeping up to date and consciously seeking to improve. Continuous professional development is the key to optimising a person's career opportunities for today and for the future. It focuses on what you learn and how you develop throughout your career.*

Villegas-Reimers (2003:55) agrees, adding that:

> *Professional development are those education and training activities engaged in by primary and secondary-school teachers and principals, following their initial professional certification, and mainly or exclusively to improve their professional knowledge, skills and attitudes in order that they can educate children more effectively*

Guskey (2000:16) similarly defined professional development as, *"…those processes and activities designed to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of educators so that they might, in turn, improve students' learning."*

As may be observed, the above definitions interpret professional teaching development as a 'process,' meaning to say it is systematic, deliberate as well as organised (Whitehouse, 2010; Collin et al., 2012; Shaha et al., 2015). The common denominator is that the staff skills and competencies are improved upon in order to produce outstanding educational results for students. Additionally, CPD is lifelong in one's working life. Therefore, professional development of educators is the cornerstone for the provision of quality teaching and learning (Bernadine, 2019). It also implies that educators never cease to learn. CPD therefore, puts emphasis on lifelong learning 'zeroing-in' on student achievement. In education, the term professional development may be used in reference to a wide variety of specialised training, formal/informal education or advanced professional learning intended to help educators, principals and other educational personnel improve their professional knowledge, competence, skill and general effectiveness (Evans, 2002; McDonough et al., 2010; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017)).

In a school set up, professional development is concerned about improving upon the knowledge, attitude and skills base of principals and educators. The needs of the personnel, ideally, should be satisfied in the context of the needs of the school. The learner should equally be a beneficiary of the development efforts by learning at high levels of achievement (Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Caena, 2011;

Osmundson, 2016). The programmes are planned in pursuit of addressing the needs of the school in particular and the needs of the education system in general. CPD in a broad sense refers to the development of a person in his or her professional role. More specifically, Villegas-Reimers (2003:11) views educator development as that, "…*professional growth a teacher achieves as a result of gaining increased experience and examining his or her teaching systematically."* Continuous professional development includes formal experiences such as in attending workshops and professional meetings and in mentoring, and informal experiences such as in reading professional publications or watching television documentaries related to an academic discipline. Continuous professional development can also occur in informal contexts such as discussions among work colleagues, independent reading and research, observations of a colleague's work, or other form of learning from a peer (Marcelo, 2009; Mizell, 2010; Bautista & Ortega-Ruiz, 2015).

The new perspective of continuous professional development has several characteristics herewith put forward by Villegas-Reimers (2003:13-15) as;

- It is based on constructivism rather than on a "transmission-oriented model." As a consequence, educators are treated as active learners who are engaged in the concrete tasks of teaching, assessment, observation and reflection.
- It is perceived as a long-term process as it acknowledges the fact that educators learn over time. As a result, a series of related experiences rather than one-off presentations is seen to be the most effective as it allows educators to relate prior knowledge to new experiences. Regular follow-up support is, therefore, regarded as an indispensable catalyst of the change process in continuous professional development.
- It is perceived as a process that takes place within a particular context. Contrary to the traditional professional development opportunities that did not so much relate training to actual classroom experiences, the most effective form of continuous professional development is that which is based in schools and is related to the daily activities of teachers and learners (Ganser, 2000; McLaughlin & Zarrow, 2001) in Villegas-Reimers (2003). Schools therefore, are, transformed into communities of inquiry, of professionals and of learners. Wood and McQuarrie (1999) quoted in Villegas-Reimers (2003) actually claim

that the most successful educator development opportunities are on-the-job learning activities such as study groups, action research and portfolios.

- Continuous professional development is identified as a process of culture building and not of mere skill training. In this case, educators are empowered as professionals, and therefore should receive the same treatment that they themselves are expected to give their students. An educator professional development programme that is not supported by the school or curricular reform is not effective according to Villegas-Reimers (2003).
- An educator is conceived of as a reflective practitioner; someone who enters the profession with a certain knowledge base, and who will acquire new knowledge and experiences based on that prior knowledge. In so doing, the role of professional development is to aid educators in building new pedagogical theories and practices (Bautista & Ortega-Ruiz, 2015) and to help them develop their expertise in the field.
- Continuous professional development is conceived of as a collaborative process. Even though there may be some opportunities for isolated work and reflection, most effective professional development occurs when there are meaningful interactions, not only among educators themselves, but also between educators, administrators, principals, parents and other community members (Lessing & de Witt, 2007; Salo & Ronnerman, 2010).
- Continuous professional development may look and be very different in diverse settings, and even within a single setting, it can have a variety of dimensions. In other words, professional development processes have to be considered within a framework of social, economic and political trends and events. What works in one situation may not work in another because of the enormous variability in school or educational contexts. Instead, there will be a collection of answers, each specific to a context. Guskey (1995: 17) posits, *"Our search must focus, therefore, on finding the optimal mix; that assortment of professional development processes and technologies that work best in a particular setting."*

Guskey (2002: 381) defined also professional development as, *"…systematic efforts to bring about change in the classroom practices of teachers, in their attitudes and beliefs, and in the leaning outcomes of students."* This definition combines the needs

of the individual educator with those of the student. One should always note that the needs of the educator should be satisfied in the context of those of the school. This precaution ensures that there is no possible conflict.

Of interest is the view of Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) on educator professional development as they interpreted what professional development entailed rather than define it. They view educator professional development as educators learning, rather than others getting educators to change or learn. Further, they identified and described three main types of development namely; personal, professional and social. Clarke and Hollingsworth (2002) are convinced that the process of educator development could be seen as one in which personal, professional and social development is occurring, and one in which development in one aspect cannot proceed unless the other aspects develop also.

Salo and Ronnerman (2013) also describe what they consider key features of the educator development process. Educator professional development could be seen as having two aspects. One is the input of new theoretical ideas and new teaching suggestions. The second is trying out, evaluation and practice of those new theoretical and teaching ideas over an extended period in a collaborative situation where the educators are able to receive support and feedback, and are able to reflect critically. They conclude that both aspects were important if personal, professional and social development of educators are to occur.

Evans (2002:127) picked up that, implicit in the description of educator professional development appeared to be an interpretation of educator development as, *"… a comparatively longitudinal process of teachers' behavioural change that is guided by and focused upon practical application of suggested innovations."* It appears to be a process involving sequentially; the generation of ideas, that may be applicable to teaching; then trying out these ideas. That is followed by discussing in collegial contexts the viability and implications of the ideas as they emerge as potential practice; and finally adopting new practices that emanate from the ideas (Evans, 2002). There is no evident consideration of the possibility that, continuous professional development may also occur in less systematic and unplanned ways incidentally or accidentally.

Evans (2002) hereby puts an interpretation of continuous professional development forward. She interprets educator professional development as a process which may be on-going or which may have occurred and is complete. She is however, cautious not to imply that educator professional development in its entirety may ever be considered to have been completed in a finite way, but rather that educators may be considered to have developed in some way. Her reference to professional development being completed incorporated recognition that the completion may often be "transient" or lasting only for a short time. Furthermore, Evans (2002) also interprets continuous professional development as a process rather than a product, but would categorise unsuccessful or partially successful efforts as professional development; rather those professional development processes that failed or partially failed to be completed.

Furthermore, Evans (2002:132) sums up her concept of professional development as some form of change that would generally be categorised as learning. She refers to continuous professional development as, *"…functional development…"* that may include learning new ways of teaching, learning how to apply new methods or processes in teaching, for example, on how to be more productive. In this context, the intellectual change focus within attitudinal development may incorporate the enhancement of understanding or the increase of knowledge, which are generally accepted as products of learning. A further point is that, in the context of professional development, an educator who becomes more reflective or analytical would be manifesting intellectual development and one who becomes more highly motivated in general or in relation to specific aspects of his or her work would be manifesting motivational development (Lessing & de Witt, 2007; Whitehouse, 2011; Darling-Hammond, 2017).

From the above contributions, continuous professional development may be used in reference to a wide variety of specialised training, formal or informal education, or advanced professional learning intended to help educators and other school personnel improve their professional knowledge, skill or competence and effectiveness. Continuous professional development of educators is educators' on-going learning to improve the way they teach, deliberately directed towards students learning at high levels of achievement (Kosgei, 2010; Vracar, 2014; Huish, 2014). In other words,

lifelong learning is the means by which educators attempt to maintain and keep abreast of the knowledge and skills related to their job considering that initial teacher training would not suffice in this fast technology-changing world.

2.3 IMPORTANCE OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The role of the educator in the success of every student is of paramount importance in all educational situations. A part of the success of every educator is highly dependent upon his or her knowledge and skill (Collin et al., 2012). Furthermore, a part of every educator's knowledge and skill is dependent upon his or her training. However, schools can no longer sorely rely on educators having undergone some teacher education training; educators need to continually update their knowledge and skills throughout their careers (Haslam, 2010; Steyn, 2010; Cooper, 2016).

Educational technology and curricula, for instance, are constantly changing, making it challenging, for educators to keep with trends and practices in the field (Mizell, 2010). Continuous professional development comes handy in transforming educators into better and more apt educators by enabling them to create relevant and tailored course instructions for today's students (Tsotetsi & Mahlomaholo, 2013; Huish, 2014). The assumption with professional development is that when educators discover new teaching strategies, they are able to go back to the classroom and make changes to suit the needs of their learners. In fact, research shows that an inspiring and informed educator is the most important school-related factor influencing student achievement, so it is critical to pay close attention to how both new and experienced educators are supported (Edutopia, 2008; Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009).

Villegas-Reimers (2003) established that the process of continuous professional development has a significant positive impact on three aspects that he identifies as; educators' beliefs and practices, students' learning and the implementation of educational reforms. Successful continuous professional development experiences have a noticeable impact on educators' work or beliefs and practices both in and out of the classroom, especially considering that a significant number of educators tend to be under-prepared for their profession at the initial assumption of duty (Villegas-Reimers, 2003). The claim, according to Villegas-Reimers research evidence, is that professional development strengthened educators' knowledge, skills and dispositions.

Kettle and Sellars (1996), Kallestad and Olweus (1998) and Youngs (2001), all, report similar results cited by Villegas-Reimers (2003). In addition, Baker and Smith (1999) in Villegas-Reimers (2003:21) identified the following characteristics of professional development as being the most effective in sustaining positive change in educators;

1. A heavy emphasis on providing concrete, realistic and challenging goals;
2. Activities that include both technical and conceptual aspects of instruction;
3. Support from colleagues;
4. Frequent opportunities for educators to witness the effects that their efforts have on students' learning.

On the second aspect, with regard to the effect of educators' professional development on students' learning, a number of studies report that the more professional knowledge educators have, the higher the levels of student achievement (Falk, 2001; Educational Testing Service, 1998; Grosso de Leon, 2001; Guzman, 1995 & Tatto, 1999) all cited in Villegas-Reimers (2003:21). Darling-Hammond (2017:32) agrees, adding that, *"…investments in teachers' knowledge and skills net greater increases in students' achievement than other uses of an education dollar."*

Villegas-Reimers (2003:21) offers evidence to support the fact that continuous professional development plays an important role in changing educators' teaching methods, and that these changes have a positive impact on students' learning. Data collected during the "Cognitively Guided Instruction Project" (a multi-year and multi-phase programme of curriculum development, professional development and research) showed powerful evidence, which supported the strong relationship that links the improvement of educators' practices and the increasing levels of students' achievement. Darling-Hammond (2017:32) also concluded that, *"Teachers who participated in sustained curriculum-based professional development reported changes in practice that, in turn, were associated with significantly higher student achievement scores on state assessment."*

The third aspect brings us to the issue of continuous professional development having a positive impact on the success of educational reform. Educational societies tend to be engaged at some point in some form of educational reform at national, district, provincial, state or school level. Villegas-Reimers (2003) puts forward the assertion

that educational reforms that do not include educators and their professional development have not been successful. That puts the relationship between educational reform and educators' professional development in a state of positive co-relationship, making the relationship reciprocal.

As mentioned previously, reforms that have centred on educators' professional development have been extremely successful in transforming even national education systems. Villegas-Reimers (2003) cites Namibia as the case where the education system was transformed into a more democratic system after the country gained independence.

As has already been alluded to, professional development may happen in a variety of ways. Formally, it can take place at a workshop, seminar, meeting or conference. Informally, it can occur through conversations, readings, observations or even feedback. The importance of continuous professional development is to become more educated in one's desired profession. Huish (2014) proposed that it is important for educators to engage in some form of professional development for the gain of being educated, as opposed to dragging oneself to attend because it is either mandatory or for the benefit of earning some reward for attendance. With the internet and increased technology in the classroom, for instance, new ideas and tools are being explored and implemented on a daily basis, rendering it crucial to stay up to date. Ideally, professional development programmes should energise and excite educators about what it is that they are teaching (Mestry, Hendricks & Bisschoff, 2009; Tsotetsi & Mahlomaholo, 2013).

Huish (2014) further highlights the importance of professional development for educators by putting forward claims that continuous professional development should introduce new ideas, teaching methods, structures, tools and technology that would benefit in the daily classroom activities. When educators return to their classes after attending a professional development programme of some sort, the most important part of the professional development programme would be to apply those new ideas or teaching methods to benefit the learner. As a way of encouragement, Huish (2014) is very clear and bold on advising fellow educators to always look to educating themselves. By so doing, educators are in a better position to set an example to their students by continuing to learn and expand one's knowledge and skills base.

The importance of professional development is viewed in the context of the importance of educator knowledge, skills and positive attitude in executing their duties. Professional development is the strategy schools employ to ensure that educators continue to strengthen their practice throughout their careers (Borko, 2004, Dinham & Scott, 2003; Caena, 2011). Mizell (2010:3) agrees by adding that, *"In education, research has shown that teaching quality and school leadership are the most important factors in raising student achievement."*

As if to sum up on the importance of educator continuous professional development, Mizell (2010:18) had this to say:

> *Good teaching is not an accident. While some teachers are more naturally gifted than others, all effective teaching is the result of study, reflection, practice, and hard work. A teacher can never know enough about how a student learns, what impedes the student's learning, and how the teacher's instruction can increase the student's learning. Professional development is the only means for teachers to gain such knowledge. Whether students are high, low, or average achievers, they will learn more if their teachers regularly engage in high-quality professional development.*

> *School leaders too, improve with study, reflection, practice, and hard work. Their learning supports not only teachers' learning, but students' as well. When leaders know how to engage teachers, support staff, and students in effective learning, the school becomes the center of learning for all adults and students.*

To further clarify and emphasise on the importance of professional development for educators, Mizell (2010:5-9) posed eight questions that he immediately responded to, as illustrated below;

"Why do educators need professional development? Didn't they learn what they need to know in college?" Mizell (2010: 5).

College and university programmes cannot provide the extensive range of learning experiences necessary for graduates to become effective school educators. Once students graduate and are employed, they then continue to learn through experience. New educators take years to gain the skills they need to be effective in their roles.

Even experienced educators confront great challenges each year, including changes in subject content, new instructional methods, advances in technology, changed laws and procedures, and student learning needs. Educators who do not experience effective professional development do not improve their skills, and student learning suffers.

"Why do new educators need extra support?" Mizell (2010:6).

New educators juggle an overwhelming number of unfamiliar issues, such as classroom management, instruction, curriculum, school culture and operations, test preparation and administration, parent relationships and interactions with other educators as colleagues. When left to themselves, they may develop counter-productive behaviours (Mizell, 2010:6). Nevertheless, with some extra support, the new educators learn effective practices to mitigate daily challenges. Many school systems provide mentors and familiarisation or induction programmes for novice educators. More importantly, research shows that hew educators who received intensive mentoring had a significant effect on learner achievement after as little as two years (Strong, Fletcher & Villar, 2004) in Mizell (2010).

"Do new principals need the same kind of extra support as new educators?" Mizell (2010:6).

Yes indeed, new principals and assistant principals, just like new educators, benefit from on-going learning when they assume their new roles (Mizell, 2010).

"Do principals have separate professional development from educators?" Mizell (2010:7).

Principals who are instructional leaders often choose to participate in professional development designed primarily for educators so that they can support its outcomes. In addition, principals need professional development to address their specific roles and responsibilities. This professional development usually occurs in separate venues, often at different times. Many experts, however, believe that principals do not have adequate access to professional development related to their roles as school leaders (Mizell, 2010).

"When do educators typically engage in professional development?" Mizell (2010:7).

Continuous professional development is most effective when it occurs in the context of educators' daily work. When learning is part of the school day, all educators are engaged in growth rather than learning being limited to those who volunteer to participate. School-based professional development helps educators analyse student achievement data during the school year to immediately identify learning problems, develop solutions and promptly apply those solutions to address students' needs.

"Where does professional development typically occur for educators?" Mizell (2010:8).

Educators benefit most by learning in the setting where they can immediately apply what they learn; that is, in the school where they work. However, other professional development may occur at:

- An educator's school district complex, or some professional development resource centre.
- A third-party site such as an educator service centre.
- Another school, school system, state or foreign country.
- A college or university.
- Local, provincial or national conferences, seminars or workshops.
- Online.

"Why can't educators just use online professional development?" Mizell (2010:8).

Online professional development can be useful for learning content and even observing video demonstrations of effective teaching or leadership. Some online professional development also provides interactive, real-time discussion among participants and an expert. However, there are limitations to online professional development which include;

- Professional development may not relate to the specific learning challenges of an educator's students.
- An educator learns in isolation rather than as a member of a team where participants learn from colleagues' expertise, experience and insights.
- Educators' collective growth has a greater impact on student learning across the school than individual learning does.

- No one will know whether or how well an educator applies his or her learning to benefit learners.

Mizell (2010) underscores the above claims by asserting that, all schools should be places where both adults and children learn. In addition, educators who routinely develop their own knowledge and skills, model for students that learning is important and useful (Burns, 2014; Cooper, 2016). Their on-going development creates a culture of learning throughout the school and supports educators' efforts to engage students in learning. Furthermore, a school that organises team-based professional development and expects all educators and administrators to participate; though for different purposes, at different times, in different ways, demonstrates that it is serious about all educators performing at higher levels. As a result, the entire school is likely to be more focussed, effective and efficient (Osmundson, 2016).

Vraca (2014:1-3) identified three reasons why continuous professional development matters. *"A teacher's professional learning journey is an on-going process throughout their career*." was the first reason (Vraca, 2014:1).

To substantiate the above claim, Vraca (2014:1) had this to say:

> *To promote and nurture effective teaching, the profession should offer quality training, well designed career paths, time to work together on the best ways to help students, quality evaluations that help teachers in their development, professional development based on identified needs, and fair accountability process."*

Professional learning as is in professional development is an on-going process. Continuous professional development becomes the link between educators' individual skills and knowledge and the contribution they make to a school and learners (Borko, 2004; Mizell, 2010). According to Vraca (2014), the process of professional learning should provide educators the opportunity to expand their skills, develop new teaching strategies and deepen their understanding of subject content. For instance, for experienced educators, it is vital to find time to participate in some continuous professional development of some sort because technology is continually changing as much as subject knowledge is updated. More specifically, when subject knowledge is updated, experienced educators need access to professional learning opportunities to be refreshed on those subject areas and keep abreast of educational trends to

promote student learning effectiveness. What teachers know has a bearing and major influence on how students learn (Mizell, 2010; Steyn, 2010; Vraca, 2014).

Vraca (2014:2) second reason was based on the claim that*, "The classroom is continuously changing, and educators must be prepared to meet needs of their students."*

The emphasis is on educators being given professional learning opportunities to be ready and equipped for any changes in classroom practices. The introduction of eBooks, tablets as learning devices, and electronic notebooks and boards into some schools is testimony to the above claim.

Finally, Vraca (2014:3) third reason asserted that, *"It is important for schools to adopt rich professional learning opportunities for its educators."*

Principals of schools should identify professional development training needs and prepare educators for the changing classroom by providing opportunities for educators to continue to develop their teaching skills and subject matter knowledge. To sum up, Vraca (2014) posits that professional development ultimately matters because it is an on-going process throughout an educator's career as it prepares educators for the changing classroom. In addition, professional development provides rich opportunities for educators to continue to develop their teaching skills and subject matter, ensuring effective, high quality teachers, optimistically are placed in all classrooms.

2.3.1 Principles of effective professional development

To emphasise and highlight on the importance of educator professional development, Dunne (2002:68) came up with what he referred to as, *"Principles of effective professional development*." Viewed from another angle, the importance of educator continuous professional development is mirrored through seven principles herewith quoted and presented as discussed by Dunne (2002:68-70) below;

2.3.1.1 Driven by a vision of the classroom.

Two important ideas converge to both describe and make the case for the importance of vision of the classroom as central in effective professional development. The first idea is that the intersection of student learning, academic content and instructional practice become the content anchor of professional development for educators. The second idea is that professional development is most relevant when it focuses on educators' real work. Examining new knowledge in light of one's own students and classroom can provide a bridge that links what is only interesting to educators to what is relevant to them.

2.3.1.2 Helps educators develop the knowledge and skills to create vision.

Benchmarks for student learning and achievement cannot be met without a clear image of how those measures of success will come to life in actual classrooms. As facilitators of learning, educators need opportunities to create and act on their vision of high achievement for all of their students. Effective professional development experiences enhance educators' content knowledge and pedagogy within the framework of an educator's vision for his or her classroom.

2.3.1.3 Mirrors methods to be used by students.

Educators need to be provided with the learning opportunities they are expected to provide students. For example, if expectation is that educators will implement a particular curriculum, then the educators need to learn about the curriculum by experiencing the lessons. Professional learning often stops at the explanation phase of new learning; the antithesis of what we want educators to do with and for students.

2.3.1.4 Builds a learning community.

There is a vital link between the growth, development and learning of children and the growth, development and learning of adults in schools. When students see their educators talking about and being excited by learning that experience positively affects how students think about their own learning. Additionally, when educators have opportunities to learn with and from one another, a culture of collaboration and possibilities can emerge that often does not otherwise develop educator leadership.

Leadership is a role that applies to all educators within schools. Typically, leadership is thought about as something that pertains only to those in formal positions of authority such as in principals. However, when opportunities for leadership exist for educators as well as administrators, the school culture, what those schools create and

provide can be enhanced dramatically. Professional development can play a crucial role in developing and sustaining educator leadership.

2.3.1.5 Links to the system

Professional development is not a panacea in and of itself. It is part of a larger system and when explicitly linked to that system yields a greater potential for positive impact. One of the ways to create these links is to gather and analyse pertinent data to make decisions about where a school "is" and what needs to happen next. Examples of pertinent data include student achievement data, building goals for teaching and learning, student and educator needs assessments and results of current and past professional development initiatives. Through data-driven decision-making, curriculum, instruction, assessment and the related professional development can be better aligned.

2.3.1.6 Is continuously assessed

The expenditure of time, funds and other resources for professional development needs to be justified through data that indicate positive results. The cry is often heard, "The only professional development that counts is that which makes a difference in student learning" (Dunne, 2002:69). While student learning is the primary goal of professional development, there are several levels of evaluating professional development programmes that must be considered together in order to ultimately impact greater student learning (Guskey, 2000; Joyce & Showers, 2003).

Moeini (2008:2) views teacher professional development as, *"…the tool by which policy makers convey broad visions, disseminate critical information, and provide guidance to teachers."* The instruction provided to educators is perceived to be instrumental in promoting educator development in areas such as reading instruction, technology and general subject mastery. Moeini (2008) takes notice that the majority of novice educators began their career in a teaching environment that had little or no professional assistance while expected to carry a full educational load immediately. It is not unusual for some new educators to teach in disciplines that may differ from their area of specialisation. Worse still, they may be asked to teach in some fields for which they are less prepared and receive little support, and may further not be evaluated based upon proper criteria to improve their teaching. In such a scenario, continuous professional development comes in handy to ensure that individual educators enhance

their skills and abilities once they have formally qualified (Dinham & Scott, 2003; Osmundson, 2016; Cooper, 2016.)

Continuous professional development is important as it helps to ensure that further learning is progressed in a structured, practical and relevant way to guarantee that there are applied efficiencies in learning (Desimone, Smith & Ueno, 2006; Vracar, 2014; Moonasar & Underwood, 2018). Professional development allows individual educators to focus on specific skills and knowledge they require. In fact, not only novice educators require guidance, but also there are also veteran educators whose knowledge of teaching methods needs updating. A major study carried out by the National Foundation for Improvement of Education of the US National Education Association concluded after interviewing 1 000 educators that professional development was no longer viewed as separate from the teaching job, but must be built into the daily, weekly and yearlong job of teaching (Jegede & Taplin, 2000). This renders continuous professional development essential for educators to develop the content knowledge and skills they need to succeed in their classroom.

Osmundson (2016) agrees that the goal of continuous professional development is to learn and become a better employee, but contends that other advantages are possible through participation in development opportunities. The underlying benefits gained beyond building knowledge includes the aspect of gaining confidence and credibility (Osmundson, 2016:2). The phrase, “knowledge is power” rings true. The act of learning provides new perspective and increased expertise in one’s field. Secondly, the goal of most continuous professional development activities, if not all, is to teach how to do something better. By mastering new skills, efficiencies are recognised. Osmundson (2016:2) further claims that CPD empowers the programme participant with the ability to influence and lead. By using the knowledge learned with the confidence, credibility gained, the ability to influence, and lead becomes less subjective, and focuses more on the facts/figures brought to the table. These opportunities provide a tool for more meaningful contributions to the team.

Additionally, professional development opportunities conducted in group settings provide an added benefit of building one’s network. They also provide an outlet for individuals to brainstorm and seek feedback (Osmundson, 2016). CPD also keeps one

abreast of changes in the education system. It is easy to become complacent and simply maintain the status quo. Employee development opportunities can shed light on new approaches and direct on how to navigate through (Dinham & Scott, 2003). For many individuals, professional development is just a part of moving up the career ladder. Whether necessary for advancement or not, professional development must be encouraged as a motivator for one to become a better employee. Professional development opportunities are about getting more out of the work experience. Being the best one can be, hopefully is reciprocated in things like better compensation, flexibility, perks and advancement, and more (Jagede & Taplin, 2000; Moeni, 2008).

Sparks (2002) posits that quality teaching in all classrooms and skilful leadership in all schools will not occur by accident, but require the design and the implementation of the most powerful forms of professional development. Sparks (2002: iv) summarises the importance of continuous professional development by highlighting what he purported to be the best approach beneficial to sound continuous professional development by proposing that:

- Surround educators and principals with a culture and support them with structures that encourage professional learning, innovation, experimentation and the collegial sharing of new ideas and practices.
- Engage educators and principals in the professional learning that is standards-focused, intellectually rigorous, part of their daily work and continuous.
- Deepen educators' knowledge of the content they teach.
- Expand educators' repertoire of research-based instructional skills to teach that content.
- Provide on-going classroom assistance in implementing new skills.
- Create small teams of educators who meet several times a week to plan lessons, critique student work and assist in problem solving.
- Provide educators with the classroom assessment skills that allow them to regularly monitor gains in student learning resulting from improved classroom practices.
- Connect educators to educators within and beyond their schools and to outside sources of knowledge and skill.

To maximise continuous professional development benefits, Sparks (2002:1-1) advocates for what he refers to as, *"…powerful professional development."* The professional development recommended here would ideally provide classroom support to educators. "Given the intellectual and behavioural complexity of teaching and the interpersonal demands made on teachers by students, sustained classroom assistance related to the practical issues of instructional change is essential if staff development efforts are to lead to improved practice and significant gains in student learning" (Sparks, 2002:10-2). Such assistance may include, amongst others, demonstration lessons, coaching and small-group problem solving. Such assistance may come from principals, peers or hired facilitators. Sparks (2002) claimed that powerful professional development deepened educators' subject-area knowledge.

Sparks (2002:10-2) in support of the claim, points out the importance of educators possessing deep knowledge of the subjects they teach and coined the term *"…pedagogical knowledge…"* to describe the special kind of subject-matter understanding that enabled educators to support the learning of their students. He argues that successful teaching required educators to understand their subject or discipline in such a way that they are able to anticipate common misconceptions that learners bring to the study of that subject. That understanding would help educators provide alternative representations of the material for students facing challenges in mastering the subject content. Rigden (2000) in Sparks (2002:10-3) shares that view by claiming that:

> *Research demonstrates that there is a strong, reliable relationship between teachers' content knowledge and the quality of their instruction. Teachers with a deep conceptual understanding of their subject ask a greater number of high-level questions, encourage students to apply and transfer knowledge, help students see and understand relationships between and among ideas and concepts, and make other choices in instructions that engage students and challenge them to learn.*

2.3.2 Benefits of continuous professional development

Khan (2010: 38) identified the following three benefits of CPD that go beyond the acquisition of knowledge, but aim to impact on performance.

2.3.2.1 Personal benefit.

CPD is an investment that educators make to accelerate their careers. It assists educators to improve their professional effectiveness and career opportunities. CPD will boost educator confidence and strengthen professional credibility to prepare educators for greater responsibilities. Apparently, educators can see their progression by tracking their learning path. CPD empowers educators to be creative in dealing with and challenges and to cope positively with change by constantly updating knowledge and skill. With CPD, educators can identify gaps in knowledge and experience. CPD makes educator working life more interesting and can significantly increase job satisfaction and prevent educator 'burn-out' as in being obsolete or outdated (Khan, 2010:38).

2.3.2.2 Organisational benefits.

As schools shift the responsibility for personal development back to the individual, the ability and insight to manage one's professional growth is seen as a key strength. CPD will maximise staff potential by linking learning to actions and theory to practice. This leads to better staff morale and a motivated workforce helps to give a positive image or brand to organisations. This is a good tool to help educators focus their achievements throughout the year (Khan, 2010:38).

2.3.2.3 Community benefit.

CPD contributes to improved literacy and knowledge base levels spill over to the society. The ultimate aim is to upgrade the standard of education levels of the general populace (Khan, 2010:39).

From the above discussions, one can comfortably conclude that continuous professional development enables educators to develop the skills and knowledge they need to address students' learning challenges. Those who are concerned to develop educators; be they school leaders or government, need to know whether and with what varying degrees of success, educators are likely to be developed by, for instance, sending them on courses, mentoring them, imposing reforms on them or placing them within a particular professional culture or climate (Evans, 2002).

2.4 PROFESSIONAL NEEDS-IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS

In order to make appropriate investments in the professional development of educators, one must first establish what the competences of each educator are, and then identify the skills, knowledge and teaching experiences required for each educator or groups of educators. The gap between the two may be met by professional development or training of some sort; whether on-the-job, through distance learning or attending workshops specifically designed for that purpose. In the absence of adequate information from the job, it becomes difficult for principals, head of departments or educators themselves to identify the range and scale of professional development needs to be met (Moeini, 2008; Killion, 2009).

One of the most common viewpoints of needs is that articulated by Harris (2000) who defined needs as subjective perceptions of something useful for a purpose that a person or community is able to specify. The perception or view of needs the researcher holds in this study is that of the discrepancy. According to the definition above, a need exists where there is a gap between present and some desired state or condition that can possibly be corrected or remedied (Goe, Biggers & Croft, 2012).

In other words, in continuous professional development, information about training and learning-needs has to be gathered. Instances when an educator or principal might feel needs are numerous. Thus, when an educator embarks on something new or unfamiliar; be it a new subject area, methodology or new technology, he or she has identified a need.

Goe, Biggers and Croft (2012) further state that continuous professional development needs-identification is based on the belief that evidence collected for educator accountability (as in performance appraisal) can also be used to determine the focus and strategies for professional growth for all educators. However, particularly for those educators who are not meeting expectations in terms of their classroom performance or their students' learning. The alignment of educator assessment or evaluation results with professional growth opportunities can be considered in terms of the collection and use of evidence. It begins with identifying sources of evidence that will be used for evaluating educators. This brings us to the issue of professional development needs emanating from different sources. Some of the sources from which needs may be

derived are, for example, one's teaching experience, one's personal or professional level or standard of education, or one's personality and personal experience.

A novice educator or probationer might require a systematic programme of professional initiation, guided experience or study of some management aspect of class control. As such, the probationer would have an induction, orientation or familiarisation need. This need would be to enable the new entrant into the profession to settle into the new job as soon as possible so that he or she can be effective in the classroom right from the start (Harris, 2006; Killion, 2009; Gates & Gates, 2014).

Similarly, a need exists when one moves into new areas of untried sphere of instructional activity such as, movement from one school to the next, promotion to head of department, vice-principal, principal or moving from the foundation phase section of a primary school to the intermediate section of the school. The discrepancy between the actual and the ideal situation or need may result from inexperience or lack of confidence. It may also arise from sheer ignorance of what the task to be undertaken is, as in attempting to use a laptop in power-point presentation for the first time without prior training (Guskey & Yoon, 2009).

Killion (2009) hereby attempts to clarify the distinction in concepts of "needs" and "wants" to dispel what he perceives to be some misunderstanding and confusion. By asking educators, for instance, to identify their needs for professional learning, the thinking behind is that their needs are more likely to be met, and in turn translate fulfilment of the needs into student achievement. Needs identified by educators could come in the form of, for example, fewer students or more textbooks. These indeed would be the educator needs. Nevertheless, the big question is, "Would addressing those needs necessarily promote student achievement?"

Killion (2009: 1) states that, *"Needs are data-driven, evidence-based areas for improvement. Wants are wishes that describe what we hope for, and in many cases, based on personal preference or desires."* An educator may desire or "want" to pursue a Bachelor of Education degree in Career Guidance and Counselling; but would that necessarily, for instance, upgrade the pass-rate in the Mathematics subject that educator is teaching? All educators deserve opportunities to pursue their wants and many opportunities exist to fulfil those wants; often mistaken for needs. According to Killion (2009) the priority for professional development investment for educator

learning is based on student achievement data. Asking educators, “What would you like to study?” is redundant when analyses of data from multiple assessments of student achievement reveal gaps in student learning. Those gaps are the professional learning needs. In other words, what an educator needs in as far as professional development is concerned, is defined by what the students need to be successful learners.

Killion (2009) further clarifies his point by stating that needs assessments for professional learning are embedded in student achievement data. The needs continue to be refined by conducting research to identify the teaching or instructional practices and specific curriculum enhancements that have demonstrated impact on addressing those gaps in contexts similar to those where the needs exist. The US National Staff Development Council (NSDC) quoted in Killion (2009:1-2) offers a guide to help identify professional development needs; hereby referred to as, “Back-mapping Model for Professional Learning.”

First, analyse student achievement data to develop goals for student achievement to know the specific knowledge and skill areas in which students are underperforming and in which students are most often underperforming. Secondly, understand the context in which those needs exist so that educator, principal, school, and district factors that influence successful change initiatives based on professional learning are identified and ready to be addressed. Thirdly, develop clear educator learning goals that specify changes in knowledge, attitude, skill, aspiration and behaviour to ensure attainment of the student achievement goals. Thereafter, research professional learning designs, programmes and or content to identify ones that have successfully achieved similar goals in similar contexts to identify core components to include in our programme.

What follows is planning professional learning, the implementation of professional learning and its evaluation to ensure success not only in implementation but also in results for educators and students. Then one must support, monitor and evaluate implementation of professional learning. Finally, assess student progress and reflect on educator practice to assess the effectiveness of professional learning before implementing the process again.

In a nutshell, the Back-mapping Model stresses that the role of professional learning is deeply connected to the work educators do each day in their classrooms, driven by the needs of their students, and measured in terms of results for students. It requires educators to examine, change and reflect on their content knowledge and instructional strategies with colleagues to refine and extend their practice throughout their career (Killion, 2009). In sum, student-achievement needs should define educator continuous professional learning needs.

The authorities on continuous professional development needs identification have so far attempted to indicate what needs are. The researcher briefly examined the concept of needs analysis. It indicates that needs analysis comprises the processing of information about training and learning needs. Put more precisely, the difference between the present condition of the staff knowledge, skills and attitudes needs to be studied, and compared to the conditions of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are necessary for task accomplishment (Moeini, 2008; Gates & Gates, 2014; AL-Qahtani, 2015)).

Such a study or needs analysis would help determine whether there is need for introducing in-service education and training solutions or non-training solutions. In other words, several questions should be asked when continuous professional development needs identification and analysis are carried out. Harris (2000) supplies such questions as:

- Does a performance discrepancy exist?
- Is the identified discrepancy important to the school, region or to the whole education system?
- Can we correct the discrepancy in performance through professional development?
- Is professional development the most cost-effective solution that can be applied?

This brings us to some of the purposes of identifying continuous professional development needs supplied by Harris (2000) as to;

- Improve understanding of the community or group you serve.

- Build a realistic training programme.
- Set training goals and objectives.
- Determine training subjects or content.
- Involve trainee (educators) to remove suspicion and promote co-operation.

Continuous professional development needs identification and analysis or simply, needs assessment, as has been indicated earlier, is a vital step in undertaking professional development. However, one needs the relevant knowledge and skills in carrying out need assessment. Needs assessment techniques fall into four major categories or clusters (Wilson & Easen, 2006). Broadly, these techniques can be grouped as descriptive methods, group process methods, observation and public consultations or questionnaires and surveys. The researcher hereby adopts and examines how these techniques supplied by Harris (2000) may be put to use, by highlighting their strengths and weaknesses;

2.4.1 Diary methods

The key technique of needs or information analysis employed by the Diary Method is taking notes in a “special” way. Mainly, educators are asked to complete a diary showing what is done over a set period in their teaching endeavour. For example, entries could show the major purposes of educators’ visits to the principal or head of department’s office during working hours. These entries might show entry and exit time, the nature of business or problems discussed and the solution offered or found.

A special version of the diary method is the Critical Incident Diary Method whereby educators are asked to concentrate on recording “critical incidents.” For example, principals or educators could be asked to record the most difficult tasks they have done in the past year or two. Alternatively, the educators might be asked to list the most frustrating events that have taken place at school during the current year. The diary method’s major advantage is its capacity to explore a multitude of aspects. Its open-ended nature provides opportunities for different types of needs to be analysed and revealed.

The diary method requires conscientious effort. It is time consuming to keep up the recording for periods running into weeks or months. Besides, the processing of the

information collected in this manner can be time consuming (Harris, 2000; Bowen, 2009; AL-Qahtan, 2015).

2.4.2 Record or document analysis

Schools often possess a variety of written information which can be analysed and used in assessing professional development needs. Among some of the records or documents in schools may include letters of learner performance complaints from the clientele, minutes of staff meetings of the whole school, of departments or subject committees, circulars, personnel files, office memos, learner performance school reports and other archival materials (Moira, 2000; Bowen, 2009). Wilson and Easen (2006) emphasise that checking records of this nature first can save time later and it is usually an inexpensive exercise. Besides, records such as those identified are stable sources of information.

Some information, however, may be difficult to quantify. Some information might be classified or confidential such that one may not have access to it, such as letters of complaint or educator personnel files. Since some records may not have been properly kept, the information may be inaccurate or constitute only one side of the story, rendering it difficult to establish real professional development needs (Cole, 2004; Goe, Biggers & Croft, 2012).

2.4.3 Brain storming

The Brain Storming process method is designed to generate a creative and unrestricted flow of ideas in such a manner as to boost the less confident participants or respondents to participate with the objective of making them contributors that are more comfortable. In brain storming, all ideas are publicly recorded verbatim or in exactly the same words, the contributors stated them. As such, criticism and debates on the contributions are not permitted and lateral thinking is actively encouraged. Once the recording is over, the ideas can be prioritised, combined and/or edited.

A major advantage of this method of needs assessment is that it can be fast and creative. Moreover, it is an inexpensive means of producing more ideas than is possible by getting individual participants working together.

The brain storming method belongs to the Group process method of professional development needs assessment that largely depends on interpersonal skills. The needs assessment facilitators must have good interpersonal skills to achieve the desirable impact. Because of the volume of qualitative data they yield, and the variety of sources that they tap, the group processes method pose the problem of data processing. Brainstorms rely on the knowledge of the group. Where groups are large, they could prove difficult to handle for inexperienced facilitators (Smithson, 2000; Ruiz, 2017).

2.4.4 Force field analysis

Force Field Analysis mode of professional development needs assessment belonging to the Group process method, can be more appropriately termed “needs refinement.” The reason for this label is that, the main concern of this technique is implementation.

Once the professional development needs have been identified, they are ranked on a scale of say, 1 to 10 including all the forces, which constrain or facilitate implementation. Concentration must first be on those forces that are easiest to change, hence the likelihood of success once the goals and plans to undertake change are decided upon. After the forces, which are difficult to change, have been dealt with, then the more difficult ones are dealt with in the manner that has been outlined above.

The force field technique’s advantage lies in the fact that it is an inexpensive method to use. Because of its basic requirements, facilitators do not need specialised training to enable them to operate this technique. The success of this as a needs-assessment devise depends on the experience of the participants’ understanding of the forces that are at work. Additionally, the relative value or interaction between forces might not be given their due attention (Wilson & Easen, 2006; Moeini, 2008).

2.4.5 Nominal group technique

The nominal group technique is a needs assessment method that is only useful where it is feasible to gather people in small groups. The principal or facilitator has to pose a question such as, what the school’s professional development needs for the next twenty-four months are. In response, participants have to work silently, individually and then engage in some controlled brainstorming activity. Initially, discussion is strongly discouraged.

After the participants have completed writing their ideas silently as individuals, they then take turns in presenting their ideas one at a time. The ideas are then recorded publicly. As is the case with the brainstorming technique, no criticism or discussion is allowed at this stage.

The next phase involves what Hansen (1991) terms “simplification” and or merging of the recorded ideas in order to develop an agreed list of issues. Individuals then vote privately on each issue in an effort to prioritise them. Then, further discussions may be undertaken during which, the list may be enlarged by adding more items or altered as found necessary.

Nominal groups can be conducted quickly and relatively cheaply. Staff within a department could quite easily form a nominal group for the sole purpose of performing a needs assessment. Like in brainstorming, participants can produce more ideas than the sum of ideas produced by individuals working alone. Nominal groups, however, are handicapped by their dependence on the knowledge of the group. They may be slightly less creative than in brainstorms sessions (Harris, 2000; Rude & Brewer, 2003).

2.4.6 Search conferences

By definition, the search conference is a participative management technique often led by a trained facilitator. As a need assessment method, its areas of focus are future trends and gains, commitment to shared goals and the employment of action plans (Alzahrani, 2016). Its major objective is the attainment of change in organisations such as schools. In other words, the search conference’s main target is organisational development. Put in another way, this technique seeks to modify the organisation to facilitate a more favourable context for continuous professional development.

Alzahrani (2016) suggests that a number of participants be chosen to represent stakeholders in the school or department. Once they are at conference, they are encouraged to let go of their hierarchical position and interact on an equal footing. Stated differently, the participants have to act like a team or colleagues. The conference facilitator might spell out the conference objectives as well as the school or department’s objectives right at the beginning (Alzahrani, 2016).

Brainstorming is conducted to elicit from the participants shared views of the generalised future and the school's future. Small groups are then tasked with synthesising and clarifying issues in random small groups focusing on whether the situation should continue as it is, or whether they should take action to create new conditions for the future. The purpose of this exercise would be to allow educators to share their views at the level of their values. The small groups then report back to the whole group and then isolate differences between the "probable" that is born out of leaving things as they are and the "desirable" or future, as it would be when planned. The issues to be resolved are isolated and or prioritised. Small groups present action plans to the large group. During these deliberations, commitments to carry out the plans after the conference are usually made.

Search conferences are especially useful where the change in the school is rapid and or change of direction is being sought. Furthermore, this method of needs assessment is especially effective in that it allows clarification of issues as well as participation and commitment to action within the school. It tends to motivate the participants.

Search conferences require skilled facilitators. It is likely that some participants might find the time taken in the early stages of conferences to elicit the shared view of the future too theoretical or a waste of time and they may become uneasy.

2.4.7 Observation method

The observation here is more than watching what is going on. It is watching what is happening with a purpose. To fulfil the purpose, observations need to be documented accurately and objectively. Before one can do this though, one needs to plan the system for recording information before-hand.

First, the point should be clearly understood that observing and recording what is going on is a flexible tool to use on any work site. To be an effective observer, one needs to be patient, tactful and genuinely curious. Observers should try to blend into the work situation and not affect the setting and the way people go about accomplishing the tasks set for them. For instance, the head of department or principal may observe an educator deliver a lesson on some aspect of a subject, or a series of some aspects of the subject. One requirement for carrying out successful observation is that the

observer should be aware of his or her own assumptions and biases which could affect the way he or she carries out the task at hand (Baker, 2006; Driscoll, 2011).

2.4.8 Questionnaires and surveys (US Department of Education, 2013)

These fall under the broad Public Consultations technique. As needs assessment techniques, questionnaires and surveys rely on written questions which are completed by individuals and returned to the professional development facilitator or organiser. They are best used to obtain information of a detailed nature about behaviour, knowledge and attitudes held and about interests of the clients (such as students or parents). Surveys, as needs assessment method, are often used when a school is conducting an evaluation of its programmes and services. Activities such as engagement of information technology (IT) or use of clusters for professional development are examples of issues that can be surveyed to establish what needs exist.

Surveys can be designed as an easy and relatively cheap means of collecting and analysing data. They can be short and to the point, very general or extended and comprehensive. In other words, they can be tailored to each situation. Anonymous answers can be more honest than face-to-face or named survey where respondents identify themselves (US Department of Education, 2013).

Large surveys can require quite significant commitments of expertise, time and resources. There are difficulties in choosing samples in large schools. There are problems of item design. Clear and unambiguous questions that are not restrictive are not easy to formulate. As a professional development needs assessment method, the survey suffers from a serious flaw. There is no sense of ownership of the results by respondents answering the survey (US Department of Education, 2013).

The US Department of Education (2013) through a publication by the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education offers a guideline on how the identification and analysis of professional development needs may be accomplished. The six strategies herein referred to as “effective plans for Professional Development Committees” are adopted and discussed by the researcher beneath;

2.4. 9 Identify student and educator learning needs

The first step in the planning process is to identify student learning needs based on disaggregated student achievement data. This analysis can also help identify reasons for gaps in learning-disconnects between educator content knowledge and pedagogical content and student outcomes; that is, school and classroom environmental issues that may impede learning, or differences in written and implemented curriculum and standards (AL-Qahtani, 2015).

The principal, head of departments or simply the professional development committee should ideally review multiple types of student achievement data such as results from school-based assessments, samples of student work, projects and/or state assessment data as in Annual National Assessment (ANA). In addition, the committee may want to look at attendance data, discipline referrals and other data that might influence student learning.

Once the student learning needs have been identified to represent the long-term focus for professional learning, the next step in the process is to identify the learning needs of educators that will support these student-learning needs. Decisions about the knowledge and skills needed by the educators should be based on research and experience from successful practice (US Department of Education, 2013).

2.4.10 Specify who will benefit from the professional learning

It is important for professional development committees to consider which educators will benefit from the professional learning or how the learning opportunities may be tailored to address various developmental levels of educators with differing amounts of experience, knowledge and skills.

School leaders will be crucial to making decisions about the learning needs of individual educators, teams of educators or grade level or content specific educators. It is also important to ask educators about the kinds of learning they feel they need to support specific student learning in their classrooms. If the school is implementing a new comprehensive reform (such as e-learning) that is a departure from current practice, most or all of the educators will need some level of assistance in making the necessary changes in practice (US Department of Education, 2013).

2.4.11 Identify learning outcomes

The next move is to take the learning needs identified earlier and translate them into specific expectations for professional learning outcomes and indicators. At this stage, the committee will also begin thinking about when the outcomes will be achieved and how the professional learning will be evaluated to determine whether the participants achieved the intended outcomes.

At this point it is important to take note that participation in effective professional development may result in:

- New knowledge: - mastery of content, understanding of diverse student learning needs and styles, knowledge of cross curricular content etc.
- New professional skills: - instructional skills, assessment skills, effective communication etc.
- Application of new knowledge and skills.

According to US Department of Education (2013), professional learning indicators associated with desired outcomes specify levels of mastery and/or expected patterns of application and use of new knowledge and skills. To enable the committee to gauge the effectiveness of the professional learning, the indicators should be measurable or observable. It is appropriate that indicators specify measures or procedures for assessing mastery or application of new learning.

In this endeavour, specificity lends focus to the committee's thinking about the content, learning activities and follow-up learning opportunities necessary to help participants reach the intended outcomes. Specificity guides the evaluation plan and helps in the data collection process by giving direction as to what data will need to be collected and when it would be realistic and reasonable to collect this data. Furthermore, specificity also provides criteria to judge the success of the professional learning. The learners also need to know what is considered as evidence of success to help them clearly understand in advance the expectations of the learning (AL-Qahtani, 2015; Alzahrani,2016).

2.4.12 Specify the learning opportunities

The professional learning activities and related follow-ups should be described. Key to this step is ensuring that there is a match between the planned learning and the intended outcomes and indicators. If the expectation is that educators implement new learning activities in the classroom, but the plan only provides a presentation of the key features of the new programme and no follow-up learning activities, then it is unrealistic to expect implementation or any change in educator practice (US Department, 2013). “The traditional professional development workshops, conferences, graduate courses or professional meetings engaged without thorough school-based follow-ups, will result in no change in teacher practice nor results for students.” (McCutchen et al., 2009) quoted in US Department of Education (2013:92).

School leaders should contribute to the design of professional development activities. They should also help identify learning needs, identify which educators should participate as well as ensure that professional development programmes are focused on school improvement needs (Smith, DeVol & Stetson, 2003; Visser et al., 2013).

2.4.13 Identify the resources needed

School leaders facilitating educator participation should ensure that substantial time for learning and follow-up is provided and that there are adequate resources to support educator professional growth. Effective professional development requires resources as time, human resources, material resources, technology gadgets or equipment and fiscal investments (Smith et al., 2003). How resources are allocated can level the playing field by addressing inequities and achieving results for both students and educators. Careful planning can identify what resources are needed, where to best use these resources to significantly impact educator and student-learning (US Department of Education, 2013).

2.4.14 Identify how professional learning will be evaluated

Planning the evaluation of a continuous professional development programme should begin as soon as possible in a pre-implementation approach. The team responsible for the evaluation may include the principal, head of departments and the educators themselves to form the professional development committee. The evaluation team

may want to consult the Teacher Professional Development Evaluation Guide designed by Haslam (2010) in US Department of Education (2013:94):

- Designing evaluations
- Selecting instruments
- Preparing the evaluation team
- Collecting and analysing data
- Reporting
- Evaluation resources.

2.5 MODELS OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The approach to institute continuous professional development programmes in schools is through the guidance of some professional development packages in the form of models that have been tested and tried over time. The models discussed in this chapter are not all-inclusive, but they are considered to be potentially effective in implementing continuous professional development.

In real or true practice, models of educator professional development do not appear in isolation at implementation phase, but there might be some considerable overlap amongst them. It should be stressed here that it is not sufficient to learn mere models in isolation. Instead, these models must be in the context and totality of continuous professional development at large. Only then, can the engagement of models and the use of particular techniques, strategies or methods be determined.

Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) identify five models of professional development, namely, individually guided professional development, Observation/assessment, Involvement in a development/improved process, Training and Inquiry. The researcher herewith adopts and presents the five models and discuss the ideal operation of each one of these models in a school set-up.

2.5.1 Individually-guided professional development

Educators may learn and do learn many academic and professional aspects of their career on their own. Reading professional publications, discussing with colleagues or experimenting with new instructional strategies, are among such engagements (Malik,

2016). Such activities may occur with or without the existence of a formal professional development programme.

The key characteristic of the model is that the educator designs the learning. The educator is perceived to determine his or her own goals, and in the process, selects the activities that will result in goal achievement. The underlining assumption is that individuals can best judge their own learning needs and that they are capable of some sort of self-direction and self-initiated learning (Trotter, 2006). In other words, the model assumes that adults are likely to learn most effectively when they initiate, design and plan their learning activities as opposed to spending their time in activities that are perceived as less relevant than they themselves would design (Drago-Severson, 2008; Malik, 2016).

The proponents of this model seem to recognise that the circumstances that are most suitable for one person's professional growth or development may be quite different from those that promote another individual's growth. Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989:4) put it more candidly, by stating that, *"Consequently, individually-guided staff development allows teachers to find answers to self-selected professional problems using their preferred modes of learning*." As a result, individually guided professional development is likely to allow educators to find answers to self-selected professional problems using their preferred modes of learning.

2.5.2 Observation/Assessment

With this model, another educator or a group of fellow educators, the principal or head of department as the professional development providers observe educators at work for example, on lesson delivery. The lesson is observed and recorded, highlighting strengths, weaknesses and possible suggestions for improvement. A feedback must be provided at a later stage to reinforce on strong practices and to help educators improve upon their performance.

According to Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989:7), *"Observation and assessment of instruction provide the teacher with data that can be reflected upon and analysed for the purpose of improving student learning."* In other words, reflection and analysis of an educator's performance is hereby viewed as a means for professional growth when suggestions for improvement are put forward. The key assumption inherent in this

model is that reflection by an educator on his or her practice can be boosted or enhanced by another's observations (Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989). Teaching is typically an isolated profession-taking place more commonly in the presence of no other adults. This scenario renders educators unable to practically benefit from the observations of other colleagues. Nonetheless, when educators have *"another set of eyes"* a different view of how he or she is performing with learners or students is given (Burns, 2014: 2).

Yet another assumption is that observation and assessment of classroom teaching can benefit both parties involved, that is, the educator being observed and the observer. The educator benefits from receiving helpful feedback on his or her behaviour from a colleague. Further, the observer benefits from watching a colleague, preparing the feedback and discussing the common practice (Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989; Eliahoo, 2016).

Under this model, assessment is also extended to the student. Examining the student's work entails an educator collaborative on-going or formative assessment of the learner's work. The learner's work is examined in view of the way the educator would have designed and executed the teaching content or lesson. As a result, the lesson would be restructured in an attempt to improve educator and learner performance.

Burns (2014:3) clarifies by stating that, *"This type of professional development uses highly structured protocols that make the examination of student work non-threatening and keep the focus off what the teacher did or did not do and instead on evidence of student learning."*

It is hoped that when educators see positive results from their efforts to change, they are more likely to continue to engage in self-improvement to resultantly benefit the student. This theory is supported by research findings by (Guskey, 2002) in his 'Teacher Change Theory'.

Enshrined in observation and assessment is the lesson study approach. Educators hereby collectively and collaboratively plan, develop and improve upon a lesson. That is followed by field-testing the lesson in a classroom by observing it and making any necessary changes. Data is collected to see the impact of the lesson on student

learning. Usually this process is repeated over a period of months. Burns (2014) claims that lesson study has been shown and proven to improve the educators' design and instructional skills. All that is needed is to provide the educators with the time, resources and skilled facilitation needed to make it a success.

2.5.3 Involvement in a development/improvement process

According to Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989), educators are sometimes asked to develop or adapt curriculum, design programmes or engage in some systematic school improvement processes. The idea behind it is to improve classroom or curriculum. Such projects are ideally meant to solve some envisaged problem or problems. The successful completion of the projects would result in educators acquiring specific knowledge or skills such as in curriculum planning, research on effective teaching or group problem-solving strategies. The learning could be acquired through such approaches as in reading, discussion, observation or some other form of training. As is evident, this model tends to focus on a combination of a myriad of learning activities that would result from the involvement of educators in such development/improvement processes (Sparks and Loucks-Horsley, 1989).

Once more, the assumption is based on the notion that adults learn most effectively when they have a need to know or a problem to solve (Trotter, 2006). In other words, educator learning would be driven by the demands of problem solving. Another assumption of this model is that people in general, working closest to the job are better positioned to understand what is required to improve their performance. The educators' teaching experiences, therefore, guide them to frame problems and develop appropriate solutions.

One more assumption of this model is that educators acquire important knowledge and skills through their involvement in school improvement or curriculum development processes. Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) assert that such involvement may cause changes in attitudes or the acquisition of skills as individuals or groups work towards the solution of a common problem. The theory around this model is supported by researches carried out by Shawers (2002) as well as Glatthorn (1987) and Glickman (1986), both cited in Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989).

2.5.4 Training model

The educators attend workshop type sessions facilitated by a trainer who has the relevant expertise (Sparks & Loucks-Horsley, 1989). The activities may include lectures, demonstrations, microteaching or some role paying. The training sessions are conducted in pursuit of set objectives or goals. It is the facilitator or trainer's role to select the training activities such as in lectures, demonstrations, role-playing or simulation (Lee, 2005; Burns, 2014). Such activities would aid educators in achieving the desired outcomes.

The key assumption in this model is that there are behaviours and techniques that are worthy replicating in the classroom. Another assumption that undergirds the training model of professional development is that educators can change their behaviours and learn to replicate behaviours in their classroom that were not previously in their practice or repertoire. Inherent in this model is that training is a powerful process for enhancing knowledge and skills (Joyce & Showers, 2002).

The theory underpinning this model is supported by Burns (2014) study-group approach. In the study, the reading, discussions, writing and reflections are under the supervision and guidance of a skilled facilitator. Herein, critical issues are formally discussed amongst educator peers to benefit each other. In study groups, educators collaborate as a single large group or in smaller teams, to study a particular issue with the goal of solving a common problem or creating and implementing a plan to attain a common goal. It is interactive and problem-solving in nature (Burns, 2014).

Educator preparation aligned to the training model is designed for student educators or untrained educators awaiting training. The reality is that some schools employ unqualified, untrained or semi-trained educators (referred to in this study as student educators). These educators often are given same responsibilities and mandate to teach like any other professionally qualified educator, unless they are engaged as assistant educators.

The best educator-prep programmes emphasise subject matter and provide many opportunities for student educators to spend time in real classrooms under the supervision of an experienced mentor before they are released to stand on their own.

The idea is to allow the educator candidates the time to apply their learning of theory in the context of teaching in a real classroom.

Additionally, educator induction programmes are ideal for newly qualified educators. Support for beginning educators is often uneven and inadequate as they are assumed to be fully equipped and ready to execute their duties (Sparks, 2002; Kennedy, 2005; Edutopia, 2008). Newly qualified educators may be assigned to some challenging schools or classes with little supervision. The much younger and inexperienced educators may choose to leave the profession frustrated in response to being assigned to demanding school environments. Attention, therefore, must be paid to providing them with early and adequate support.

Edutopia (2008:1) underscores the above claim by stating that, *"Mentoring and coaching from veteran colleagues is critical to the successful development of a new teacher. Great induction programs create opportunities for novice teachers to learn from best practices and analyse and reflect on their teaching."*

The training model of professional development is universally recognisable (Edutopia, 2008; Burns, 2014). The model supports a skills-based technocratic view of teaching whereby professional development provides educators with the opportunity to update their skills in order to be able to demonstrate their competence (Kennedy, 2005; Burns, 2014). Prominent features include that an expert generally delivers it to the educator whereupon the expert determines the agenda. The educator (participant) is placed in a passive role. The training may take place at the school, but is most commonly delivered off-site and is often criticised for its lack of connection to the current classroom context in which participants work. Hoban (2002) in Kennedy (2005) put forward a claim that the training model is acknowledged as an effective means of introducing new knowledge.

2.5.5 Inquiry model

An individual educator or a group of teachers may do educator inquiry. It can take different forms. For instance, educators undertake to study basic classroom research techniques, formulate research questions, gather and analyse data, and use their findings to improve instruction in the classroom (Lee, 2005). A group of teachers may

gather weekly to examine the research on ability grouping or streaming, and their findings shared.

Loucks-Horsley (1987) quoted in Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989:18) put forward three assumptions about educator inquiry approach to professional development:

- Educators are intelligent, inquiring individuals with legitimate expertise and important experience.
- Educators are inclined to search for data to answer pressing questions and to reflect on the data to formulate solutions.
- Educators will develop new understandings as they formulate their own questions and collect their own data to answer them.

The model encourages cooperative study by educators themselves into problems and issues arising from their practice.

2.5.6 On-going professional development

It is critical for veteran educators to have on-going and regular opportunities to learn from each other. On-going professional development keeps up-to-date on new research on how children learn, emerging technology tools for the classroom, new curriculum resources, and more. Edutopia (2008: 1) posits, *"The best professional development is on-going, experiential, collaborative and connected to and derived from working with students and understanding their culture."* This model appears to embrace all the models put forward by Sparks and Loucks-Horsley (1989) and Burns (2014).

Educators may also engage in what is referred to as open-classrooms. Educators see other educators in action. Educators create lessons and invite colleagues to observe the lesson and provide feedback in a post-observation session. The focus of open classroom is on educator behaviour. Gaible and Burns (2007) cited in Burns (2014) asserts that when the observation is followed by structured discussion and information sharing after watching more skilled colleagues in action, it tends to benefit both parties – those conducting the lesson and those observing.

2.5.7 The award-bearing model

An award-bearing model of professional development relies on and emphasises on the completion of award-bearing programmes of study. Such studies are usually (but

not exclusively) validated by universities or some tertiary college. According to Kennedy (2005), this external validation can be viewed as a mark of quality control. It may also be viewed as the exercise of control by the validating or funding bodies.

Kennedy (2005) cites Solomon and Tresman (1999) as pointing out those award-bearing courses need to be focused on classroom practice, on issues of value and relevance to the teaching and learning of the student.

2.5.8 The deficit model

Continuous professional development can be designed specifically to address a perceived deficit in educator performance as in performance appraisals. The model, therefore, can be viewed as a means of raising standards in educator performance and student achievement. According to Kennedy (2005), performance appraisal requires that somebody take charge of evaluating and managing change in educator performance by attempting to remedy perceived weaknesses in individual educator performance. However, what is not always clear is what the expectations are for competent performance and whose notion of competence they reflect (Kennedy, 2005; Elliot, 2015).

Kennedy (2005) in reference to Rhodes and Beneicke (2003) claims suggests that the root causes of poor educator performance are related not only to individual educators, but also to organisational and management practices. To attribute blame to individual educators, and to view professional development as a means of remedying individual weaknesses, suggests a model whereby due cognisance on collective responsibility is not considered (Kennedy, 2005; Sammons & Bakkum, 2011; Elliot, 2015).

2.5.9 The cascade model

The term cascade literally refers to a process whereby something (typically information or knowledge) is successfully passed on or disseminated. The cascade model involves individual educators attending training events and then cascading or disseminating the information to colleagues. It is commonly employed in situations where resources are scarce or limited (Kennedy, 2005). Solomon and Tresman (1999) in Kennedy (2005) suggest that one of the drawbacks of this model, however, is that what is passed on in the cascading process is generally skills-focused or knowledge-based, but rarely focuses on values. This is an argument that is also articulated by Nieto (2003) cited in

Kennedy (2005), when she claims that educator education needs to shift from a focus on questions of “what” and “how” to also consider questions of “why.”

It could therefore be argued that the cascade model supports a “technicist” view of teaching, where skills and knowledge are given priority over attitudes and values (Kennedy, 2005; Elliot, 2015).

2.5.10 The standards-based model

The terminology “standards” may interchangeably be used with “competences.” The chief feature of this model is in that it represents a desire to create a system of teaching and educator education that can generate and validate the connections between educator effectiveness and student achievement (Beyer, 2002) in Kennedy (2005). “Standards” also provide some form of benchmark or yardstick or common language, thereby making it easier for educators to engage in dialogue about their professional practice (Kennedy, 2005). In other words, the standards-based model may bring some form of uniformity in the professional development of educators.

Critics of this model, such as Beyer (2002) cited in Kennedy (2005), disagree with the mode of operation inherent in this model in that it relies heavily on a behaviourist perspective of learning; focusing on the competence of individual educators and resultant rewards at the expense of collaborative and collegiate learning.

2.5.11 The coaching/mentoring model

The coaching/mentoring model appears to cover a whole range of professional development models that have already been discussed in this chapter; as most professional development programmes have a lot to do with some coaching or mentoring of some sort. However, the defining characteristic of this model is the importance of the one-on-one relationship between two educators (Kennedy, 2005). Coaching is more skills-based, whereas mentoring involves an element of counselling and professional friendship (Rhodes & Beneicke, 2002) in Kennedy (2005). Mentoring also often implies a relationship where one partner is novice and the other more experienced (Clutterbuck, 2002) cited in Kennedy (2005).

The mentoring or coaching relationship can be collegiate as in peer coaching. However, it is probably more likely to be hierarchical as in novice/experienced educator mentoring relationship. The novice/experienced educator model is akin to

apprenticeship; where the experienced educator initiates the novice educator into the profession. In direct contrast, the coaching/mentoring model involves a more equitable relationship. According to Kennedy (2005:243), it allows for the two educators involved to, *"… discuss possibilities, beliefs and hopes in a less hierarchically threatening manner."* Ideally, two or more educators, in confidence, work together as colleagues. They could share ideas, teach one another or collaboratively solve problems within the workplace. Furthermore, the colleagues could expand, refine or build new skills, or conduct research in their teaching endeavour.

2.5.12 The community of practice model.

There is a clear relationship between communities of practice and the mutually supportive and challenging form of the coaching/mentoring model discussed above. Kennedy (2005), however, picks up an essential difference in that a community of practice generally involves more than two people, and would not necessarily rely on confidentiality. Learning within a community of practice happens because of that community and its interactions. Boreham (2000) in Kennedy (2005) highlights the added value of learning in communities (considering the existence of individual knowledge and the combinations of several individuals' knowledge through practice) coming as a powerful ingredient for the creation of new knowledge.

In a school set-up, the community of practice can act as a powerful ingredient of transformation, whereupon the sum total of individual knowledge and experience of educators is enhanced significantly through collective endeavour (Kennedy, 2005).

2.5.13 The action research model

In action research study, the participants involve themselves as researchers with a view to improve the quality of action within it (Kennedy, 2005). Advocates of the action research model Weiner (2002), Burbank, and Kauchack (2003) cited in Kennedy (2005), tend to suggest that it has a greater impact on practice when it is shared in communities of practice or enquiry.

Burbank and Kauchack (2003) in Kennedy (2005) argue that collaborative action research provides an alternative to the passive role imposed on educators in traditional models of professional development. They advocate that educators be encouraged to view research as a process as opposed to merely a product of someone else's endeavours. It is also, arguably, a means of limiting dependency on externally

produced research such as those coming from universities. The action research model tends to shift the balance of power towards educators themselves through their identification and implementation of relevant research activities (Kennedy, 2005). Furthermore, action research as a model of professional development has been acknowledged as being successful in allowing educators to ask critical questions of their practice.

2.5.14 The transformative model

The transformative model of professional development tends to involve a combination of a number of aspects, processes and conditions, which are drawn from other models outlined in this study. Kennedy (2005) asserts that it is chiefly characterised by a combination of practices and conditions that support a transformative agenda. In this sense, it could be argued that the transformative model is not a clearly definable model in itself; rather it recognises the range of different conditions required for transformative practice (Kennedy, 2005).

It could be argued further, that one of the key characteristics of the transformative model is its integration of the range of models described above, together with a real sense of awareness of power issues, that is, whose agendas are being addressed through the process (Kennedy, 2005). Nieto (2003) in Kennedy (2005) pointed out that this model is not so much evident in schools, except for limited small-scale research activities featuring in academic literature.

Like other teaching and learning processes and experiences, professional development cannot be handled by an isolated strategy or model. Lee (2005) hereby presents a model of the Teacher Needs-Based (TNB) professional development programme. The TNB is deliberately designed to fulfil educators' needs, which reflect their personal shortcomings or deficiencies in content, students' needs and/ or education policy (Lee, 2005). In his research, the primary goal of TNB, according to Lee (2005:41) was, *"…to deepen the participating teachers' conceptual understanding of mathematics content knowledge and pedagogical content knowledge by exposing them to innovative and creative approaches that necessitate active participation in developing mathematics concepts."*

The TNB professional development programmes should be decided upon based on educators' inputs. Belcastro and Isaacson (1992) cited in Lee (2005) called for a TNB

professional development programme that is responsive to the intrinsic needs of educators to be more productive. In other words, educator professional growth is most possible when a professional development programme responds to educators' needs. Educators themselves need to determine what students already know and what they still need to know. Information on student needs may be identified through a variety of classroom assessments or routines such as through written or oral tests, conversations or observations. In other words, educators need to focus on areas of weak student performance, as well as their own understanding of teaching concepts and pedagogical techniques to improve those areas of deficiency (Lee, 2005).

The TNB model is best effected through workshops conducted through discussions, collaborative group work, hands-on activities, problem-solving opportunities, reflections and presentations by participants. Further, approaches may include additional reading materials for educators, developing lesson plans or solving teaching problems with invented ways (Lee, 2005).

2.6 EVALUATION OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGAMMES

After implementing a professional development programme, a question that might appeal to the professional developer could be, *"Did the programme serve the purpose for which it was designed?"* That calls for the evaluation of the professional development programme. Evaluation has to determine the effectiveness of the programme so that future programmes can be improved.

2.6.1. The importance of evaluations.

It is crucial to assess the effectiveness of professional development and learn whether what schools are doing makes a difference for the educator. Results would also show what effect professional development programmes had on learner success.

Rovai (2003) cited in Visser et al. (2013:93) views evaluation as, *"… an essential component of programme improvement and renewal and long-term success."* In simple terms, evaluation is the systematic investigation of merit or worth of a professional development programme (Guskey, 2000). According to Guskey (2000), systematic implies a planned, well thought-out, focused and deliberate or intentional process. In other words, evaluations are conducted for clear reasons and intentions. Collection and analysis of data through proven appropriate methods and techniques

renders the process investigative in nature. Judgment is attached in evaluations to determine the value, worth or merit of the programme. Guskey (2000:46) posed questions such as:

- *"Is this program or activity achieving its intended results?"*
- *"Is it better than what was done in the past?"*
- *"Is it better than another competing activity?"*
- *"Is it worth the costs?"*

In a school set up, evaluation of a professional development programme would enable principals and educators alike to determine if the intended learning goals, objectives and general outcomes of the professional development were met. Furthermore, an evaluation would allow schools to discover if the needs and desires of the participants were also fulfilled. Put simply, an evaluation can show principals and educators what went according to plan, what did not and where opportunities for growth are (Haslam, 2010; Harris et al., 2017).

2.6.2. Purposes of evaluation

Evaluation instruments may be deliberately crafted or designed to source or collect precise pertinent information. With ideas sourced from Guskey (2002), particular instruments may be employed to gather information used to:

- Convince the funding source that money is well spent.
- Show that the needs of the programmes are being met.
- Indicate whether a particular resource person was effective.
- Lead the development to other follow-up activities.
- Demonstrate that participants have acquired information, gained a skill, perfected an attitude and changed or benefited from participation.
- Provide evidence that student achievement has increased.

Smith et al (2003:3) identified two major purposes of professional development programme evaluation thus as discussed below.

2.6.2.1 External reporting

Schools account for professional development expenditures and so evaluate the effectiveness of the programme to justify programme funding to their funding sources such as the Department of Education, school development committees or to the responsible authorities of the schools. By proving that the needs of the programme are being met, schools can convince the funding source that money was well spent.

2.6.2.2 Internal programme improvement

It is necessary to continually improve professional development programmes by assessing strengths and weaknesses of the principals as well as monitor the performance of educators for whom the programmes were designed. Evaluations would also ascertain the extent of gain and give direction to programme modification.

The effect of professional development can be assessed at four levels, based on models for evaluating training by Kirkpatrick (1998) and Phillips (1997) in Smith et al (2003:3). The guiding questions in evaluating would be:

- *How did participants react to the development activity?* Evaluators want to find out how well the participants have liked the programme. Since the participants are the consumers of the service, their perceptions are an important and accurate indication of quality. These reactions are usually obtained when participants complete a questionnaire at the end of a workshop or a training programme (Smith et al., 2003).
- *What did they learn?* It is crucial to ascertain to what extent the participants learnt and retained the information presented in the professional development programme. How well participants grasp specific information should be evaluated just as students' acquisition of knowledge and skills (Smith et al, 2003).
- *What changes did they make in their behaviour and attitudes?* There is need to establish to what extent the behaviour of the participants changed because of the programme. Change in behaviour can be confidently assessed by a self-report questionnaire where participants assess their own changes in behaviour. Observation is yet another method of evaluating objectively any changes in behaviour. Behaviour is a legitimate area of focus in any evaluation of a

professional development programme. Professional development either way reflect in the staffs' overt, as well as covert behaviour (Smith et al., 2003).

- *What were the effects of their training on students and the organisation?* Results achieved from the programme need to be established to determine, if it results in more collegiality, reduced costs, improved productivity or more student learning among other things. Professional development programmes are important because they determine the performance of an organisation. Evaluators then want to find out whether the school actually performs more efficiently because of the training effort or they are due to other factors. The cost-benefit analysis in education may be rarely considered, but it is important to consider it here since most professional development programmes come at a cost to the school (Smith et al., 2003).

Guskey (2002) is also of the view that the financial investment into professional development programmes needed to be assessed to establish if it yielded tangible payoffs; or maybe that money could be spent in better ways.

Mullins et al. (2010) summarise the purpose of evaluation in professional development in that:

- it can provide information on the effectiveness of specific professional development offerings,
- it can help professional development facilitators improve their offerings
- it can help inform professional development consumers in selecting appropriate trainings to improve their programme's performance.

Concisely, the purpose of evaluation is highlighted in its provision of diagnostic and interim data for feedback at every stage, that is, pre-implementation/planning stage, formative evaluation and summative evaluation stages. Evaluation enables continuous assessment of strengths and weaknesses of leadership as well as the performance of those for whom the objectives and programmes have been designed (Haslam, 2010; Harris et al., 2017).

2.6.3. Forms of evaluation

Haslam (2010:8) and Guskey (2000:3) similarly identify three broad forms of evaluation.

2.6.3.1 Pre-implementation and early evaluation

This evaluation is intended to establish the readiness of the programme by checking if, for example, funds are available, material resources are in place, human resources (such as facilitators or trainers) are available, and if sufficient time has been put aside or budgeted for. The evaluation would also gauge educator readiness and satisfaction with the professional development (Haslam, 2010). Early evaluation would help determine if professional development took place as planned. Whether educators mastered the new basic knowledge and skills, and whether the educators applied the knowledge and skills in the classroom (Guskey, 2000; Haslam, 2010).

Planning evaluation takes place before a programme or activity actually begins. It is designed to give those involved in programme development a precise understanding of what is to be accomplished and what procedures will be used (Guskey, 2000; Guskey, 2002). In essence, it is used to determine success and to lay groundwork for all other evaluation activities (Guskey, 2000; Mullins et al., 2010). Guskey (2000:3) further asserts that, *"It typically includes a determination of needs, assessment of the characteristics of participants, careful analysis of the context, and the collection of pertinent baseline information."* Concisely, it helps to identify and render early remedies on the possible difficulties that might plague later evaluation efforts.

2.6.3.2 Formative evaluation

In other terms, this is referred to as on-going or continuous evaluation. It occurs during the operation of an activity or programme. Formative evaluation is intended to assist professional development participants, facilitators, providers and sponsors determine whether the programme is on track, or whether mid-course changes are necessary to achieve intended outcomes (Haslam, 2010; Harris et al., 2017).

According to Guskey (2000), the most useful formative evaluations focus on the conditions for success by answering question such as; What conditions are necessary for success? Have they been met? Can they be improved upon? Guskey (2000)

further asserts that formative evaluation is a recurring process that takes place multiple times throughout the life of a professional development programme. Flaws at implementation can then be identified and ideally, weaknesses located in time to make the adaptations necessary for success.

2.6.3.3 Summative evaluation

This is supposed to be the final evaluation occurring at the end of the programme, referred to as impact evaluation in other terms. It provides evidences as to the overall effectiveness of the programme and offers a review of the total operation in terms of design and implementation. It is at this point, possible to make judgments on the possible success or failure of subsequent programmes. At this stage, stakeholders need to understand whether the professional development achieved the intended outcomes as these outcomes are reflected in changes in the educator's professional practice and student learning (Smith et al., 2003; Haslam, 2010; US Department of Education, 2013).

Guskey (2000) further clarifies the precise purpose of summative evaluation by stating that, unlike formative evaluation that is used to guide improvements, summative evaluations present decision-makers with information they need to make crucial decisions about the life of a programme. Her questions posed could be framed thus; should it be continued, continued with modifications, expanded or discontinued? (Haslam, 2010; Mullins et al., 2010).

2.6.4. Evaluation strategies

Smith et al (2003:13) provide nine strategies hereby reproduced by the researcher:

2.6.4.1 Participant feedback

Participants may be asked to report on their experiences at various stages on;

- How the events met their expectations and individual needs.
- What they learnt from the programme.
- What they expect to use in their jobs.
- How, if at all, their opinions or attitudes changed.
- What they actually acquired and used in teaching (specify).

- What impact changes had on students and the school in general? (Smith et al, 2003).

2.6.4.2 Classroom assessment techniques

Ask students were applicable questions such as, "*What was the most important part of this programme? What was the least important part? What would you like more of or less of the programme? What unanswered questions do you still have from the programme?"* (Smith et al, 2003:13)

2.6.4.3 Surveys

Surveys are commonly used to gather information and opinions from a wide variety of people. Surveys may include open-ended questions, multiple-choice formats, or rating scales. Open-ended surveys can provide valuable and often unexpected information. Surveys that incorporate multiple choice questions or rating scales are much easier to respond and analyse (Smith et al, 2003).

2.6.4.4 Institutional data

Most schools routinely generate reports on student performance, student progression and retention or student and staff diversity. If the professional development goals are to improve student performance, examining these data over several months or years can tell whether change has occurred (Smith et al, 2003).

2.6.4.5 Focus groups and interviews

Individual interviews and focus groups are used to assess both needs and outcomes. Both require careful planning. The interviewer or group leader must be skilled and willing to probe for further information. Interviews and focus groups are time-consuming but make it possible to gather high quality information on professional development needs or impact of a programme (Smithson, 2000; Hannock et al., 2009; Ruiz, 2017).

2.6.4.6 Using technology

Email lists and websites make conducting surveys, soliciting feedback and analysing data much easier than before. Surveys and evaluation forms can be posted and completed online, thereby making it much easier than paper/pencil forms to collate and analyse responses (Smith et al, 2003).

2.6.4.7 Professional consultants

Professionals with expertise in areas to be evaluated may be asked to observe, critique, and provide feedback on certain aspects of the programme. Some externally funded programmes require an evaluator because the results will be perceived as more objective than in-house evaluation Smith et al, 2003).

2.6.4.8 Observations

Some changes are observable such as in the ability to manipulate electronic notebooks. Routine observations may also indicate changes in performance that may have occurred because of professional development (Smith et al, 2003).

2.6.4.9 Control groups

Compare those who participated to those who did not on some aspect, for example, in testing proficiency in using the internet, compared to a group that has no internet access. Specifically, designed questionnaires or observations may be conducted to determine if there are differences between those who participated and those who did not (Smith et al, 2003).

Killion (2002:1-3) proposes an 8-step process for measuring impact in evaluating a professional development programme:

Step 1: Assess evaluability

Evaluators examine the design of the professional development programme to determine its likelihood of producing the intended results. They scrutinise the programme's goals, objectives, standards and indicators of success, theory of change and logic model. Evaluators also ask about the programme's feasibility, clarity, strength and worth. If, after that analysis, the programme is deemed evaluable, the evaluator moves ahead to step 2. If the programme is deemed not evaluable, the

evaluator encourages the programme's designers to revise the programme (Killion, 2002).

Step 2: Formulate evaluation questions

Evaluators design the formative and summative questions, which focus on the initial and intermediate outcomes and the programme's goals and objectives. By asking questions about results, for example, "*Did teachers use the strategies? Did student work demonstrate evidence of teachers' application of strategies rather than services?"* Evaluators can measure impact rather than programme delivery (Killion, 2002).

Step 3: Construct the evaluation framework

Evaluators determine what evidence to collect, from whom, what sources to collect the evidence, how to collect the evidence, and how to analyse the evidence (Killion, 2002).

Step 4: Collect data

Evaluators use the data collection methods determined in step 3 to collect evidence to answer the evaluation questions (Killion, 2002).

Step 5: Organise and analyse data

Evaluators organise and analyse collected data and display analysed data in multiple formats to use in step 6 (Killion, 2002).

Step 6: Interpret data

Stakeholders and evaluators work together to interpret data to make sense of it. They draw conclusions, assign meanings and formulate recommendations. Including stakeholders in this process is essential because their participation expands and enhances the meaning of the data (Killion, 2002).

Step 7: Report findings

Evaluators report findings and make recommendations in formats sensitive to the needs of multiple audiences. Rather than a single technical report, evaluators prepare multiple reports of varied lengths and in varied levels of sophistication and formats (Killion, 2002).

Step 8: Evaluate the evaluation

The evaluator analyses his or her own evaluation methodology, process, resources, skills and so forth. As a reflective practitioner, the evaluator looks back at the work done and identifies its strengths and areas for continued refinement and growth (Killion, 2002).

Guskey (2002) developed a five-level model for evaluating professional development. The levels in this model are hierarchically arranged from simple to complex, with each higher-level building on the ones before it. The more basic level of positive appreciation for the professional development programme is therefore necessary for positive results at the higher evaluation results (Visser et al., 2013).

Figure 1 below, adopted from Guskey (2002:48) illustrates how the five levels could be utilised in evaluating professional development

FIVE LEVELS OF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION

Evaluation Level	What Questions Are Addressed?	How Will Information Be Gathered?	What Is Measured/ Assessed?	How Will Info Be Used?
1Participants' Reactions	Did they like it? Was their time well spent? Did the material make sense? Will it be useful? Was the leader knowledgeable and helpful? Were your personal needs met?	Questionnaires administered at the end of the session.	Initial satisfaction with the experience.	To improve program design and delivery.
2Participants' Learning	Did participants acquire the intended knowledge and skills.	Paper and pencil instruments. Simulations. Demonstrations Participant reflections. Participant portfolios	New knowledge and skills of participant	To improve program content, format, and organization.
3Organization Support & Change	Was implementation advocated, facilitated & supported? Was the support public & overt? Were problems addressed quickly & efficiently? Were sufficient resources made available?	School records. Minutes from follow-up meetings. Questionnaires. Structured interviews with participants. Participant portfolios.	The school's advocacy, support, accommodation, facilitation & recognition.	To document & improve school support. To inform future change efforts.

	Were successes recognized & shared? What was the impact on the organization? Did it affect the organization's climate and procedures?			
4Participants' Use of New Knowledge & Skills.	Did participants effectively apply the new knowledge and skills?	Questionnaires. Structured interviews with participants & their supervisors. Participant reflections. Participant portfolios. Direct observations. Video or audio tapes.	Degree and quality of implementation.	Document and improve the implementation of program content.
5Student Learning Outcomes	What was the impact on students? Did it affect student performance or achievement? Did it influence students' physical or emotional well-being? Are students more confident as learners? Is student attendance improving? Are dropouts decreasing?	Student records School records Questionnaires Structured interviews with students, parents, teachers and/or administrators. Participant portfolios.	Student learning outcomes: Cognitive (Performance & Achievement) Affective (Attitudes & Dispositions) Psychomotor (Skills & Behaviours)	To focus & improve all aspects of program design, implementation & follow-up. To demonstrate the overall impact of professional development.

Table 2.6.4.9.1 Source: Guskey (2002:48).

Haslam (2010:9) offers four considerations or guiding assumptions about evaluating teacher professional development:

- No single best approach to evaluation exists.
- Evaluation planning should be an integral part of professional development planning.
- Educators have key roles to play in evaluating professional development.
- Evaluations of educator professional development should be separate and distinct from educator performance appraisals.

US Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (2013:105) in summary, put forward four broad questions that should be considered in evaluating the success of professional development programmes;

- How did students improve because of the professional learning you implemented in your classroom?
- What is the measurable, convincing evidence of educator growth and gains in student achievement?
- How will you use the results from the evaluation to modify or eliminate ineffective strategies or expand effective ones?
- How will you use this year's results to plan for next year?

Professional development evaluation is an essential component of programme improvement and renewal and long-term success (Rovai, 2003) in Visser et al., 2013). If the professional development programme fails to satisfy participants' needs, a determination should be made as to whether that was due to the design or the delivery of the professional development programme (Visser et al., 2013; Harris et al., 2017).

2.7 Impediments on success of professional development

Guskey and Yoon (2009) assert that research syntheses confirm the difficulty of translating professional development into student achievement gains despite the intuitive and logical connection. The complaints about professional development have been well documented and most often cite several shortcomings, barriers or impediments that tend to militate against effective and efficient implementation of educator continuous professional development programmes.

Insufficient time leading to hurriedly put-up professional development programmes tend to compromise on the effectiveness of the programmes (Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Gates & Gates, 2014). Time is essential to effective professional development, and obviously, educators need time to deepen their understanding, analyse students' work and develop new approaches to instruction (Guskey, 2003; Cole, 2004; Macheng, 2016; Moonasar & Underwood, 2018). However, significant contrary evidence exists on abundant supply of time in implementing professional development. For instance, a research analysis showed that differences in time spent in professional development activities were unrelated to improvements in student outcomes (Guskey, 2003). In other words, the amount of time spent in professional development was unrelated to achievement. While effective professional development surely requires time, it is clear that the time must be well organised, carefully structured and purposefully directed (Guskey, 2003).

Research on educators, according to Guskey (2003), shows that individual educators can collaborate to block change or inhibit progress just as easily as they can to enhance efficient process of professional development. Mainly, educators value opportunities to work together, reflecting on their practices by sharing strategies and exchanging ideas in promoting collegiality and collaboration. For collaboration to bring its intended benefits, it too needs to be structured and purposeful, with efforts guided by clear goals for improving student learning (Guskey, 2003; Berry et al., 2010; Burns; 2015).

Educators in undeveloped to developing countries or nations referred to as Third World, tend to face enormous barriers to quality professional development. Burns (2015:2) referred to such environments as, *"…fragile and crisis contexts…*" Burns (2015) identified four barriers to educators' professional development in fragile contexts as listed and expounded below.

2.7.1 Difficult working conditions

Low, delayed or irregular remuneration, overcrowded classrooms and lack of teaching and learning materials may all contribute to difficult working conditions. Such conditions (both discretely and cumulatively) are often highly demotivating for educators and tend to affect educator characteristics, which are critical to effective teaching performance. Some educators become educators by necessity, and not by

design. Such educators may lack a strong professional identity or the desire to strengthen that identity, even in environments where respect for educators is high and even where education is seen as important or restorative (Guskey, 2003; Ingvarson et al., 2005; Burns, 2015).

Furthermore, if educators are poorly prepared for their profession and receive little or inadequate professional support, they may lack confidence particularly so if they teach students with acute emotional and academic needs. Burns (2015) asserts that such calibre of educators may doubt their own efficacy or ability to produce an intended result. As a result, student-educator relationships and the quality of teaching and learning may be undermined thereby compromising on student learning.

Burns (2015) put forward a claim that difficult working conditions, low status, gender bias, amongst others, often prompt educators to look for alternative work or resist any attempts to enhance increased professionalism. Educators may view professional development as not resulting in their improvement in their own practice or leading to promotion.

2.7.2 Systematic challenges

Fragile education systems are often characterised by poor leadership, limited administrative capacity or inadequate budgets. Any attempts at professionally developing educators may render the effects nullified by problems associated with low quality and a limited variety of the tools used to observe and supervise educators and provide them with feedback about their teaching (Caena, 2011; Burns, 2015).

2.7.3 Conflict

Not every country is in literal conflict. However, professional development, for instance, offered to one social group at the exclusion of another may actually contribute to the exacerbation of some form of tension (Burns, 2015). Racially segregated communities or inherited racially discriminatory tendencies (as is in almost all post-colonial states in Africa) are a potential for conflict.

2.7.4 Poorly designed professional development

Poorly designed professional development programmes often are characterised by budget constraints, the lack of qualified facilitators, volatility and a host of other

logistical challenges (Ingarson et al., 2005). Burns (2015) claims that policy makers and donors may often have a misunderstanding about the best practices around educator learning. Continuous professional development programmes disconnected from policies around educator recruitment, assessment, retention and support may be futile (Guskey & Yoon, 2009; DeMonte, 2013). Such programmes may be viewed by educators as low quality or irrelevant.

DeMonte (2013:4) put forward shortcomings in effecting professional development programmes that tend to impede against efficient implementation;

- When it is usually disconnected from the everyday practice of teaching. Such kinds of training programmes are unlikely to positively influence teaching and improve student learning. Professional learning should honour the expertise of educators by taking into consideration educator prior knowledge and skills.
- When it is too generic and unrelated to the curriculum or to the specific instructional challenges that educators face. Ideally professional development programmes need to be aligned to the curriculum, school goals, assessment and other professional learning activities.
- When it is infrequent and implemented as a one-time event or led by an outside consultant who drops in to conduct a workshop and never returns to the school. Continuous professional development activities should include follow-up and continuous feedback.

Based upon a research conducted by Gates and Gates (2014), both educators and school administrators identified a number of barriers to moving closer to their ideal professional learning experiences. For educators, the most often-cited barriers are insufficient time, lack of financial resources to pay for the professional development they needed, learning that is not customised enough to the content they teach. Together with, the skills they need to develop, and a lack of continuity between professional development sessions (Ingvarson et al., 2005; Guskey &Yoon, 2009; Gates and Gates, 2014; Macheng, 2016). School administrators mostly cited a lack of time, training and resources as key barriers.

Below is a list of research responses established by Gates and Gates (2014:12), indicating barriers to effective professional development of educators. The top three were the most cited, with the bottom three being the least cited.

- There is not enough time built into educators' schedules for professional development.
- School administrative tasks make it difficult for school leaders to spend enough time on instruction.
- School leaders do not have enough time to support educator professional development effectively.
- School leaders do not receive enough training and support on how to develop the professional development at schools.
- School leaders have not received enough training on how to provide coaching and feedback to educators.
- School leaders do not have a clear understanding of the development needs of specific educators.
- The district (Department) does not allocate sufficient financial resources to professional development.
- The district's (Department) professional development priorities change too often.
- Finding the right external professional development resources for schools is very challenging.
- District leadership does not make professional development a priority.
- External professional development providers are of poor quality.

A study conducted by Macheng (2016) on barriers of continuing professional development of educators in junior secondary schools in Botswana established the following as major barriers.

2.7.5 Time constraints

It emerged that time is a constraint with regard to professional development of educators (Guskey, 2000; Guskey, 2003; Darling-Hammond & Richardson, 2009; Burns, 2015). Sufficient time should be availed for educators to engage in professional development programmes. In addition, educators need abundant time to make professional development an on-going part of their work on a daily basis.

Nevertheless, educators in countries such as Germany, Japan and China have significant amount of time to engage in professional development activities Macheng, 2016). In these countries, educators have smaller classes enabling them to spend part of the day conferring with students and colleagues on professional development matters.

2.7.6 Financial constraints

Inadequate funding of educator development activities was also identified by the study as one of the barriers to professional development of educators. The situation is made worse in situations where the government through the Department of Education may be the sole funder of professional development of educators.

2.7.7 Lack of support by school leadership

Unsupportive school leadership emerged as one of the barriers of the professional development of educators. One of the key roles of instructional leaders is to avail opportunities for educators to grow professionally. Support by school management is critical in promoting educator development and high-quality education (Macheng, 2016). When the school leadership is weak, it also tends to weaken the educators' morale and services (Berry et al., 2010).

2.7.8 Lack of expertise

Lack of trained personnel to manage professional development programmes is another issue of concern. According to Macheng (2016), education managers are essential in capacitating school management. Their responsibility is to interpret and supervise the implementation of educational policy at their level of administration. They are expected to guide, direct and advise educators on professional development matters (Guskey, 2003; Cole, 2004; DeMonte, 2013). However, for the principals or other school managers to deliver on their mandate, they need themselves to be knowledgeable and skilled for the job.

2.7.9 Lack of ownership by educators

Another barrier to professional development established by the study is lack of educator ownership of professional development initiatives. Educators were of the view that they had minimal to no input in the decisions about “what?” and “how?” of the professional development activities they had to participate in (Guskey & Yoon, 2009; Berry et al., 2010; Caena, 2011). One of the critical assumptions of the adult learning theory is that adults have a deep need to be self-directing as active participants in the learning process (Trotter, 2006; Malik, 2016). Put in another way, adult learners (educators) dislike circumstances in which they feel that other people are imposing their will on them.

2.7.10 Unstructured in-service programmes

Unstructured in-service programmes also surfaced as barriers of professional development of educators. Currently there is no policy framework at national level in Botswana, which directs continuing professional development of teachers (Macheng, 2016). However, South Africa has such policy frameworks.

2.8 CONCLUSION

The study of related literature has attempted to show that there are a number of studies that have been undertaken on professional development of educators. The issue has been to review related literature, which sheds light on what could be done to effectively professionally develop educators.

If it is acknowledged that an improvement in educator practice signals that an educator has developed professionally, then it is also possible to contend that any action that improves educators’ effectiveness at promoting student learning is some kind of professional development. From the literature presented in this chapter, it seems obvious that improved educator practice can result from a broad range of activities and events. Formal and informal CPD engagements are some of many learning opportunities available to educators. Having presented a review of related literature, the study proceeded to chapter 3 which focused on the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of educational research is to discover new knowledge about teaching, learning, administration and other educational phenomena. The new knowledge is ideally envisaged as valuable because it is expected to eventually lead to the improvement of educational practice. One way to classify research involves the qualitative-quantitative distinction. These terms refer to the research process and to the kinds of data in which research results. The purpose of each method is to gather data to achieve the purpose of the research.

This research adopted and engaged the qualitative research approach. The chapter discussed all the technological aspects that guided the research process. These included the research approach, research paradigm, research design, and collection of data, data analysis, target population, sampling, and quality control through triangulation, credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability and ethical consideration.

3.2. RESEARCH APPROACH

3.2.1 Qualitative research approach

The study was based on qualitative research approach. Education involves complex human interactions that can rarely be studied or explained in simple terms (Anderson, 2010; Sutton & Austin, 2015). Complex educational situations or circumstances equally demand complex understanding; thus, the scope of educational research can be extended by the use of qualitative methods. Anderson (2010) claims that qualitative research can provide a better understanding of the nature of educational problems and thus add to teaching and learning insights in a number of contexts. Denzin and Lincoln (2000) underscore this assertion by pointing out that qualitative methods generate rich detailed data that leave the participants' perspectives intact and provide multiple contexts for understanding the phenomenon under study.

Throughout the twentieth century, qualitative research methods developed, evolved, diversified and became more widely adopted and adapted across the social sciences.

Within sociology and anthropology, early qualitative research often took the form of ethnography, which involves the understanding of beliefs and values and shared behaviours of particular social groups or cultures through involving oneself by immersion in their community (Ormston et al., 2013). Sociology also saw the influence of phenomenology (describing the meaning people attach to particular phenomenon, concept or idea). Other predominant methodologies within the traditions and approaches to qualitative research include; conversation analysis, discourse analysis, protocol analysis, interpretive phenomenological analysis, symbolic interactionism, grounded theory, ethogenics, narrative analysis, constructionism, critical theory and participatory action research (Ormston et al., 2013).

3.2.1.1 The nature of qualitative research

Qualitative research is a type of social science research that collects and works with non-numerical data and that seeks to interpret meaning from that data which would in turn help humanity to understand social life through the study of social groups (Crossman, 2017). People are often tempted to frame it in opposition to quantitative research; which uses numerical data to identify large-scale trends and employs statistical operations to determine causal and correlative relationships between variables (Sharma, 2010; Moriarty, 2011; Sutton & Austin, 2015; Rahman, 2017). According to Moriarty (2011: 13), qualitative research embraces those aims, which are directed at providing, *"…an in-depth and interpreted understanding of the social world of research participants by learning about their social and material circumstances, their experiences, perspectives and histories."* In other words, qualitative research involves the collection, analysis and interpretation of data that are not easily reduced to numbers.

Qualitative research is concerned with developing explanations of social phenomena. That is to say, it aims to help us to understand the social world in which we live, and why things are the way they are. According to Hancok, Ockleford and Windridge (2009:7), qualitative research is concerned with the social aspects of our world and seeks to answer questions about;

- Why people behave the way they do.
- How opinions and attitudes are formed.
- How people are affected by the events that go on around them.

- How and why cultures and practices have developed in the way they have.

At a general level, qualitative research is often described as a naturalistic, interpretative approach concerned with exploring phenomena from within (Mason, 2002; Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009). The perspectives and accounts of research participants are taken as a starting point. Denzin and Lincoln (2011:3) described qualitative research as:

> *…a set of interpretive, material practices that make the world visible. These practices transform the world. They turn the world into a series of representations, including field-notes, interviews, conversations, photographs, recordings and memos to self… Qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of or interpret phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them.*

Shank (2000) in Ospina (2004:2) underscores the above claim by defining qualitative research briefly but concisely as, *"…a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning."* The term "systematic" means qualitative research is planned, organised or ordered, as opposed to being haphazard. "Empirical" means that this type of inquiry is grounded in the world of experience, and "inquiry into meaning" is when researchers try to understand how others make sense of their experience (Abdullah & Rahman, 2001; Ospina, 2004; Merriam, 2009). As Hancock, Ockleford and Windridge (2009:4) put it, *"Qualitative research, therefore, attempts to broaden and/or deepen our understanding of how things came to be the way they are in our social world."*

The word "qualitative" implies an emphasis on the qualities of entities and on processes and meanings that are not (as previously stated) experimentally examined or measured in terms of quantity, amount or frequency (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000; Patton & Cochran, 2002; Anderson, 2010). There is deliberate intimate relationship between what is studied, the situational constraints that shape inquiry and the researcher. The qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality. Researchers will ideally emphasise the value-laden nature of inquiry as they seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created and given meaning. In contrast, quantitative studies emphasise the measurement and analysis of causal relationships between variables, not processes (Rahman, 2017).

Kielmann, Cataldo and Seeley (2012:7) view qualitative research generally as adhering (although not always) to a constructivist view of the world; one that suggests that reality is in the eye of the beholder. In other words, there is no single reality for a given phenomenon, but *"… multiple relative dimensions of reality which can only be partially captured using subjective, naturalistic methods."*

3.2.1.2. Key features of qualitative research

Qualitative research methods are naturalistic, that is, they attempt to study things, people and events in a non-experimental natural setting (Kielmann et al., 2012). It is a field of research because the investigation is carried out in the usual environment where a phenomenon occurs, rather than in controlled laboratory settings. In other words, naturalistic refers to studying real-world situations as they unfold naturally in a non-manipulative or non-controlling manner (Berg, 2012). The method studies behaviour in natural settings or uses people's accounts as data, with no manipulation of variables. The researcher is open to whatever emerges to guard against predetermining research findings or outcomes.

Qualitative research is holistic because it seeks to situate the meaning of particular behaviours and ways of doing things in a given context, as opposed to compartmentalise or isolate phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The idea is to focus on the complex social phenomena interactively in a holistically perceived manner. The whole phenomenon under study is understood as a complex system that is more than the sum of its part (Berg, 2012). Concisely, the focus is on complex interdependencies and system dynamics that cannot be reduced in any meaningful way to linear cause-effect relationships or a few discrete variables (Merriam, 2009; Berg, 2012; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

Put differently, Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000:138) posit that, *"…qualitative research is holistic because it seeks a description and interpretation of total phenomena. In addition, there is a deliberate move from description data to inference, explanations, suggestions of causation and theory generation."*

Mason (2002) posits that qualitative research should be conducted systematically and rigorously as opposed to a haphazard, casual or ad hoc approach. The recommendation is for an immersion in the details and specifics of the data to discover

important patterns, themes and inter-relationships that may emerge. An inductive analysis approach dictates that the researcher explores and confirms findings guided by analytical principles rather than rules (Merriam, 2009; Sharma, 2010; Moriarty, 2011; Creswell, 2013).

A prolonged field involvement in the natural setting ensures that the researcher yields detailed, thick description of data to garner in-depth understanding of phenomena (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Sutton & Austin, 2015). The data compiled must be very detailed, information rich and extensive. Interviews, for instance, are intended to capture direct quotations about people's personal perspectives and lived experiences. Extended time in field is to enhance the researcher to intensely take part in the fieldwork. It is also intended to help build good rapport with respondents to build trust and obtain authentic data. A prolonged field study also ensures active involvement and possible thorough observations by the researcher. In addition, credibility is maintained through conducting prolonged periods of engagement in order to learn the content, to minimise distortions and to build trust with participants (Moriarty, 2011).

Qualitative research is characterised by an interpretive understanding of reality and emergent knowledge (Mason, 2002; Kielmann et al., 2012). Qualitative researchers are constantly trying to make sense of what they see and hear in a specific context. They collect information about events and make meaning of that information by drawing inferences, interpretations or conclusions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The researchers' approach to understanding what is going on is interpretive. In other words, their aim is to mainly explain rather than to merely describe. Mason (2002; 7) asserts that qualitative research should produce:

> *"…explanations or arguments, rather than claiming to offer mere descriptions…descriptions and explorations involve selective viewing and interpretations; they cannot be neutral, objective or total."*

A multiple methods inquiry approach is a feature of qualitative research. The purpose of using a multi-method approach (triangulation) to data gathering is to ensure that all the data does not come from one source (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2000). Triangulation allows the researcher to validate data, as one data collecting method would act as a check on the findings of another. The multi-dimension of reality is thus captured to pick up any diversity in data gathering. This process allows for checking up on any inconsistencies within the data from one of the research methods. In other

words, triangulation is used to determine if data results from different sources support each other. The research is therefore flexible. In addition, the data collection methods such as interviews, observations and/or focus groups usually involve close contact between the researcher and the participants; which promotes close interaction and allow emergent issues to be explored (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Moriarty, 2011; Kielmann et al., 2012).

Qualitative research is humanistic because it focuses on the personal, subjective and experiential basis of knowledge and practice (KIelmann et al., 2012). Cases of study such as people are selected because they are information rich and illuminative. Respondents offer useful manifestations of the phenomenon of interest. In addition, with qualitative methods, the relationship between the researcher and the participant is often less formal than in quantitative research. Participants have the opportunity to respond more elaborately and in detail (Creswell, 2013). In turn, researchers have the opportunity to respond immediately to what participants say by tailoring subsequent questions to information the participant has provided (Cohen et al., 2000; Vanderstoep & Johnston, 2009; Anderson, 2010).

Qualitative methods are typically more flexible in that they allow greater spontaneity and adaptation of the interaction between the researcher and the study participant (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002; Sharma, 2010; Ormston et al., 2013; Rahman, 2017). For example, qualitative methods ask mostly open-ended questions. With open-ended questions, participants are free to respond in their own words, and these responses tend to be more complex than simply “yes” or “no.”

An empathic neutrality is basic to a qualitative researcher in working with study respondents (Merriam, 2009). An understanding, respect and sensitivity to respondents’ feelings without judgment is critical, bearing in mind that the researcher is the tool of the inquiry (Crossman, 2017). Furthermore, the researcher’s personal experiences and insights are an important part of the inquiry and critical to understanding the phenomenon, in view of the fact that the researcher has direct contact with and gets close to the people, situation and phenomenon under investigation (Merriam, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Berg, 2012).

Furthermore, Mason (2002:7) contends that it is characteristic of qualitative research to involve critical self-scrutiny by the researcher, or what he refers to as, *“…active*

reflexivity." This means that researchers should constantly take stock of their actions and role in the research process, and subject these to the same critical scrutiny as the rest of their data. In other words, a researcher cannot be neutral, objective or detached from the knowledge and evidence they are generating (Mason, 2002; Ormston et al., 2013). Reflexivity also entails researchers asking oneself crucial and difficult questions in the research process.

One important characteristic of qualitative research is that there is no attempt to generalise the findings to a wider population. Qualitative research scope is limited, so its findings are not always widely generalisable (Crossman, 2017). Researchers use the term generalisability to refer to whether the findings of a study hold up beyond the setting or individuals under study (Sharma, 2010). Instead, qualitative research is used to gain insights into people's feelings and thoughts, which may provide the basis for a future stand-alone qualitative study, or may even help researchers to map out survey instruments for use in a quantitative study (Sutton & Austin, 2015).

3.2.1.3. Rationale for using qualitative research

The researcher favoured qualitative research's flexible methodology in using multiple methods to examine the same question. Interviews, observations, documentary evidence and focus group discussions were engaged as data collection instruments. This approach incorporated a multi method inquiry, which was used to capture the multi-dimensions of continuous professional development (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002; Trochim, 2008; Sutton & Austin, 2015). Triangulation is the process of using multiple referents to draw conclusions about what constitutes the truth (Berg, 2012). In other words, data was triangulated to enhance validity and reliability. Triangulated data is believed to be more superior to a single data source or instrument. Triangulation allowed the researcher to check for consistencies on inferences drawn from one source of data with data from another source. Constant comparison also enabled the researcher to identify emerging unanticipated themes within the research study.

The researcher asked the subjects if, for instance, the observations concerning them were correct. This was one way of verifying to establish if the researcher's interpretation made sense to the subjects. The extent to which consensus developed between the researcher and the subjects, was a useful indicator of truth emerging out

of the study. Additionally, the researcher checked and crosschecked descriptions against theoretical interpretations of continuous professional development.

The chosen methodology was appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to get data directly from the subjects themselves in an attempt to promote intensive interaction. A small and purposeful sample selection from 5 schools of 10 educators and 5 principals was deemed convenient for detailed and thorough data collection. The sample was small and purposively selected based on salient criteria. The 5 schools were comprised of 3 public schools (considering there is more in the circuit) and 2 independent schools. Two public schools and 1 independent school of the sample 5 had an average pass rate of 90%+ for 5 years running (2011-2016). One public school and one independent school of the sample had an average pass rate of below 40% for the 5 years running (2011-2016).

The researcher sat with the respondents and heard their views in detail. Qualitative research allowed the researcher the flexibility to probe initial participant responses using “why?” or “how?” questions. The researcher listened carefully to what participants said, engaged with them according to their individual personalities and styles, and used probes to encourage them to elaborate on their answers. The researcher was the primary instrument for data collection and analysis. Thus, the researcher was able to recognise several nuances or very slight differences of attitude and behaviour that could escape researchers using other methods (Ospina, 2004; Rahman, 2017).

Qualitative research approach favours on prolonged engagements in natural settings as opposed to set-up artificial laboratories (Merriam, 2009; Crossman, 2017). The researcher favoured the naturalistic feature in that the study was carried out in a non-experimental natural school setting free of controlled measurements as is often found in quantitative research approaches. The researcher stayed in close contact with participants and was therefore in a better position to adapt techniques according to prevailing circumstances. The prolonged engagement ideally provided the researcher with the perspective of the participants of the study through immersion in their school setting as a direct interaction with them (Merriam, 2009; Anderson, 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). The long stay in the field also allowed the researcher to discover the participants’ inner experiences in as far as continuous professional development was

concerned. The prolonged stay also enabled the researcher to respond to changes that occurred while conducting the study (such as rescheduled appointment dates and times by respondents and offered the flexibility to shift the focus of the research as a result (Merriam, 2009).

The long stay in the field facilitated intensive interaction between researcher and participants, yielding detailed data. Qualitative research, largely, invests in time and is thorough and intensive to promote some measure of accuracy in research reporting. Theory, inferences and conclusions were therefore built from detailed and extensive data. Crossman (2017:3) underscores this claim by asserting that, *"… qualitative research produces descriptive data that the researcher must then interpret using rigorous and systematic methods of transcribing, coding, and analysis of trends and themes."* In other words, this qualitative research approach produced thick detailed descriptions of participants' feelings, opinions and experiences, and interpreted the meanings of their actions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2002; Rahman, 2017).

The researcher favoured the interpretive nature of qualitative research to help understand what was going on with professional development in schools. The researcher's aim was to interpret phenomena rather than merely explain. According to Patton and Cochran (2002), qualitative data is in the form of texts and descriptions of behaviours and actions or practises. Thus, verbal statements and actions of the subjects were analysed for meaning and interpretation. The researcher collected data objectively and reported statements of educators in their school environment. The researcher sought to understand the thoughts, feelings and experiences of the subjects by building rapport through social and physical closeness (Mason, 2002; Patton & Cochran, 2002; Ospina, 2004).

As mentioned earlier on, qualitative research promotes close interaction with the respondents. The data arising out of these interactions was in the form of what educators revealed to the researcher and the researcher's impressions. Such collaborative inquiry was destined to help improve the validity and usefulness of the findings. Abdullah and Rahman (2001) stressed that most of the phenomena that interest the researchers are internal events such as perceptions and feelings rather than plainly apparent, public or overt behaviour. Central to the nature of qualitative

research is to view events through the perspective of the people who are being studied; the way they think and their view of the world.

The researcher endeavoured to empathise with the educators being studied. The essence of qualitative research is compassion and the capacity to understand or feel what another person is experiencing from within his or her frame of reference. The researcher responded to situations, conditions and possible needs of the participants, for instance, the withdrawal from continued participation provision due to the consent form stipulations. The researcher interacted with the research subjects on their own terms to uphold ethical considerations. In so doing, the researcher hoped to obtain a more realistic view of the "lived world" of continuous professional development that may not be understood or experienced in numerical data or statistical analysis.

3.2.1.4. Challenges faced by qualitative research methods

Beyond the merits of qualitative research highlighted in this chapter, some limitations are obvious. Despite the strengths attributed to qualitative research approach, it is important that researchers be aware of the shortcomings associated with this approach so that measures are put in place to try to minimise the effects of these hindrances.

Some critics of qualitative research find fault with the qualitative approach as they consider it to be lacking in validity and reliability (Sharma, 2010). Cohen et al. (2000) define reliability as a measure of consistency over time and over similar samples: the extent to which a procedure produces similar results under constant conditions on all occasions with the same person(s). Reliability suggests that the same data would have been collected each time in repeated observations or interviews. Data is replicable. Put differently, a question, which produces one type of response on one occasion but a different response on another, is considered unreliable (Sharma, 2010). Qualitative research may also lack consistency and reliability because the researcher can employ different probing techniques and the respondent can choose to tell some particular stories and ignore others (Merriam, 2009; Anderson, 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Cohen et al. (2000), however, point out that qualitative researchers tend to view reliability as a fit between what they record as data and what actually occurs in the natural setting rather than accurate measurements between different observations. They further claim that two researchers studying a single setting may come up with

different data and produce different findings, but both studies can be considered reliable. Triangulation came handy and was engaged by the researcher in this study to wipe out or minimise challenges of unreliability.

Closely related to the concept of reliability is validity. Like reliability, it is concerned with errors that may occur in the research process. It is particularly concerned with whether an item measures or describes what it is supposed to measure or describe (Flick, 2007). Validity is a test of whether the collected data accurately gauge what is being measured. Validity refers to the sound, logical and acceptable truth of the research in promoting credibility of the study. Patton (2002) argues that validity in qualitative research is largely dependent upon the skill, competence and rigour of the researcher. Threats to validity in interviewing in this research were minimised by decreasing the number of incorrect interpretations through asking interviewees whether inferences drawn from what has been said were correct (Sharma, 2010).

Critics of qualitative research point out that a major setback of in-depth qualitative research is that generalisation is not possible beyond the population under study (Sharma, 2010). Patton and Cochran (2002) claim that small samples are not necessarily representative of the broader population, so it is difficult to know how far one can generalise the results. Smaller sample size raises the issue of generalisability to the whole population of the research (Thompson, 2011; Harry & Lipsky, 2014). Sharma (2010) in an apparent counter to the critics, pointed out that qualitative research does not aim to generalise findings, but to understand a specific situation. Attention in this research was on the local school setting and unique context, rather than on generalising the findings.

Research quality is heavily dependent on the individual skills of the researcher and is more easily influenced by the researcher's personal biases and idiosyncrasies or a mode of behaviour or way of thought peculiar to an individual (Anderson, 2010). It therefore is difficult to tell how far the findings are biased by the researcher's own opinions (Patton & Cochran, 2002). The researcher's presence during data gathering, which is often unavoidable in qualitative research, can affect the subjects' responses.

Issues of anonymity and confidentiality can present problems when presenting findings. Deductive disclosure, also known as internal confidentiality, occurs when the traits of individuals or groups make them identifiable in research reports (Kaiser,

2009). For instance, someone with deep knowledge of a particular school in some circuit can likely identify the school or individual educators based on traits such as age, gender and number of years with the school (Kaiser, 2009). As such, qualitative researchers face a conflict between conveying detailed accurate accounts of the social world, and protecting the identities of individuals who participate in their research.

The qualitative approach has often been referred to as soft, non-rigorous or lacking in extreme thorough or accuracy, and subjective as it is viewed to be based on or influenced by personal opinion (Abdullah & Rahman (2001). The rigor that is claimed to characterise qualitative research is difficult to maintain, asses and demonstrate (Anderson, 2010). Moreover, the massive data makes analysis and interpretation time consuming and/or expensive. However, in this study, NVivo computer software programme was engaged to manage and help analyse qualitative data (Azeem & Salfi, 2012).

As the primary instrument of investigation, qualitative researchers are often imbedded in the cultures and experiences of others. Additionally, cultural embeddedness increases the opportunity for bias to enter into the way data is gathered, interpreted and reported (Merriam, 2009; Anderson, 2010; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). It is also worrisome that a research study using human subjects may increase the chance of ethical dilemmas that undermine the overall validity of the study (Pope & Mays, 2006).

3.3. RESEARCH PARADIGM

3.3.1 Interpretive research paradigm

This study is situated in the interpretivist paradigm. In this chapter under “Qualitative research approach”, several predominant paradigms within the approaches to qualitative research were enlisted. Qualitative research is largely associated with the interpretivist paradigm (Goldkuhl, 2012; Thanh & Thanh, 2015). Interpretivism is the school of thought that stresses the importance of interpretation as well as observation in understanding the social world (Hughes & Sharrock, 1997; Creswell, 2013; Ormston et al., 2013). According to Ormston et al. (2013:24), interpretivism claims that:

> *…natural science methods are not appropriate for social investigation because the social world is not governed by regularities that hold law-like properties. Hence, a social researcher has to explore and understand the*

social world through the participants' and their own perspectives; and explanations can only be offered at the level of meaning rather than cause.

Interpretivism is therefore seen as being integral to the qualitative tradition although alternative research paradigms do exist. No research paradigm is superior, but each has a specific purpose in providing a distinct means of producing unique knowledge (Creswell, 2009; Taylor & Medina, 2013; Chowdhury, 2014).

3.3.2. The origins of interpretivism

However, the widespread adoption of qualitative research methods across the social sciences is a relatively new or recent phenomenon, the early ideas and development of what is now largely associated with, qualitative research can be traced and linked to the writing of Immanuel Kant (Ormston et al,2013; Spencer, Barnard & Snape, 2013). Kant published the book, "Critique of Pure Reason" in 1781, in which he argued that there were ways of knowing about the world other than direct observation, and that people used those ways all the time (Hughes & Sharrock, 1997; Ormston et al., 2013). He proposed that perception relates not only to the senses but also to human interpretations of what senses tell us. His claim was that knowledge of the world is based on understanding. The understanding arose from reflecting on what happens, and not just from one having had some particular experience(s). He concluded that knowledge and knowing transcend or go beyond the limits of basic empirical research or enquiry, but can establish theory based on logic. As a result, qualitative researchers who follow his line of thinking tend to place emphasis and value on human interpretation of the social world; upholding the significance of both participants' and the investigator's interpretations and understanding of the phenomenon being studied (Blaikie, 2007; Ormston et al., 2013).

In the 1860s-70s, Wilhelm Dilthey featured as a prominent contributor to the development of interpretivist line of thinking along the qualitative research tradition. According to Ormston et al (2013), Dilthey's writings stressed the importance of "understanding" and also emphasised the merits of studying people's lived experiences which would occur within a particular historical and social context (Creswell, 2013). He also argued that self-determination and human creativity played crucial roles in guiding human actions. He therefore proposed that social research should explore "lived experiences" in order to reveal the connections between the

social, cultural and historical aspects of people's lives and to see the context in which particular actions take place (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997; Ormston et al., 2013; Creswell, 2013).

The interpretivist paradigm can also be called the "anti-positivist" paradigm because it was developed as a reaction to positivism (Mack, 2010; Ormston et al., 2013. Positivism is a scientific paradigm whose purpose in research is to prove or disapprove a hypothesis based on statistically analysed generalisable findings (Mack, 2010; Yen, 2010; Ormston et al., 2013). Positivist research is quantitative and usually has a control and experimental group with a pre-test post method. Furthermore, positivist thinking focuses on the importance of objectivity and evidence in the research for truth (Mason, 2002; Hancock et al., 2009; Weber, 2004). A key feature of positivism is that researchers must attempt to distance themselves from any influences that might corrupt their analytical capacity (Ormston et al., 2013).

The interpretivist paradigm was also heavily influenced by constructivism because it emphasises the ability of the individual to construct meaning (Atieno, 2009; Creswell, 2009; Mack, 2010). Constructionism emphasises that human beings rather than being passively received by them (Ormston et al., 2013), actively construct knowledge.

Another strong influence in interpretivism thinking is the philosophical movement of phenomenology. Phenomenology entails researchers describing the meaning people attach to a particular phenomenon, concept or idea (Ormston et al., 2013). A phenomenologist advocates the need to consider human beings' subjective interpretations and perceptions of their world as our starting point in understanding social phenomena (Mack, 2010).

Blumer (1969:2) quoted in Goldkuhl (2012:11) had this to say in support of interpretivism:

> *Human beings act toward things on the basis of meanings that the things have for them. The meanings of such things is derived from, or arises out of the social interaction that one has with one's fellows, and these meanings are handled in, and modified through an interpretive process used by the person in dealing with the thing he encounters.*

3.3.3 The nature of the interpretivist paradigm

According to various scholars, it is theoretically understood that interpretive paradigm allows researchers to view the world through the perceptions and experiences of the participants (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). In seeking the answers for research, the investigator who follows interpretive paradigm uses those experiences to construct and interpret his or her understanding from gathered data (Walsham,2006; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2011; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

What is distinct about interpretive approaches is that they see people and their interpretations, perceptions, meanings and understandings as the primary data sources (Mason, 2002). The aim is to explore people's individual and collective understandings as well as their reasoning processes. Blaikie (2000:115) had this to say:

> *Interpretivists are concerned with understanding the social world people have produced and which they reproduce through their continuing activities. This everyday reality consists of the meanings and interpretations given by the social actors to their actions, other people's actions, social situations, and natural and humanly created objects. In short, in order to negotiate their way around their world and make sense of it, social actors have to interpret their activities together, and it is these meanings, embedded in language, that constitute their social reality.*

An interpretive approach therefore not only sees people as a primary data source, but also seeks their perceptions or what Blaikie calls the "inside view", rather than imposing an "outside view" (Mason, 2002). Interpretivism's main tenet is that research can never be objectively observed from the outside; rather it must be observed from inside through the direct experience of the people (Mack, 2010). Researchers in this paradigm therefore seek to understand rather than explain or describe. Other data sources are possible according to this approach, such as, observations and gathering documentary evidence, but what an interpretivist would want to get out of these would be what they say about or how they are constituted in people's individual or collective meanings (Mason, 2002; Weber,2004; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

Interpretive research is more subjective than objective. Willis (2007) argues that the goal of interpretivism is to value subjectivity as interpretivists deliberately avoid the idea that objective research on human behaviour is possible. Consistent with Willis' view, Goldkuhl (2012:4) claims that, *"… the aim of understanding the subjective*

meanings of persons in studied domains is essential in the interpretive paradigm." The social world of people is full of meaning built upon subjective and shared meanings. In other words, the core idea of interpretivism is to work with these subjective meanings already there in the social world; that is*,"… to acknowledge their existence, to reconstruct them, to understand them, to avoid distorting them, to use them as building blocks in theorizing"* (Goldkhl, 2012:5). Interpretivists contend that only through the subjective interpretation of and intervention in reality can that reality be fully understood (Creswell, 2013; Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

Research knowledge is viewed as an understanding through processes of interpretation (Silverman, 2004; Phothongsunam, 2010; Nind & Todd, 2011). In this instance, the researchers are supposed to interpret the existing meaning systems that are shared by the participants or respondents. Baroudi (199I:14) quoted in Goldkuhl (2012:5) posits that:

> *The aim of all interpretive research is to understand how members of a social group, through their participation in social processes enact their particular realities and endow them with meaning, and to show how these meanings, beliefs and intentions of the members help to constitute their actions.*

Through the principle of contextualisation, the key idea in interpretivism is to create an understanding of the social context of the studied area through the process of interpretation based on or influenced by personal feelings, tasks or opinions (Morehouse, 2011; Goldkuhl, 2012; Chowdhury, 2014,). In addition, it is essential to create a holistic understanding of the studied area; not only an understanding of its different parts (Willis, 2007; Ormston et al., 2013; Sutton & Austin, 2015). Goldkuhl (2012) asserts that the understanding should emerge through dialectical movements between the holistic understanding and the understanding of singular parts. It is important that the reader or intended audience can see how the current situation under investigation emerged.

Interpretivists avoid rigid structural frameworks (such as in positivist research) and rather adopt a more personal and flexible research structures which are receptive to capturing meanings in human interaction, and thereby make sense of what is perceived as reality (Edirisingha, 2012; Sutton & Austin, 2015). Interpretivists believe that the researcher and his or her informants are interdependent and mutually

interactive. The interpretivist researcher enters the field with some prior insight of the research context but assumes that it is insufficient due to complex, multiple and unpredictable nature of what is perceived as reality (Edirisingha, 2012). The researcher remains open to forthcoming knowledge throughout the study and allows the knowledge to develop with the help of respondents or informants. In the process of research, participants often create new meanings and make new connections of ideas (Phothongsunan, 2010). By our own nature as human beings, we are able to communicate with one another and in interpretive research; such forms of communication are given priority. The use of such an emergent and collaborative approach is consistent with the interpretivist belief that humans have the ability to adapt, and that no one can gain prior knowledge of context bound social realities (Edirisingha, 2012). In other words, researchers also construct meanings and interpretations based on those of participants.

Embedded in interpretivism is a research method known as Interpretive Phenomenological Analysis (IPA) (Ormston et al., 2013). IPA attempts to understand the meanings that individuals ascribe to their lived experiences, and the researcher must then attempt to interpret this meaning in the context of the research (Sutton & Austin, 2015). Hancock et al. (2009) agree by adding that IPA recognises the negotiation between the researched and researcher, to produce the account of the insider's perspective. The data are accounts, which researchers then code for emergent themes. Consistent with Edirisingha's views, Sutton and Austin (2015) claim that, because the researcher has some knowledge and expertise in the subject of the research means that he or she can have considerable scope in interpreting the participants' experiences. Concisely, IPA is about getting "underneath" what a person is saying to try to understand the world from his or her perspective (Morehouse, 2011; Ormston et al., 2013; Sutton & Austin, 2015).

Interpretive studies are idiographic in that they use small numbers of participants (Phothongsunan, 2010). This is because the purpose is not to generalise, but to explore the meanings, which participants place, on the social situations under investigation.

The study of phenomena in their natural environment is key to interpretivist philosophy. This is characterised by a prolonged field study involvement in the natural setting

(Cohen et al, 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Hancock et al, 2009; Creswell, 2013). Cohen et al., 2000:138) propose that interpretive research should be conducted in *"…natural, uncontrived, real world settings with as little intrusiveness as possible by the researcher."*

3.3.4 Rationale for choosing the interpretive paradigm

The challenge for any researcher is how to select a suitable research paradigm, which will align with an appropriate research approach. The interpretive paradigm was deemed the most suitable for the research due to its potential to generate new understandings of continuous professional development in schools (Van-Esch & Van-Esch, 2013; Ponelis, 2015). This research sought the practical knowledge that is embedded in the world of human interaction and meanings, thus further justifying the appropriateness to investigate under the interpretive paradigm.

As explained by Willis (2007), qualitative approaches often give rich reports that are necessary for interpretivists to fully understand contexts. Consistent with Willis's ideas, Thomas (2003:6) in Thanh and Thanh (2015) maintain that interpretivists usually support qualitative methods because the interpretive paradigm, *"…portrays a world in which reality is socially constructed, complex and ever changing…"* It was the researcher's intention in this study to understand by interpreting and establishing meanings on the educators' perspectives on the factors that could influence the successful engagement of continuous professional development approaches in enhancing student achievement. The researcher intended to construct reality through human interactions. In other words, the researcher endeavoured to discover how educators made sense of professional development in their schools by means of conversations and general interaction with them. The researcher and participants were interlocked in an interactive process of talking, listening and recording in a more personal, interactive mode of data collection (Hancock et al., 2009; Goldkuhl, 2012; Thanh & Thanh, 2015).

Interpretivism is much more inclusive because it accepts multiple viewpoints of different individuals (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). In support of Thanh and Thanh's view, Willis (2007:583) asserts that interpretivism includes, *"…accepting and seeking multiple perspectives, being open to change, practicing iterative and emergent data collection techniques, promoting participatory and holistic research and going beyond*

the inductive and deductive approach." Considering that different people have different perceptions of the world, the researcher sought answers for the research by underpinning multiple understandings of the individual educators' views on professional development. Morehouse (2011) posits that the acceptance of multiple perspectives in interpretivism often leads to a more comprehensive understanding of the situation. This significantly facilitated my research when the researcher sourced and gather in-depth and insightful information from a group of practising educators. According to McQueen (2002:16) quoted in Thanh and Thanh (2015), interpretivists view the world through a *"…series of individual eyes…"* and choose participants who, *"…have their own interpretations of reality…"* to encompass the worldview.

It is characteristic of interpretivism for the researcher to be part of what is observed. Since the social world is constructed and given meaning subjectively by people (Phothongsunan, 2010; Yanow et al., 2011; Taylor & Medina, 2013) so the researcher interviewed, facilitated focus group discussions and reviewed documents in an attempt to establish meaning and understanding of the prevalence and impact of professional development in schools.

In interpretive research, the number of participants is relatively small. The emerging nature of research in small enterprises is best suited to an interpretive qualitative approach that can yield a rich understanding of key issues (Ponelis, 2015). A small sample also eases the complexity of managing and analysing large volumes of data (Seale et al, 2007; Morehouse, 2011; Sutton & Austin, 2015). The research sample comprised of 10 educators and 5 principals from 5 secondary schools.

As evidenced in the "Review of Related Literature" in chapter 2, the researcher went into the field with some background knowledge on professional development therefore; the researcher's interpretation is socially constructed thereby reflecting his motives and beliefs. The interpretivist assumption that the social world is observed by seeing what meanings people give to it and interpreting these meanings from their viewpoint guided the researcher to explore different schools and educators' experiences, constructions and meanings they gave to professional development (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Blaikie, 2007; Merriam, 2009). Thus, the researcher dug into the processes of subjective interpretation, but acknowledged the beliefs, values and reasons participants gave.

Interpretivist research often relies on total immersion in a setting. The interpretive understanding is grounded in an interactive, field-based inductive methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Pope & Mays, 2006; Berg, 2012; Goldkuhl, 2012). The researcher immersed himself in the *"belly"* of the research field by interacting in depth and detail with educators. Transcripts, conversations and audiotapes were studied in order to establish themes and meanings thereof. Many hours and days of at least 5 months were devoted to gathering detailed and informative research data for onward analysis. The researcher established an inseparable researcher-participant relationship. The data gathered, helped establish reality in schools in reference to continuous professional development. When analysing data, the researcher attempted to make sense and interpret the phenomena in terms of the meaning the educators placed (Creswell, 2009).

Van-Esch and Van-Esch (2013) propose that the interpretive researcher should abstain from making suppositions, but instead, focus on a specific topic to guide in constructing questions to guide the study. The responses to questions in this study should derive research findings that may provide the basis for further research and reflection.

Thus, the researcher collected information and interpreted it to make meaning of the information supplied by respondents by drawing inferences. In a way, this research paradigm was relevant to this study since the researcher was interested in understanding the subjective experience and perceptions of educators regarding the influence of professional development programmes in schools. The researcher understood fully the reality of professional development prevailing in schools through the process of interpretation of the data gathered.

3.3.5 Limitations of interpretive paradigm

Criticism of interpretive approaches exists to a certain degree. Arguments range from the concerns about false consciousness to the relativism of the paradigm (Phothongsunan, 2010). Mack (2010) posits that one of the limitations to interpretive research is that it abandons the scientific procedures of verification and therefore results cannot be generalised to other situations. That alone puts many positivists to question the overall benefit of interpretivist research. The argument raised is that the primary data generated in interpretivist studies cannot be generalised since data is

heavily impacted by personal viewpoint and values (Chowdhury, 2014). This is considered on the notion that researchers use their own preconceptions in order to guide the process of enquiry (Cohen et al., 2001; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Furthermore, bias-free data cannot be obtained since the researcher interacts with the human subjects of the enquiry, possibly changing the perceptions of both parties in the process (Chowdhury, 2014). That may render the reliability, validity and representativeness of data to be undermined to a certain extent.

This study, however, resonated with other scholars' works and productions on continuous professional development, as expounded under the "Review of related Literature." Moreover, interpretivist researchers do not only look for the presence or absence of a causal relationship, but also the specific ways in which it is manifested and the context in which it occurs (Silverman, 2004; Kelliher, 2005; Travers, 2008). Thus, the researcher was able to go beyond from what has occurred to see how it has occurred in helping establish facts.

Another criticism of interpretivism is that it is subjective rather than objective. However, all research has some element of subjectivity. For instance, by selecting a paradigm, the researcher is being subjectively oriented towards one way of doing research (Mack, 2010). One cannot completely divorce oneself from one's perspective, vantage point or viewpoint as a researcher. In qualitative research, the researcher is being more subjective in the sense that he or she is not engaging a hypothesis, and that the researcher is involving oneself in the research. However, the researcher in this study took an objective stance when analysing the data he collected. *"By bracketing their assumptions, they look at the data thoroughly so that the data informs the researcher about what is going on in the environment, instead of the researcher's own preconceptions"* (Mack, 2010:8).

Mason (2002) considers the major challenge for interpretivist approaches to be centred on the question of how the researcher can be sure that he or she is not simply inventing data, or misrepresenting the research participants' perspectives, point of view or stance. The main challenge is for the researcher to ensure that interpretations are not imposed inappropriately or without justification. It is of paramount importance in this context, for the researcher to record as fully and explicitly as one can; the route by which as a researcher you came to the interpretations you are making. In this study,

the researcher engaged the services of audio recording to minimise on the challenges of memory loss and to enhance data verifiability. However, Mason warns that having a tape recorder switched on must never tempt the researcher to stop listening, observing or taking written notes. In extreme but rare cases, the researcher may discover that the tape-recording equipment failed. If the researcher was not paying full attention to the interaction, there will be little or nothing to retrieve from the recording gadget.

Interpretivists who engage documentary analysis must watch for shortcomings that go with this data collection tool. Mason (2002) warns that reading documents should not extend to treating them as though they are direct representations or reflections of reality or straightforward factual records. Considering that documents are always, *"… constructed in particular contexts, by particular people, with particular purposes, and with consequences – intended and unintended*." (Mason, 2002:110), the researcher must exercise a high degree of sophistication and scepticism in the reading and interpretations of documents. Furthermore, documents may not always be accurate, reliable, genuine and authentic; they may have been put together just to fulfil some policy requirement. In this study, 3.4.1 the researcher augmented documentary evidence with focus groups and interviews and in a process of triangulation.

3.4 RESEARCH DESIGN

3.4.1 Case study research design

Qualitative research approach encompasses several research designs that include phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, generic qualitative research, historical research, concept analysis, participative action research and case study (Merriam, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Creswell, 2013). This research is a case study. The definition of a case study is necessary because it places the case study in its own space and gives it its own characteristics in comparison to other types of qualitative research (Starman, 2013; Yazan, 2015). Several researchers have provided definitions of case studies.

Yin (2009:18) defines a case study as, *"…empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon in depth and with its real context, especially when the*

boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident." The twofold definition goes further to say the case study inquiry:

> *Copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis.*

Given this definition from Yin's point of view, case study is an empirical or verifiable inquiry that investigates the case or cases conforming to the abovementioned definition by addressing the "how" or "why" questions concerning the phenomenon of interest (Yazan, 2015). The rest of Yin's technical definition draws attention to the aspects of data collection and analysis in relation to the situation under study. Yazan (2015:138) is of the view that, *"This attention is indicative of how meticulous his approach is in terms of the cohesion and consistency among the design components and phases of case study as a research strategy."* From Yin's stance, when making every move or decision in the entire research process, the researcher was able to provide the logic behind every move in conformity with the theoretical propositions and the characteristics of the case. This case study research investigated predefined phenomena on continuous professional development programmes in secondary schools, but did not involve explicit control or manipulation of variables. The focus was on in-depth understanding of continuous professional development and its context. Data collection techniques, which are mainly concerned with words and meanings, were engaged through interviews, focus group discussions and documentary evidence analysis.

Creswell, Hanson, Plano, Vicki and Morales (2007:33) seem to best capture the full depth and breadth of case study concepts and descriptions as they defined case study as:

> *…a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information (e.g., observations, interviews, audio-visual material and documents and reports) and reports a case description and case-based themes.*

Merriam (2009:40) defined case study as *"…an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system."* Viewed as a clarification of the above definition, Merriam (2009) conceives a qualitative case study an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon such as a programme, an institution, a person, a process or a social unit. According to Harrison, Birks, Franklin and Mills (2017) Merriam emphasises the defining feature of case study research as being the object of the study (the bounded system/ the case); adding that case study research focuses on a particular thing and that the product of an investigation should be descriptive and "hands-on" or heuristic in nature.

These varied definitions stem from the researchers' differing approaches to developing case study methodology and often reflect the elements they emphasise as central to their designs (Harrison et al., 2017). The definitions all seem to share some commitment to the examination of complexity in a variety of real-life situations (Starman, 2013). The holistic feature guided me to consider the interrelationship between the phenomenon on continuous professional development and its contexts in a school set-up. The comparative analysis of three different renditions of case study definitions was helpful to the researcher as a quick reference while designing the research.

3.4.2 Main features of case study research

Case study research is consistently described as a versatile, adaptable or multifaceted form of qualitative inquiry most suitable for a comprehensive, holistic and in-depth investigation of a complex issue or particular situation rather than a sweeping statistical survey (Merriam, 2009; Shuttleworth; Yin, 2009; Cresswell, 2014). Merriam (2009) asserts that the purpose of such case studies is to provide an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single, bounded unit situated in a specific context to provide insight into real-life situations. Case study methods enable a researcher to examine the data closely. Zainal (2007:1) had this to say, *"In most cases, a case study method selects a small geographical area or a limited number of individuals as the subject of the study."* Zainal (2007:2) posits that, *"…case studies explore and investigate contemporary real-life phenomenon through detailed contextual analysis of a limited number of events or conditions and their relationships."*

In other words, a case study is a unique way of observing any natural phenomenon, which exists in a set of data (Yin, 2009). By *"unique"* it means that only a small geographical area or number of subjects of interest are examined in detail (Sharma, 2010; Ponelis, 2015; Ruiz; 2017).

Case study research scholars contend that it is incumbent upon the case researchers to draw their data from multiple sources to capture the case under study in its complexity and entirety (Yazan, 2015; Harrison et al., 2017). The Yin (2009) perspective is on multiple sources of evidence from at least two or more sources, but converging on the same set of facts or findings for the purpose of triangulation. Case study research should rest upon multiple sources of evidence. The chain of evidence linking the questions asked, the data collected and the conclusions drawn is conducive to data validation and boosts the process to maximise the quality of the inquiry (Yin, 2002; Baxter & Jack, 2008; Hancock et al., 2009). In support, Merriam (2009) states that the use of multiple methods to collect and analyse data are encouraged and found to be mutually informative in case study research where together they provide a synergistic or cooperative and comprehensive view of the issue being studied.

Primarily exploratory and explanatory in nature, case study is used to gain an understanding of the issue in real life settings (Merriam, 2009). Yin (2009) points out those case studies are the preferred strategy when "how" and "why" questions are posed. Rigour is a central concern to case study research. In addition, extended time in the field of study, lengthy interviews, transcription, and analysis are all factors that should be thought out well in advance of engaging with participants in case study research (Zucker, 2009).

Case study research may adopt single-case or multiple-case designs. A single-case study is appropriate where it represents a critical case and allows researchers to investigate phenomena in depth to provide rich description and understanding (Yin, 2009; Darke, Shanks & Broadbent, 1998). Multiple-case designs allow cross-case analysis, comparison, and the investigation of a particular phenomenon in diverse settings (Yin, 2009). Multiple cases may also be selected to predict similar results (literal replication) or to produce contrasting results for predictable reasons in theoretical replication (Yin, 2009). This research is a single-case study.

3.4.3 Rationale for selecting case study

Case study research has grown in reputation as an effective methodology to investigate and understand complex issues in real world settings (Harrison et al., 2017). Case study research produces holistic understandings of rich, contextual and generally unstructured non-numeric data (Ponelis, 2015) by engaging in conversations with the research participants in a natural setting (Creswell, 2009). In this study, the researcher deliberately isolated a small group of 5 principals and 10 educators from 5 of the Polokwane urban secondary schools. The qualitative case study was considered vital because of its idiographic nature. Instead of surveying large groups, the researcher took a close look at a small group in its natural school setting and engaged in-depth studies.

It is impossible to embark upon research without some idea of what one is looking for. Case study researchers attain theoretical sensitivity and direction from a number of sources such as the literature, and professional and personal experiences (Ponelis, 2015). In this research, the researcher explored the emerging literature on continuous professional development under “Review of Related Literature” in order to generate some established knowledge on the study. The researcher undertook a comprehensive literature analysis in order to understand the existing body of research literature within the research and to position the research questions within the context of that literature. In addition, the researcher was motivated to embark on this case study by a personal interest emanating from being a principal; a critical role in facilitating for and effecting continuous professional development programmes in schools.

Since case study method receives criticism in terms of its lack of robustness as a research tool and its inability to provide a generalising conclusion, the researcher triangulated the data source in order to confirm the validity of the data. Moreover, generalisations from case studies stem on theory rather than on population or frequencies in statistical analysis (Zainal, 2007). Semi-structured interviews, focus group analysis and documentary evidence analysis were engaged as data collection tools.

In case studies, it is important to ensure that the research questions are appropriate in terms of their interest, significance and value (Mason, 2002; Hancock et al., 2009; Anderson, 2010). In other words, the research questions must be questions that can actually be answered in a useful way. This research explored the influence of continuous professional development in promoting quality teaching and learning as a way of boosting student achievement reflecting in high pass-rates. The research was particularly relevant to schools as they endeavour to upgrade or maintain high pass-rates. The schools were clear on *"what's in it for them"*; no wonder principals were forthcoming in availing themselves, their educators and their documents. In other words, the purpose for which the case study was conducted influenced positively on participant support and compliance.

Ethical considerations need to be incorporated in case study research. Schools were also encouraged to participate as I made it clear to them that the research results would be made available to them within a useful timeframe. Issues of confidentiality were explained before commencing fieldwork.

Efficient and effective data collection for case study research requires careful planning and judicious use of both the case participants' and researcher's time (Mason, 2002; Hancock et al., 2009; Harriso et al., 2017; Yin, 2009). Six months at the most were spent on frequent visits to the field of study in this research.

Rigour needs to be established in writing up case study research so that it is publishable in academic journals (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Ruiz, 2017). Sufficient evidence for the research results was provided and alternative interpretations were carefully considered with clear reasons for their rejection provided so that the rigour and reliability of the research are established. In addition, the aspects of credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability were fulfilled to establish and conform to the standards of rigour.

In case study research, the unit of analysis is the basis of each case (Ponelis, 2015). The unit of analysis may be an individual such as a person who has an interest to the study, or an organisation. Schools, educators and principals form the unit of analysis with educators as chief curriculum implementers and principals as leaders in directing continuous professional development.

3.4.4 Limitations of case study research

One of the criticisms aimed at case study research is that the case under study is not necessarily representative of similar cases and therefore the results of the research are not generalisable (Hancock et al., 2009). This, however, reflects some misunderstanding of the purpose of case study research, which is to describe that particular case in detail (Merriam, 1998; Yin, 2002; Anderson, 2010; Harrison et al., 2017). In other words, case study is particularistic and contextual.

Starman (2013) claims that generalisation upon the basis of an individual case is not possible; therefore, case studies cannot make sound contribution to scientific development. In case studies, inference is based on analytical induction or generalisation and not on statistical induction or enumeration (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Creswell, 2013; Rahman, 2017). In analytic induction, researchers are examining a particular case, that is, the relationships among individual characteristics, processes or events and how they are connected to each other (Starman, 2013). Mesec (1998) in Starman (2013) argues that if the connection exists even in one single case, it may be theoretically important.

Proponents of the holistic approach believe that generalisation may be possible even on the basis of a single case study (Starman, 2013). Stake (2005) quoted in Starman (2013:39) holds a similar position in that*,"… a process of naturalistic generalisation arrives from the tacit knowledge of how things are, why they are, how people feel about them, and how these things are likely to be later on or in other places this person is familiar with."* Generalisation is therefore possible by recognising the similarities of the issues in different contexts. In this study, to ensure that this kind of generalisation is possible, the salient features of the case were documented in detail so that a very thorough understanding of a known case Sturman (1997) in Starman (2013) can illuminate new situations.

The data collection and data analysis processes in case study research are both subject to the influence of the researcher's characteristics and background, and rely heavily on the researcher's interpretation of events, documents and interview material (Cohen et al., 2000; Yin, 2002; Ormston et al., 2013). In support, Starman (2013) claims that case study contains a bias toward verification; that is, a tendency to confirm

preconceived notions of the researcher. This may limit the validity of the research findings, although, as Yin (2002) notes, bias may enter into the design and conduct of other types of research as well. Moreover, case study can achieve its own precision when the researcher describes the entire research process in detail, especially the analysis process in which concepts are shaped and the regularity and patterns of behaviour, interaction and experience are determined (Starman, 2013).

Research methodologists such as Yin (2002), Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) do not have a consensus on the design and implementation of case study, which makes it a contested terrain and hampers its full implementation (Yazan, 2015). Yin (2002) actually claims that case study does not have a legitimate status as a social science research strategy because it does not have well-defined and well-structured protocols. Merriam (1998: xi) quoted in Yazan (2015:134) further claims that emerging researchers who plan to utilise case study usually become confused, *"…as to what a case study is and how it can be differentiated from other types of qualitative research."*

Overall, critics of case study believe that the study of a small number of cases can offer no grounds for establishing reliability or generality of findings (Soy, 2006). Others feel that the intense exposure is time consuming and biases the findings. Some dismiss case study as useful only as an exploratory tool (Soy, 2006). Yet researchers continue to use the case study research method with success in carefully planned and crafted studies of real-life situations, issues and problems. Reports on case studies from many disciplines are widely available in the literature as academic reports.

3.5 TARGET POPULATION

The population from which the sample was drawn is defined as all Polokwane urban secondary schools. Two subjects for the study were principals and educators. The population comprised of all 19 secondary schools from Pietersburg Circuit.

3.6 SAMPLING

A sample is a subset or portion of a population or universe (Yin, 2014; Etikan et al., 2015; Gentles, Charles, Ploeg & McKibbon, 2015). Sharma (2017: 749) defines sampling as:

> *…a technique (procedure or device) employed by a researcher to systematically select a relatively smaller number of representative items or individuals (a subset) from a pre-defined population to serve as subjects (data source) for observation…as per objectives of his or her study.*

In a broad definition, Mason (2002: 120) views sampling in apparent advice to qualitative method researchers as:

> *…sampling and selection are principles and procedures used to identify, choose and gain access to relevant data sources from which you will generate data using your chosen methods. These sources will belong to or relate to a relevant wider population or universe, and your sampling strategy will need to link the sources you choose meaningfully with that wider context.*

The ideal scenario in research is to test all the individuals to obtain reliable, valid and most accurate results, but researchers usually engage sampling for it is impossible to source data from every single individual in the population (Sharma, 2017). The basis for sampling in this qualitative research was not to make statistical estimates of population parameters based on sample data, (Yin, 2011; Patton, 2015) rather qualitative research is very often about depth, nuance, complexity and understanding (Mason, 2002). The sample gave the researcher access to data that allowed him to develop theoretically grounded information on continuous professional development programmes in secondary schools. The data helped the researcher to address the research questions.

The advantages of sampling included that it was much easier and quicker to collect data from a sample than from the entire population. It was also much less expensive. It would be impossible to carry out the study on the total population owing to the lack of adequate funds. In summary, the general aim of sampling in this research was to acquire information that was useful for understanding the complexity, depth, variation or context surrounding the phenomenon on continuous professional development, rather than to represent populations as in quantitative research (Gentiles et al., 2015).

3.6.1 Sample size

Five schools were drawn from the population to make a sample for the study. The sample consisted of 5 principals and 10 educators (those that have been in the service

for more than 5 years to have at least experienced the impact of continuous professional development over the years) to give a total sample size of 15.

The 5 schools comprised of 3 public secondary schools (considering there is more in the circuit) and 2 independent schools. Two public schools and one independent school of the sample 5 have an average pass rate of 90%+ for five years running (2011-2016). One public school and one independent school of the sample have an average pass rate of below 40% for 5 years running (2011-2016). All 5 schools sit for the DBE National Senior Examination.

The level of detail required in exploring and obtaining depth of understanding, and emphasis of homogeneity (requiring smaller samples) is characteristic and befitting of qualitative research (Cohen et al., 2000; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Rahman, 2017). Moreover, case study research is suited to this sample as it is small-scale research carried out in real school settings with emphasis on depth of study (not breadth) and on words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data (Anderson, 2010; Hancock et al., 2009; Ruiz, 2017).

3.6.2 Sampling technique

3.6.2.1 Purposive sampling technique

Qualitative research frequently does demand an alternative logic of sampling and selection in determining what principles, procedures sampling, and selection should be governed (Mason, 2002). This research engaged purposive sampling. For the purposes of this research, the terms purposeful and purposive sampling were considered to be equivalent or interchangeable (Teddlie & Yu, 2007; Patton, 2015). Yin (2011: 311) defines purposive sampling as, *"The selection of participants or sources of data to be used in study, based on their anticipated richness and relevance of information in relation to the study's research questions."*

Manen (2014:353) quoted in Gentles et al. (2015:264) suggests a definition of purposive sampling as, *"The notion of purposive sampling is sometimes used to indicate that interviewees or participants are selected on the basis of their knowledge and verbal eloquence to describe a group or (sub)culture to which they belong."* Similarly, Patton (2015:264) provides the following description of purposeful sampling:

> *The logic and power of purposeful sampling lie in selecting information-rich cases for in-depth study. Information-rich cases are those from which one can learn a great deal about issues of central importance to the purpose of the inquiry… Studying information-rich cases yields insights and in-depth understanding.*

In view of the above definitions, purposive sampling, also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling, reflects a group of sampling techniques that rely on the judgement of the researcher when it comes to selecting research respondents or data sources (Palys, 2008; Palinkas, Hoagwood, Green, Wisdom & Duan, 2013; Sharma, 2017). This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Cresswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). In addition to knowledge and experience, Palinkas et al. (2013) note the importance of availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive and reflective manner. These purposive sampling techniques include homogeneous sampling, stakeholder sampling, extreme or deviant case sampling, typical case sampling, paradigmatic case sampling, heterogeneous or maximum variation sampling, criterion sampling, theory-guided sampling, critical case sampling and disconfirming or negative case sampling (Palys, 2008; Sharma, 2017).

Purposive sampling falls under the broad nonprobability sampling techniques where randomisation is not important in selecting a sample from the population of interest. Rather, as alluded to earlier on, subjective methods are used to decide which elements are included in the sample. Hence, nonprobability sampling is a sampling technique where the samples are gathered in a process that does not give all the participants in the population equal chances of being included (Patton, 2015; Etikan et al., 2016).

3.6.2.2 Rationale for engaging purposive sampling

The educators and principals selected as participants in this study suited the purpose of the study in exploring the influence of continuous professional development programmes in improving learner achievement. The 5 principals and 10 educators had been in the teaching service for more than 5 years. The 5 schools were comprised of 3 public secondary schools and 2 independent schools. Two public schools and 1 independent school of the sample 5 had an average pass-rate of 90%+ for 5 years running (2011 – 2016). One public school and 1 independent school of the sample

had an average pass-rate of below 40% for 5 years running (2011 – 2016). The deliberate choice of participants was due to the teaching qualities and experience the educators had.

The researcher selected a small homogeneous sample of educators who were willing to supply rich and detailed information on continuous professional development programmes prevailing in their schools, by virtue of knowledge and experience. The researcher (guided by the educator demographics supplied by the principals of the respective schools) deliberately identified educators who were proficient and well informed about the phenomenon of interest on continuous professional development. In addition to knowledge and experience, the importance of availability and willingness to participate, and the ability to communicate experiences and opinions in an articulate, expressive and reflective manner was considered (Etikan et al., 2016; Sharma, 2017).

The idea behind purposive sampling was to concentrate on educators with those particular characteristics ideal to supply relevant research data that would best enable the researcher to answer research questions. A homogeneous sample is chosen when the research question(s) that are being addressed are specific to the characteristics of the particular group of interest, which is subsequently examined in detail (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012; Sharma, 2017). In addition, the homogeneity of the educators helped reduce variation, enhanced and facilitated focus-group discussions and thus promoted a simplified approach to data analysis.

As a major advantage, purposive sampling assured the researcher that at least he gathered information from respondents who were crucial to the study and the researcher's focus. In other words, the selection of the sample reflected the purpose or the objective of the investigation (Palys, 2008). Since the researcher used a sample of "experts" in their field, the research findings therefore represent the judgement of the teaching experts, thereby boosting on the validity of the research findings.

3.6.2.3 Challenges to use of purposive sampling

Purposive samples can be highly prone to researcher bias. Vulnerability to errors in judgement by the researcher may render purposive sampling susceptible to low levels of reliability and high levels of bias (Saunders et al., 2012). According to Sharma

(2017) the idea that a purposive sample has been created based on the judgement of the researcher is not a convincing defence when it comes to alleviating possible researcher biases (especially when compared with probability sampling techniques that are designed to reduce such biases). However, this judgemental, subjective component of purposive sampling is only a major disadvantage when such judgements are ill conceived or poorly considered (Palinkas et al., 2013; Sharma, 2017).

Inability to generalise research findings is embedded in purposive sampling (Saunders et al., 2012). The subjectivity and non-probability-based nature of unit selection in purposive sampling means that it can be difficult to defend the representativeness of the sample. There is no assurance that those selected are in any way representative of some clearly specified population of more general interest. In other words, if different units had been selected, would the results and the generalisations have been the same?

This however reflects some misunderstanding of qualitative research, which is to describe that particular case in detail and not to generalise (Anderson, 2010; Harrison et al., 2017). Case study is particularistic and contextual (Yin, 2011).

3.7 DATA COLLECTION

Research differs in a number of aspects but they do have some commonalities (Heaton, 2004; Gray, 2004). One of the common aspects is to collect data. Data is an essential component to conducting research.

The researcher employed three methods of data collection namely; individual interview, focus groups and documentary evidence. The researcher triangulated to determine if data results from different sources supported each other. Triangulation is the process of using more than one source to confirm information and data from different sources and different methods of data collection (Abdullah & Raman, 2001; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

3.7.1 Individual interviews

Interviews are a systematic way of talking and listening to people and, therefore, become another way to collect data from individuals through conversation. The conversation is purposeful in that it is directed by one in order to get information from the other. Holstein and Gubrium (2011:157) consider interviews to be, *"…useful tools for systematic social inquiry because of their special capacity to incite the production of narratives that address issues relating to particular research concerns."*

Kvale (1996:14) in a concise definition regards interviews as, *"…an interchange of views between two or more people on a topic of mutual interest, sees the centrality of human interaction for knowledge production, and emphasizes the social situatedness of research data."* Patton (2002:341) explains that qualitative interviewing, *"…begins with the assumptions that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable and able to be made explicit."*

Interviews resemble everyday conversations although they are focused largely on the researcher's needs for gathering data. Interviews also differ from everyday conversations because researchers are concerned with conducting them in the most rigorous way in order to ensure trustworthiness, reliability and validity (Patton & Cochran, 2002).

The interview method takes the form of a dialogue in which the researcher seeks to elicit information from the subject (Sharma, 2010). Interviews are ways for participants to get involved and talk about their views. The interviewees are able to discuss their perception and interpretation in regards to a given situation. Usually the discussion is centred upon a task or problem which has been carefully chosen to give the respondent every opportunity to display knowledge, experience or behaviour from which mental mechanisms used in thinking about that task can be inferred (Sharma, 2010; Alshenqueeti, 2014). In other words, the researcher initiates the conversation for the specific purpose of gaining relevant information. The interview as a research tool focuses on the content specified by the research objectives and a direct verbal interaction between the researcher and the informant (Abdullah & Raman, 2001). The oral exchange between individuals may have the response limited to a single word or it may require a lengthy oral discussion.

Depending on the purpose of the interview, interview questions can be structured, semi-structured or unstructured (Cohen et al., 2007; Hancock et al., 2009; Sharma, 2010). The structured interview is one in which the questions are prepared and presented to each interviewee in an identical way using a strict predetermined order. In other words, the content and procedures are already organised, and the sequence planned. The wordings of the questions are determined by means of a schedule, and the interviewer has little freedom to make modifications (Hancock et al., 2009). In addition, the structured interview involves a series of closed-form questions and there are no follow-ups to the answers to obtain greater depth.

Unstructured interviews come in a free-flowing conversation. The unstructured interview is more open allowing both researcher and subject greater flexibility and freedom although the researcher has control over the research purpose, the question(s), content sequence and wording (Abdullah & Raman, 2001). Although the unstructured interview is more casual, not regular or firmly established, it remains deliberate, organised, planned or arranged in advance.

Qualitative researchers usually employ semi-structured interviews, which involve a number of open-ended questions based on the topic areas that the researcher wants to cover (Hancock et al., 2009). Put differently, the researcher asks carefully worded questions and probes more deeply using open-form questions. The purpose is to obtain more in-depth information. Furthermore, the open-ended nature of the questions posed defines the topic under investigation but provides opportunities for both interviewer and interviewee to discuss some topics in more detail (Patton & Cochran, 2002; Opdenakker, 2006; Hancock et al, 2009). If the interviewee has difficulty answering a question or provides only a brief response, the interviewer can use cues or prompts to encourage the interviewee to consider the question further. In a semi-structured interview, the interviewer also has the freedom to probe the interviewee to elaborate on an original response or to follow a line of inquiry introduced by the interviewee (Berg, 2007; Cohen et al., 2007; Hancock et al., 2009; Driscoll, 2011).This research engaged the semi-structured interview to elicit data from educators and principals in the Pietersburg Circuit in Limpopo Province.

3.7.1.1 Advantages of the interview approach

Yin (2009) asserts that interviews are an essential source of case study evidence because most case studies are about human affairs or behavioural events. Interviews are powerful in eliciting narrative data that allows researchers to investigate people's views in greater depth (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Drew, 2008; Travers, 2008; Miller & Glassner, 2011). Cohen et al. (2007) posit that interviewing is a valuable method for exploring the construction and negotiation of meanings in a natural setting. Qualitative researchers tend to provide detailed descriptions of individuals and events in their natural settings (Alshenqeeti, 2014).

The value of interviewing is not only because it builds a holistic snapshot, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, but also because it enables interviewees to speak in their own voice and express their own thoughts and feelings (Berg, 2007). In addition, interviews have the ability to provide valuable information when used to supplement other data collection methods. For instance, when events are not always directly observable, talking to people would be one of the most effective methods of gathering data. Interviews are interactive therefore, interviewers can press for complete clear answers and probe into any emerging topics (Alshenqeeti, 2014). Hence, interviewing is expected to broaden the scope of understanding investigated phenomena, as it is more naturalistic and a less structured data collection tool.

It has been pointed out that the direct interaction of the interview is the source of its advantage (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Interviews are flexible (Drew, 2008). In an interview, the personal perspectives of the respondents are provided, meanings and feelings can be obtained and clarification of questions is possible (Sharma, 2010). Any misunderstanding and mistake can be rectified easily in an interview because the interviewer and interviewee are physically present. In addition, relations between the interviewer and interviewee can be developed. Development of relationships increases mutual understanding and co-operation between the parties when a user-friendly interview ambience or climate is created.

Interviews can be tape-recorded with the permission of the interviewee (Opdenakker, 2006) alongside taking down written notes. Using a tape recorder has the advantage that the interview report is more accurate than writing out notes. However, the tape

recorder should be thought of as complimentary or a “third party” that cannot see. When subjects, for instance, gesture or show size with their hands (body language) these non-verbal cues have to be translated into verbal language.

Any interview has the potential to increase the knowledge of both the interviewer and the interviewee. They can exchange their views and ideas and, in the process, broaden their knowledge base. Interviews also have the capacity to explore the cause behind the problem. For instance, educators need to solve different types of problems in their teaching endeavour. To explore or find out the actual reason behind the problem, interview method can be employed.

3.7.1.2 Shortcomings of the interview approach

Although the interview has a number of important advantages as a data collection technique, it does have definite limitations as a research tool. Sharma (2010) noted that both interviewers and respondents are sources of bias. The interviewer, through their perceived role and presence or the questions they ask, may bring on board some bias. Leading questions such as, for example, *“Continuous professional development is clearly prerequisite to effective and efficient teaching, wouldn’t you agree?”* can prompt the participant to respond in a particular way (Driscoll, 2011). The respondent, through their conception of the interview, their memory of events, their ability to answer and their motivation to take part, can also bring in some bias (Sharma, 2010). Denzin and Lincoln (2005) contend that interviewees sometimes respond to interviews using familiar narrative constructs, rather than by providing meaningful insights into their subjective view. Miller and Glassner (2011) expand on this view by stating that interviewees may not trust interviewers, they may not understand the questions or they may purposely mislead interviewers in their responses. Miller and Glassner further pointed out that some interviewees do not want themselves revealed in their totality, resulting in them being conservative with information. Driscoll (2011) argued that people are inherently biased about how they see the world, and may report their own actions in a more favourable way.

Another drawback is that interviews can be time consuming in terms of travel time and time required for transcribing and interpreting information (Mason, 2002; Opdenakker,

2006; Sharma, 2010). Along time constraints, generally interview method can be costly.

An interview is a systematic process of data collection. Interviews require great skill and expertise of the interviewer (Drew et al., 2008). An interview is susceptible to manipulation by the respondent. Collecting false or distorted information may lead to false findings and conclusions (Sarma, 2010). Esch and Esch (2013) propose that the interviewer must be appropriately trained in interviewing techniques to be able to extract rich, non-biased data from the research participants.

Miller and Glassner (2011) refer to language in research as, *"our window into the subject's world."* Language may also be an issue as participants in the research may have English as a second language, possibly leading to wrong decoding of messages or misconception of issues and terms (Sharma, 2010). In agreement, Holstein and Gubrium (2011) contend that language shapes meanings in interviews, but can also permit intersubjectivity and bias.

The issue of how interviewees respond to interviewers based on who the interviewers are in their lives, as well as the social class or categories to which they belong, such as age, gender, race, tribe or nationality is a practical concern in research (Miller and Glassner, 2011). Particularly because of social distances, interviewees may purposely mislead interviewers in their responses; leading to research conclusions drawn on false information.

3.7.1.3 Conducting interviews in the field

This research engaged semi-structured interviews, which facilitated probing more deeply into issues, and provided scope for interviewees to expound or add detail to their responses. The researcher considered the semi-structured interview to be less restrictive, as it allowed respondents to reveal more about the subtle issues beyond the given questions.

Planning was crucial prior to the interview sessions. Times for interviews were agreed upon in spite of the usual very busy schedules of the members of the cohort. There were no withdrawals or refusals to participate. The interviews were held in a variety of

venues and at various times throughout the day or evenings. The interviewees were given the option to propose the venue.

The interviewees upon arriving at the interview site completed consent forms. The researcher reviewed the purpose and significance of the study to each respondent. The formal protocols required for ethical conduct of research were toured. These included the assurance of anonymity and confidentiality. The interviewees were enlightened on their freedom and liberty to opt out of the study at any time if they so wished. The idea was to establish a climate for mutual disclosure (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011). The interview was an occasion for the researcher to display willingness to share his feelings and deepest thoughts with the participants. This was done to assure that they could in turn share their own intimate thoughts and feelings (Holstein & Gubrium, 2011). Forecasted amount of time it would take to conduct the interview was proposed. It was a prediction of not more than one and a half hours, but no time limit was strictly specified.

The researcher drafted an interview guide (Annexures A and B). He deliberately crafted more “how” questions as opposed to “why” questions. This was to guard against interviewees being defensive about their actions; a common feature when “why” questions dominate (Yin, 2009). The interview schedule began by soliciting for information pertaining to respondents’ demographics such as gender, age, professional qualifications and teaching experience and status. The researcher considered that information to be relevant later for contextualising participants’ responses (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The interviews with the educators and principals were audiotaped and transcribed. The researcher was not bound by a rigid questionnaire designed to ensure that the same questions are asked to all respondents in exactly the same way (David & Sutton, 2004; Cohen et al., 2007; Alshenqueeti, 2014; Patton, 2015). He created a user-friendly interview ambience to encourage subjects to tell their own stories in their own words with him prompting. The questions put to the subjects were intended to elicit valid responses. Follow-up questions also assisted with transcribing data as additional or new information emerged. Hoyle, Harris and Judd (2002:144) commented that questions have, *“…dual goals of motivating the respondent to give full and precise*

replies while avoiding biases stemming from social desirability, conformity or other constructs of disinterest."

One way of attempting to eliminate bias in the interviews was to tape-record in addition to note taking. This dismissed the notion of the interviewer relying solely on memory in note taking. Recording interviews allowed the researcher to directly quote the individual and "re-read" the interview through playing back to assist with transcriptions (Driscoll, 2011).

Hancock et al. (2009:17) advise that:

> *A good interview needs to be able to put an interviewee at ease, needs good listening skills and needs to be able to manage an interview situation so as to collect data which truly reflect the opinions and feelings of the interviewee concerning the chosen topic(s). A quiet, comfortable location should be chosen and the interviewer should give consideration to how s/he presents her/himself in terms of dress, manner and so on, so as to be approachable.*

The researcher endeavoured to allow all interviews to flow naturally rather than impede it, but ensuring that he gathers rich, detailed information to address the research problems. In other words, the researcher ensured an appropriate focus on issues and topics relevant to my research questions (Mason, 2002). The researcher established an appropriate atmosphere to ensure that the interviewees felt more at ease and thus spoke freely. Particular attention was paid to facial expressions and the general body language, by being responsive to any signs of fatigue or stress on respondents. The researcher avoided interrupting them, but instead, listened attentively to the descriptions of their experiences (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). Participants were allowed to bring up comments or pause questions during and at the end of the session (Alshenqeeti, 2014). Prolonged pauses as well as silence were allowed to give participants time to reflect on pertinent issues. The respondents would break the silence once they had formulated their thoughts. Mason (2002:74) advises that researchers, *"Be sensitive to the interviewees, to their needs and rights, in accordance with your ethical position and moral practice."*

The researcher gave polite clues that the interview was ending by shuffling field notes papers and turning off the tape-recorder (Opdenakker, 2006). The researcher explicitly terminated the interviews by politely thanking the interviewee for cooperation. He

further asked respondents if they had any further remarks that might be relevant to the topic or the interview process. This however, in some instances led to an emergent of a completely new area of information.

3.7.2 Focus groups

Focus group interviews are a qualitative research method that consists of a carefully designed discussion, which allows people to express their points of view in a group setting and provide researchers with indicators of programme impact (Villard, 2002). The focus group interviews are used to gather information for discovery, bench marking, evaluating, verifying perceptions, feelings, opinions and thoughts in nurturing different perceptions and points of view (Wilkinson, 2011; Alshenqeeti, 2014; Patton, 2015). The focus group technique can be used alone or in conjunction (triangulation) with other research methods.

Barbour and Schostak (2005:46) define focus group as, *"… an interviewing technique in which participants are selected because they are a purposive, although not necessarily representative, sampling of a specific population; this group being 'focused' on a given topic."* Leung and Savithiri (2009: 219) had this to say about focus groups:

> *… a focus group consists of participants who are guided via a facilitated discussion. A set of open-ended questions initiate focus group discussions. The facilitator can steer the participants back to the focus group questions or along with the direction of the focus group discussions, depending on the research questions posed. Focus groups concentrate on a clearly defined topic, and efforts are made to gather information and opinions from group members. Participants are free to talk with other participants – the setting is intended to be interactive.*

Rennekamp and Nall (2002:1) put forward a simplified definition of focus group thus; *"… a focus group is composed of six to twelve people who are similar in one or more ways, and are guided through a facilitated discussion on a clearly defined topic, to gather information about the opinions of the group members."*

The above definitions all seem to agree that focus groups are a type of in-depth interview accomplished in a group. Participants in the focus group are brought together because they possess certain characteristics related to the subject under study. The participants can influence each other through their answers to the ideas and

contributions during discussion (Freitas, Oliveira, Jenkins & Popjoy, 1998; Villard, 2002; Smithson, 2008). The moderator may stimulate discussion with comments. Lezaun (2007:130) had this to say, *"The role of the moderator is to structure a process of interaction conducive to the elicitation and elucidation of the most private views, while reducing to a minimum the residuum of 'socialness' left over from the process."*

Ruiz (2017) viewed focus group discussions as a process of decreased individuality in which there is a progressive loss of individualities for the emergence of a collective discourse and a group identity. Further, Ruiz noted that focus group conversations were a process of coming to an understanding. Ruiz (2017:4) posits that*, "…it is a feature of every conversation that each person opens him/herself to the other, not his/her point of view as valid and transposes him/herself into the other to such an extent that he/she understands, not the particular individual but, what he/she says."* However, this agreement should not be misconstrued as absolute agreement on each of the topics or issues covered. The 'agreement' reached can actually be diverse. As Ruiz (2017:4) put it, *"…the output of a discussion group is always a shared discourse, but the degree to which it is shared does not have to constitute absolute agreement."*

The fundamental data produced by this technique are the transcripts of the group discussions and the moderator's reflections and annotations (Freitas et al., 1998). The results obtained from the focus group engagement are particularly effective in supplying information about how people think, feel or act regarding a specific topic (Krueger, 2002; Parker & Tritter, 2006; Ruiz, 2017). The focus or object of analysis is the interaction inside the group. Typically, the discussion is recorded, the data transcribed and then analysed using conventional techniques for qualitative data such as content or thematic analysis (Wilkinson, 2011).

The general characteristics of the focus group are, according to Freitas et al. (1998:2) *"… people's involvement, a series of meetings, the homogeneity of participants with respect to research interests, the generation of qualitative data, and discussion focused on a topic which is determined by the purpose of the research."* Focus group is therefore, particularly suited to be used when the objective is to understand better how people consider an experience, idea or event (Patton & Cochran, 2002; Smithson, 2002; Hancock et al., 2009). As has been alluded to earlier on, focus group meetings are effective in supplying information about what people think, feel or act. The

objective is to obtain information on participants' beliefs and perceptions on a topic of interest.

Much misconception surrounds the concept of focus groups. Focus groups must not be confused with the many other group methods used for collecting information such as public forums, advisory councils, hearings, study circles, committees or task forces (Rennekamp & Nall, 2002; Leung & Savithiri, 2009). For instance, the moderator does not ask questions of each focus group participant in turn, but rather facilitates group discussion; actively encouraging group members to interact with each other (Wilkinson, 2011). While the purpose of focus groups is to promote self-disclosure among participants in a group by ascertaining their perceptions, feelings, opinions and thoughts, focus group interviews are not intended to help groups or researchers reach decisions, gain consensus or establish how many people hold a particular view like statistics (Villard, 2002).

3.7.2.1 The advantages of focus group

The goal of a focus group is to promote self-disclosure among participants (Rennekamp & Nall, 2002; Wilkinson, 2011; Patton, 2015). A group as opposed to an individual is asked to respond to questions. Participants dialogue as they react or 'piggy-back' on the comments of others, and in the process, add richness to the dialogue that could otherwise not be achieved in a one-on-one interview (Rennekamp & Nall, 2002). In addition, participants may feel more at ease and comfortable contributing in a group than in an individual interview. In such a scenario, interactions are likely to generate more discussion and, therefore, more detailed information considering that focus group setting is less controlled than, for instance, individual setting.

As can be inferred from the above description, participants build on each other's ideas through 'piggy-backing'. Individuals in the group are more likely to provide candid responses (Leung & Savithiri, 2009). In addition, focus groups are a flexible assessment tool as interactions between the moderator and participants allow the moderator to probe issues in depth and by encouraging dialogue and exchange of ideas (Villard, 2002). The moderator can address new issues as they arise and further probe participants to elaborate on their responses.

In a way, focus groups resemble interviews, but focus group transcripts can be analysed to explore the ways in which the participants interact with each other and influence each other's expressed ideas (Hancock et al., 2009). That obviously cannot happen with one-to-one interview material. In common with semi-structured interviews, focus group conveners use topic guides to help them keep the discussion relevant to the research question(s). With effective group dynamics, the researcher often moves into unexpected directions exploring new ideas and answers (Morgan, 1997; Lezaun, 2007; Parker & Tritter, 2006).

Morgan (1997) claims that the main advantage of focus group is the opportunity to observe a large amount of interaction on a topic in a limited period of time based on the researcher's ability to assemble and direct the focus group sessions. In addition, the group discussions provide direct evidence about similarities and differences in the participants' opinions and experiences as opposed to reaching such conclusions from post hoc analyses of separate statements from each interviewee (Lezaun, 2007; Wilkinson, 2011; Villard, 2002). Reliance on interaction in the group to produce data is a source of strength for focus group. Moreover, the comparisons that participants make among each other's experiences and opinions are a valuable source of insights into complex behaviours and motivations (Smithson, 2000; Krueger, 2002; Ruiz, 2017). Ruiz (2017) claims that the ultimate aim of the focus group technique is the group interactions that encourage the emergence or disclosure of the individual opinions and views of each of the participants.

Conducting focus groups is relatively inexpensive (Leung & Savithiri, 2009). It has low cost in relation to other methods. The actual time and cost for planning, conducting and analysing data may be relatively small when compared to, individual interviews. The condensed nature of a focus group makes it possible for the study to solicit several opinions and feedback on multiple aspects of the study without the time-intensive process of individually soliciting interviews (Abdullah & Raman, 2001; Krueger, 2002; Barbour & Schostak, 2005; Patton, 2015).

Ruiz (2017) defends the homogeneity or similarity of participants for focus group as a way to encourage the emergence, expression or disclosure of individual views and to foster a high-quality discussion on the research topic at stake. Furthermore, the homogeneous composition is likely to build trust among participants. However, while

homogeneity should be sought, a certain degree of diversity in the group should be incorporated to allow for divergent opinions that enrich and revitalise the debates (Ruiz, 2017).

3.7.2.2 Limitations of focus group

Focus group advantages are offset by certain limitations. The focus group relies heavily on guided or assisted discussion (Krueger, 2002; Leung & Savithiri, 2009). The quality of the discussion depends heavily on the skill of the moderator, making it essential that the moderator is carefully trained and skilful. Moderators can greatly influence the outcome of a focus group discussion by intentionally or inadvertently injecting their personal biases into the participants' exchange of ideas (Lezaun, 2007; Wilkinson, 2011). There is some concern that the moderator will influence the group's interaction in the name of maintaining the interview's focus (Wilkinson, 2011). The fact that the moderator creates and directs the group makes it less naturalistic. Moreover, the researcher requests the data more than the informants volunteer it. Moderators can also lead focus group participants into reaching certain assumptions or conclusions about an idea. In addition, out of fear of disappointing the moderator or going against the opinion of the moderator, participants may not completely disclose their true and honest opinions*. "Because the discussions in focus groups are controlled by the researcher, we can never be sure of how natural the interactions are,"* Morgan (1997:9).

Another particular disadvantage of a focus group is the possibility that participants may also not express their honest and personal opinions about the topic at hand. The mere presence of a group may affect what some participants say and how they say it, (Morgan, 1997). Respondents may be hesitant to express their thoughts, especially when their thoughts oppose the views of another participant. In other words, the group setting can influence the responses of individuals. Ruiz (2017) noted that the pressure to conform might lead participants to adjust their contributions to match those of others. Ruiz (2017:2) had this to say:

> *This phenomenon, which is known as 'groupthink' involves a 'bandwagon effect' where people endorse more extreme ideas in a group than they would express individually; and social desirability pressures induce participants to offer information or play particular roles, either to fulfil the*

perceived expectations of the facilitator or other participants, or to present a favourable image of themselves.

According to Wilkinson (2011), the concerns for focus group include both a tendency toward conformity, in which some participants withhold things that they might say in private, and a tendency toward 'polarization' in which some participants express more extreme views in a group than in private.

One issue for the focus group moderator, and for analysis, is how to deal with one or several group member(s) dominating the discussion so that theirs is the only opinion clearly articulated (Smithson, 2000). When the outspoken individuals 'hijack' and dominate a discussion, the emerging 'dominant voice' may over-represent the opinions of one or more vociferous members (Smithson, 2000; Villard, 2002; Leung & Savithiri, 2009is). Will this opinion be represented as the 'group's opinion? Ideally, focus group analysis should treat the 'group' as the primary unit of analysis.

Focus group discussions should be audiotaped or videotaped in addition to the recording of field notes. However, certain problems may arise when focus group interviews are tape-recorded. The challenge of recognising who is speaking when a focus group interview had been conducted a long time ago arises. Some participants may withhold some information for fear of being audiotaped.

Alshenqeeti (2014) asserts that focus group interviewing process is complex and difficult to follow. All data should be transcribed verbatim. The large volumes of qualitative data might be difficult to process and analyse. In support, Villard (2002) posits that the interpretation of data is tedious and time intensive.

A further weakness inherent to the focus group is that the small numbers constituting the group can limit the extent to which the results may be generalised. Moreover, the participants are self-selected (purposive sampling) rendering the study results harder to generalise to the larger population.

3.7.2.3 Conducting focus group interviews in the field

To enhance achieving a high attendance rate of participants, the researcher invited the informants by setting the date, time and location for the meeting. Prior to the focus

group session, the researcher made personal contacts with potential participants through telephone calls, personal letters and personal visits.

The researcher developed a semi-structured focus group guide used as a basis for discussion (Annexures C for educators and Annexure D for principals). The focus group interview guides were used as mere guidelines and did not in no way prevent participants from discussing those issues they considered crucial. Each focus group was welcomed. The researcher offered refreshments before each session as a good 'ice-breaker' to promote participants familiarisation. Hancock et al (2009:18) noted that, *"Members of a focus group may not speak openly unless they are comfortable that others present will treat their contributions as confidential."* Ground rules were outlined. All participants indicated their agreement to the ground rules and more by completing consent forms (Annexure G). Ethical considerations on anonymity and confidentiality were stressed.

The participants were informed that they would be tape-recorded so that none of their comments or contributions would be missed out. The moderator could in no way write fast enough to capture all the raised issues. The focus group interviews were audiotaped with the participants' permission. The challenge of recognising who was speaking if a tape-recorded focus group discussion had been conducted a long time ago was overcome by transcribing the recordings soon after the interview. Participants were requested to either switch-off their phones or put on mute to allow messages and calls to come through without destructing the cohort.

The problem of a dominant voice overriding other voices was supposedly dealt with by the technique of making the focus groups homogeneous in terms of professional education, experience and current occupational positions as educators or principals (Smithson, 2000). The need to maintain a reasonable homogeneity was also considered in order to encourage discussion at more or less the same level. The goal was to build-in enough variation for contrasting ideas, but not so much that participants are inhibited and move to those they perceive to be more experienced or knowledgeable on an issue (Rennekamp & Nall, 2002). It was not viewed as a problem when some members of the focus group remained silent for longer periods as, according to Smithson (2000:108) "Silence is an enduring feature of human interaction present in research communicative contexts."

The moderator did not assume the position of power or influence. Instead, he encouraged all types of comments, be they positive or negative. The researcher did not make judgements on the responses. He declared my role as moderator, and that is to basically guide the discussion. In addition, he impressed upon the participants that there were no right or wrong answers but rather only differing points of view (Krueger, 2002; Rennekamp & Nall, 2002). The researcher was also careful not to communicate approval or disapproval either with verbal language or with body language as in shaking or nodding one's head. Short verbal responses were never engaged such as in, *"excellent' or "that's good."* Smithson (2000:110) asserts that, *"A possible strategy to minimize moderator bias is to ensure that the moderator is from a similar background to the participants."* The researcher was an educator of 34 years of experience of which 16 years as principal.

Focus group interviews with educators and principals were conducted. In this research, it was felt that 5 members per focus group would be adequate to stimulate discussion but small enough to capture all relevant data. There were 2 groups of 5 educators per group and 1 group of 5 principals.

An outspoken dominant group member (Morgan, 1996; Barbour & Schostak, 2005; Patton, 2015) can overly influence the tone of the focus group. The researcher drew out less-vocal members by asking why they agreed or disagreed and solicited their opinions in other discussion aspects. He encouraged the quiet and shy group members by using eye contact, calling on them and asking follow-up questions to generate useful responses from them.

The researcher made an attempt to pose short, natural and open-ended questions that yielded powerful information (Annexures C and D). Questions in focus groups have been noted to fall into 5 categories namely, opening questions, introductory questions, transition questions, key questions and concluding questions (Rennekamp & Nall, 2002; Krueger, 2002; Leung & Savithiri, 2009). Most of the time was devoted to exploring and examining the key questions that tended to focus on the main areas of concern on professional development. Dichotomous questions that could be answered with a "yes" or "no" were never engaged (Krueger, 2002; Rennekamp & Nall, 2002). "Why" was rarely posed as it tended to put participants on a defensive

mode. Throughout, the moderator probed for additional information to describe issues further.

The researcher took note of factors, which might aid analysis such as passionate comments, body language or non-verbal activity (Krueger, 2002). In addition, he watched out for head nods, physical excitement, and eye contact between certain participants as clues that would indicate level of agreement, support or interest. Finally, with each session, the researcher reviewed the purpose of the study and asked the participants if anything in their view had been missed in the discussion. He politely thanked all the participants before dismissal.

3.7.3 Documentary evidence

Documents are the records written and kept by actual participants or witnesses of an event (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011; Prior, 2011). Concisely, documentary research concerns the analysis of documents that contain information about the phenomenon one wishes to study (Ahmed, 2010). These documentary sources are produced for transmitting information to be used in the future. A wide range of written materials can produce qualitative information. Documents that may be used for systematic analysis or evaluation as part of a research study take a variety of forms (Plummer, 2001). They can include policy documents, mission statements, annual reports, minutes of meetings, codes of conduct, web sites, series of letters or emails, event programmes, memoranda, diary entries and journals. Audio diaries may be used if the written word presents problems (Hancock et al., 2009). Photographs may also be produced for research purposes. Mason (2002:103) posits that, *"Documents are usually considered to be text-based, but they are not necessarily so, and some commentators will include non-text-based documents – especially photographs – in their discussions of documentary methods."*

It can be argued that 'literature review' is in fact one very good example of documentary research that even the skeptics of documentary research carry out unconsciously (Mogalakwe, 2006; Ahmed, 2010). All research projects always require a section on, "Review of Related Literature." Based on a comprehensive literature review on a particular topic, a researcher can be able to formulate a conceptual or

theoretical framework within which to locate data analysis (Mogalakwe, 2006; Ahmed, 2010).

A broad definition of a document, according to Ahmed (2010:2) is a, *"Written text."* Bowen (2009:27) defines document analysis as, *"…a form of qualitative research in which documents are interpreted by the researcher to give voice and meaning around an assessment topic."* Bowen further clarifies document analysis by stating that it is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating both printed and electronic material (computer-based and internet-based). Payne and Payne (2004) quoted in Mogalakwe (2006:221) describes the documentary method as the technique used to, *"…categorise, investigate, interpret and identify the limitations of physical sources, most commonly written documents…."* Plummer (2001:48) views documents as what he calls, *"…accessories to a life story."*

Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding as well as develop empirical knowledge (Bowen, 2009). The analytic procedure entails finding, selecting, making sense of (appraising) and synthesising data contained in the documents (Labuschagne, 2003). In other words, analysing documents incorporates coding content into themes similar to how focus group or interview transcripts are analysed (Bowen, 2009).

It must be noted that documents are not deliberately produced for the purpose of research. When documents are put forward for consideration in research, they tend to be approached solely in terms of what they contain (Prior, 2011). Documents contain text and images that have been recorded without the researcher's intervention (Bowen, 2009). Researchers typically review prior literature or recordings as part of their studies and incorporate that information in their reports and findings. In short, they are sourced for evidence. Data analysis strategies then concentrate entirely on what is in the text (Artkinson & Coffey, 2011). Documentary research in social science also requires rigorous adherence to research protocol (Mogalakwe, 2006; Ahmed, 2010).

It is generally better to have access to a wide array of documents providing evidence. When documents are being used for triangulation, verification or support, even a few

documents can provide an effective means of completing the research (Helm, 2000; Bowen, 2009). Bowen (2009:34) warns that document analysis is not a matter of lining up a series of excerpts from printed material to convey ideas that come to the researcher's mind. Rather, it is, *"… a process of evaluating documents in such a way that empirical knowledge is produced and understanding is developed."* In the process, the researcher should always endeavour to remain objective.

Just as a qualitative interviewer or observer needs to be forearmed with a good sense of what he/she is looking for, so does the researcher using documents (Mason, 2002). The researcher must ask hard questions as to what he/she expects the documents or visual data to be able to supply him/her. In this study, the researcher had to prove with each document that continuous professional development took place at some time in an attempt to improve teaching and learning.

3.7.3.1 The advantages of documentary analysis

There are many reasons why researchers choose to use document analysis. Document analysis is often used in combination with other qualitative research methods as a means of triangulating in an attempt to seek*, "…convergence and corroboration through the use of different data sources and methods"* (Bowen, 2009:28). By triangulating data, the researcher attempts to provide evidence that would breed credibility and validity. As a research method, document analysis is particularly applicable to qualitative case studies in which the intensive studies produce rich detailed descriptions of phenomenon (Yin, 2009). Furthermore, Merriam (1998:118) pointed out, *"Documents of all types can help the researcher uncover meaning, develop understanding, and discover insights relevant to the research problem."*

Bowen (2009) puts forward claims that document analysis is an efficient and effective way of gathering data because documents are manageable and practical resources. Documents are commonplace and come in a variety of forms; making documents accessible and reliable. Bowen asserts that the data contained in documents has already been gathered; what remains is for the content and quality of the document to be evaluated. Document analysis is an efficient method in that it is less time-consuming than other methods as it requires data-selection, instead of data collection.

Many documents are in the public domain making their availability more accessible. Some documents can be sourced from the internet without the author's permission. Furthermore, conducting documentary research enhances access to information that would be difficult to get, such as people who may not be willing to talk in a formal research interview, or might be difficult to track down.

Obtaining and analysing documents is often far more cost efficient (Mason, 2002; Mogalakwe, 2006; Bowen, 2009; Ahmed, 2010). In addition, documents are stable (non-reactive) data sources, meaning that they can be read and reviewed multiple times and remain unchanged by the researcher's influence or research process (Bowen, 2009). In other words, documents eliminate the 'researcher effect' that the researcher may have on the subjects or situation. Participants may be affected by how the researcher conducts him/herself, and on how the subjects may perceive the researcher. Issues of sex, age, tribe, nationality, race and other characteristics are likely to have an impact on what respondents tell you or do when they know they are being researched. In support, Bowen (2009:31) states that:

> *Documents are 'unobtrusive' and 'non-reactive' – that is, they are unaffected by the research process. Therefore, document analysis counters the concerns related to reflexivity (or the lack of it) inherent in other qualitative research methods. With regard to observation, for instance, an event may proceed differently because it is being observed. Reflexivity which requires an awareness of the researcher's contribution to the construction of meanings attached to social interactions and acknowledgement of the possibility of investigator's influence on the research – is usually not an issue in using documents for research.*

Whereas document analysis has served mostly as a complement to other research methods, it has also been used as a stand-alone method (Bowen, 2009). For historical and cross-cultural research, relying on prior studies may be the only realistic approach (Merriam, 1998). Documentary materials can be regarded as data in their own right (Atkinson & Coffey, 2011).

Bowen (2009:29) put forward five specific uses of documents that highlight their merits. First, documents can provide data on the context within which research participants operate. Documents can provide background information by bearing witness to past events. The researcher, therefore, can use data drawn from documents to contextualize data collected during, for example, interviews. Second,

information in documents can suggest questions that need to be asked and situations that need to be observed as part of the research. In other words, one research method (documentary analysis) can complement another in an interactive way.

Third, documents provide supplementary research data. Information and insights derived from documents can be valuable additions to a knowledge base. Fourth, documents provide a means of tracking change and developments over time. Where various drafts of a particular document are accessible, the researcher can compare them to identify the changes. Even subtle changes in a draft can reflect substantive developments in a project (Yin, 2009). Fifth, as already alluded to, documents can be analysed as a way to verify findings or corroborate evidence from other sources.

Documents can contain data that no longer can be observed and provide details that informants have forgotten (Bowen, 2009). Documents provide broad coverage as they cover a long span of time, many events and many settings (Yin, 2009). The inclusion of exact names, references, and details of events (exactness) makes documents advantageous in the research settings (Yin, 2009). As a corollary to being non-reactive, documents are stable. The investigator's presence does not alter what is being studied (Merriam, 1998). Documents, then, are suitable for repeated reviews.

Some documents may contain spontaneous data such as feelings as recorded actions (Plummer, 2001). Confessional documents, for instance, may give an insight into how people see things or how they want to present things.

3.7.3.2 Limitations of documentary evidence

Every method of inquiry has its strengths and shortcomings. Documentary research method is not always advantageous. A number of limitations inherent in documents are described below.

A document will not perfectly provide all of the necessary information required to answer research questions, considering that documents are not created with data research agendas (Bowen, 2009; O'Leary, 2014; Atkinson & Coffey, 2011). In other words, researchers rely on document data that has been produced for other purposes other than for the specific aims of the research investigation. Some documents may be incomplete, or their data may be inconsistent or very inaccurate. Other documents

may only provide a small amount of useful data, or sometimes none at all (Bowen, 2009). Some high-order investigative skills are required in gathering data using documentary evidence. Sometimes there are gaps or sparseness of documents, leading to more searching or reliance on additional documents than initially planned (Bowen, 2009; O'Leary, 2014).

In view of the above issues, if the documentary evidence is contradictory rather than corroboratory, the researcher is expected to research further (Bowen, 2009). Atkinson and Coffey (2011:79) advise researchers to consider carefully whether and how documents can serve particular research purposes. The authors emphasise:

> *Documents are 'social facts' in that they are produced, shared and used in socially organised ways. They are not, however, transparent representations of organisational routines, decision-making processes, or professional practices. Documentary sources are not surrogates for other kind of data. We cannot, for instance, learn through written records alone how an organisation actually operates day by day. Equally, we cannot treat records – however 'official' – as firm evidence of what they report.*

Mason (2002) agrees, adding to the above assertions that literal readings of documents should not be extended to treating them as though they are direct representations or reflections of reality or straightforward factual records. In other words, it is tempting to view or consider documents as providing 'legitimate' evidence that should not be questioned. Ideally, the researcher should be critical by exercising a high degree of sophistication and scepticism in reading and interpreting documents (Mason, 2002).

Some documents may not be readily or easily available. Documentation is sometimes not retrievable, or retrievability is complicated (Yin, 2009). Yin noted that access to documents might be deliberately blocked. Principals in schools, for instance, may deliberately deny access to some of the documents in fear of perceived privacy invasion by the researcher. An incomplete surrender or collection of documents suggests 'biased selectivity' (Yin, 2009:80). In a school context, the available (by selection) documents are likely to be aligned with school policies and procedures and with the agenda of the school's principals (Bowen, 2009). In addition, they may also reflect the emphasis of that particular school on how it handles record keeping.

Another concern to be aware of in document analysis is the potential presence of biases (Bowen, 2009; O'Leary, 2014). Both Bowen and O'Leary emphasise the importance of thoroughly evaluating and investigating the subjectivity of documents in order to preserve the credibility of the research. Ahmed (2010) adds the view that the researcher may also give a selective and biased understanding of a document, and may even deliberately choose or select particular documents in his/her favour. Documents can owe more to the interpretations of the producers of documents than to an objective picture of reality (Ahmed, 2010), meaning to say documents are open to manipulation.

In view of the above, it is apparent that documentary analysis demands rigorous adherence to research standards and ethics (Mogalakwe, 2006). The above concerns are potential flaws rather than major disadvantages. The reason that the issues surrounding document analysis are concerns and not disadvantages is that they can be easily avoided by having a clear process that incorporates evaluative steps and measures (Bowen, 2009; O'Leary, 2014). Given its efficiency and cost-effectiveness in particular, document analysis offers advantages that clearly outweigh the limitations (Bowen, 2009).

3.7.3.3 Collecting documentary evidence in the field

Ahmed (2010:1) posits that, *"The raw material of research is evidence, which then has to be made sense of."* In this study, documentary evidence was collected around continuous professional development of educators in an attempt to answer or address research questions. In other words, the research questions guided the focus of gathering documentary evidence.

The documents collected from the sample of 5 schools and used to gather documentary evidence included staff meeting minutes, records of school-based CPD workshops, documented records of external CPD workshops attended, hand-outs of CPD programmes, power-point presentations, Government publications and legislation (such as on SACE PD points) and audio and visual documentation. Academic publications such as journals or periodicals used to effect or accomplish CPD in schools were reviewed. The personal files of educators and principals with

CPD content, as well as certificates to authenticate attendance or acquired qualifications of educators were viewed or reviewed.

The researcher focused on the content of the documents and used the data accounts as a resource that tell what is going on in schools as far as CPD is concerned (Prior, 2011). The school Vision and Mission statements were reviewed to establish if they made any reference to CPD as a means of enhancing improved teaching and learning leading to higher student achievement. The researcher identified and gathered only pertinent information relevant to CPD. Procedurally, documents are analysed for meaning and interpretation and enhanced understanding (Bowen, 2009).

The researcher was guided by the principles offered by Mogalakwe (2006) and Ahmed (2010) in handling documentary evidence. These are authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning. Documents were analysed for authenticity, credibility, representativeness and meaning in conjunction with CPD programmes that were claimed to have instituted in the school. These quality control criteria for handling research evidence shall be discussed in more detail at a later stage in this study. Authenticity refers to whether the evidence is genuine, reliable and from impeccable sources or dependable origins (Mogalakwe, 2006). Authenticity of an evidence for analysis is the fundamental criterion in any research (Mogalakwe, 2006; Ahmed, 2010). The researcher checked for any possible inconsistencies in the documents by triangulating with interviews and focus group discussions. The researcher also looked out for any different versions of the supposedly same CPD programme.

Ahmed (2010:4) asserts that credibility refers to, *"…the objective and subjective components of the believability of a source or message; whether the evidence is free from error and distortion."* As evidenced in the triangulation exercise, the researcher confirms that all the documents used were prepared independently and beforehand. In other words, none of the documents was prepared for my benefit. The researcher therefore believe that they were sincere and could not have been altered for my benefit or to mislead me.

Representativeness refers to whether the documents consulted are representative of the totality of the relevant documents (Ahmed, 2010). Mogalakwe (2006:226) had this to say, *"Representativeness refers to whether the evidence is typical of its kind, or if it*

is not, whether the extent of its 'untypicality' is known." During fieldwork, the researcher was never denied access to any documents to his knowledge. However, as to whether the documents he consulted were representative of the totality of the documents pertaining to CPD in that particular school is difficult to claim.

'Meaning' refers to whether the evidence is clear and comprehensible (Mogalakwe, 2006; Ahmed, 2010). Mogalakwe (2006) claims that the ultimate purpose of examining documents is to arrive at an understanding of the meaning and significance of what the document contains. To this end, the researcher augmented documentary data by in-depth interviews with a few key informants. He subjected document content to additional and more rigorous interrogation to help capture certain perceptions, meanings and interpretations (Mogalakwe, 2006). The interviews were deliberately intended to help detect any conflicting attitudes and interpretations of the same events, programmes and situations.

All the questions about ethical practice and informed consent apply equally to the use of documents and visual data. It was not difficult to establish and secure informed consent for the use of documentary evidence. The researcher gained the appropriate consent from all relevant parties.

3.8 DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of data in research entails summarising the mass of data collected and presenting the results in a way that communicates the most important features (Mason, 2002; Bowen, 2009). Analysis involves the categorisation of verbal or behavioural data (non-verbal), for purposes of classification, summarisation and possible tabulation (Hancock et al., 2009). In other words, the analyst or researcher should construct and present a convincing explanation or argument based on qualitative data. The bigger task is in sorting and organising data.

In qualitative research, researchers are interested in discovering the 'bigger picture' but use different techniques to find it. The techniques amongst others include content analysis, thematic analysis, discourse analysis and interpretive phenomenological analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Jugder, 2016). For the most part researchers are interested in using the data to describe a phenomenon, to articulate what it means and to understand it (Hancock et al., 2009).

The data or research content can be analysed on two levels. The basic level of analysis is a descriptive account of the data which entails what was actually said, documented or observed with nothing read into it nor assumed about it (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Javadi & Zarea, 2016; Jugder, 2016). Some texts refer to this as the manifest level of analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The higher level of analysis is interpretive which is concerned with what was meant by the response, what was inferred or implied. It is sometimes called the latent level of analysis (Hancock et al., 2009; Braun & Clarke, 2006).

In essence, the analysis process starts when the analyst begins to notice and look for patterns of meaning and issues of potential interest in the data during data collection (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Thomas & Harden, 2007; Bazeley, 2009). Broadly, analysis involves constant moving forward and back between the entire data set (Patton & Cochran, 2002; Vaismoradi, Turumen & Bondas, 2013).

3.8.1 Thematic analysis

The method of analysis chosen for the study was a qualitative approach of thematic analysis. Researchers use thematic analysis as a means to gain insight and knowledge from gathered data. The method enables researchers to develop a deeper appreciation for the group or situation they are researching (Boyatzis, 1998; Bowen, 2006; Vaismoradi, Jones,Turunen & Snelgrove, 2016).

Thematic analysis is mainly described as, *"… a method for identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data"* (Braun and Clarke, 2009:79). A theme is defined as a coherent integration of the disparate pieces of data that constitute the findings (Sandelowski & Leeman, 2012). A theme captures something important/crucial about data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of response pattern or meaning within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2009). Fereday and Muir-Cochrane (2006) view thematic analysis as a form of pattern recognition within the data, with emerging themes becoming the categories for analysing data. Vaismoradi et al. (2016:100) consider thematic analysis to be a technique used to analyse textual data and elucidate theme in a systematic process of, *"… coding, examining of meaning and provision of a description of the social reality through the creation of theme."*

Qualitative interviews, focus group discussions and documentary analysis were the main methods in the study to obtain various perspectives on the research questions related to the continuous professional development of educators. Qualitative interviews and focus group discussions gave a new insight into social phenomenon as they allowed the respondents to reflect and reason on a variety of subjects (Jugder, 2016). The conceptual framework of the thematic analysis for this study was mainly built upon the theoretical positions of Braun and Clarke (2006). Braun and Clarke (2006) proposed a process or guide of six phases that may be followed in conducting thematic analysis in the order of; phase 1 (familiarising yourself with your data), phase 2 (generating initial codes), phase 3 (searching for themes), phase 4 (reviewing themes), phase 5 (defining and naming themes) and phase 6 (producing the report). The reason I chose this method was that*, "… rigorous thematic approach can produce an insightful analysis that answers particular research questions" (*Braun & Clarke, 2006:97).

3.8.1.1 Analysing the data

The researcher collected interview and focus group discussion data through audio recording and note taking. Documentary evidence data was largely collected through note taking except in instances when respondents were interviewed and audio taped in pursuit of some documentary evidence needing clarification. Immediately after each session, the raw field notes were transformed into well-organised set of notes reflecting closely on what was discussed, and included the researcher's comments. The researcher immersed himself in the data deeply by active repeated reading of the data to search for meaning and emergence of patterns (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Vaismoradi et al., 2013; Vaismoradi et al., 2016; Javadi & Zarea, 2016).

Audio recordings of interviews and focus group discussions were transcribed. comments such as "voice lowered" "mumbled" "coughed to clear throat" and other nonverbal accounts such as 'nodding' 'shaking' 'shrugs' or 'looking away' were inserted. Nonverbal actions or utterances tended to lead to a richer understanding of the meaning of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Thomas & Harden, 2007; Vaismoradi et al., 2013; Vaismoradi et al., 2016). The verbal data was turned into a manuscript that had no grammatical ambiguity to enhance analyst's comprehension at a later stage

whenever the researcher refers to it (Javadi & Zarea, 2016). Braun and Clarke (2006:88) advice that:

> *Writing is an integral part of analysis, and not something that takes place at the end… Therefore, writing should begin in phase one, with the jotting down of ideas and potential coding schemes, and continue right through the entire coding/analysis process.*

All the data that addressed the research question was marked. The researcher marked all the pertinent ideas and issues for coding that would be needed at a later stage. This was the beginning of the coding process. In essence, Braun and Clarke (2006) advice that coding continues to be developed and defined throughout the entire analysis. The transcripts were repeatedly checked against the original audio recordings for maximum accuracy.

The systematic way of organising and gaining meaningful parts of data as it relates to the research question is called coding (Vaismoradi et al., 2013; Vaismoradi et al., 2016; Javadi & Zarea, 2016). Phase 2 in thematic analysis involves generating an initial list of items from the data set that have a reoccurring pattern. Interesting aspects in the data items that appeared to form the basis of repeated patterns or themes across the data set were identified. Data was coded manually by writing notes on the texts being analysed. Highlighters were used to indicate potential patterns or themes. Coding also involved the process of data reduction, simplification and complication (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Codes were reduced by assigning tags or labels to the data set based on the research questions. Condensing large data into smaller units eased and permitted further analysis of the data by creating useful categories. Data complication can be described as going beyond the data and asking questions about the data to generate frameworks and theories (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The researcher expanded the data to create new questions and to ease interpretation of the data.

After all data had been coded and collated, it was moved to validate codes and began in earnest to search for themes. Searching for themes and considering what works and what does not work within themes enabled me to sort the different codes into potential themes. The researcher analysed the codes and considered how different codes could be combined to form an overarching theme. Braun and Clarke (2006:83) assert that a theme, *"… captures something important about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of patterned response or meaning within*

the data set." Themes differ from codes in that themes are phrases or sentences that identify what the data means. In other words, themes consist of ideas and descriptions used to explain causal events, statements and morals derived from the participants' stories (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Code validation involved the researcher reading and re-reading the data line by line in an attempt to pick out and find main ideas (themes and sub-themes). The researcher identified themes that needed to be combined, refined and separated, or discarded. He double-checked the codes for consistency and subsequent validation. Some 'themes' turned out not to be 'real themes' because there was not enough data to support them, or in some instances, the data was too diverse to warrant a theme.

In reviewing themes, the researcher searched for data that supported or refuted the CPD theory. From the codebook, themes and sub-themes were identified. He coded some additional data within themes that had been missed in earlier coding stages. As Javadi and Zarea (2016) advice, some new themes that did not exist before, emerged. This showed flexibility within thematic analysis.

The researcher defined, refined and named the themes that had to be presented in the final analysis. He identified themes in relation to the research questions. This was an information consolidation exercise to finalise theme names in an attempt to help communicate meaning to the reader. In writing, each theme was explained in a few sentences to put into focus.

After final themes had been reviewed, the process of writing the final report commenced. The final analysis and write-up of the report is presented in Chapter 4 as research findings. As Braun and Clarke (2006:96) put it, the analysis write-up provides, *"… a concise, coherent, logical non-repetitive and interesting account of the story the data tell – within and across themes."* The goal of the write-up is to convey the complicated story of the data in a manner that convinces the reader of the validity and merit of my analysis.

3.9 QUALITY CONTROL

Several validation strategies were engaged in this study to ensure that the validity or trustworthiness of the research findings and conclusions were maximised by basing

them on supporting evidence. The validity of research findings refers to the extent to which the findings are an accurate representation of the phenomena they are intended to represent (Bowen, 2009; Yin, 2009; Idowu, 2016). Put simply, validity relates to the honesty and genuineness of the research data. A unique strength of the case study lies in its ability to deal with a variety of evidence (Yin, 2009). Credibility, dependability, confirmability and transferability are the most common measures to achieve rigour in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

3.9.1 Triangulation

Triangulation is one research method for increasing validity of findings through deliberately seeking evidence from two or more data sources or research methods and comparing findings from those different sources to establish factual accuracy (Patton & Cocran, 2002; Mogalakwe, 2006; Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2011; Idowu, 2016). The logic of triangulation is in that one can engage different research methods or data sources to investigate the same phenomena, and that in the process one can judge the efficacy or validity of the different methods and sources by comparing the research evidence (Mason, 2002). The idea or thinking behind is that if the researcher measures the same phenomenon from different angles or positions, the researcher will get an accurate measurement. Veal (2005:39) suggests that, *"…it is when the different data/methods address the same question that true triangulation can be said to have occurred."*

In support, Bowen (2009:28) affirms that triangulating data attempts to provide, *"…a confluence of evidence that breeds credibility."* Put differently, by examining information collected through different methods, the researcher can corroborate findings across data sets and thus reduce the impact of potential biases that can exist in a single study (Bowen, 2009; Yin, 2009; Anderson, 2010; Kielmann et al., 2012). According to Patton and Cochran (2002), triangulation helps the researcher guard against the accusation that a study's findings are simply an artefact of a single method, a single source or a single investigator's bias. Triangulation also helps to avoid errors linked to a particular method by using multiple methods in which different types of data provide cross-validity (Abdullah & Raman, 2001;

Triangulation to determine if data results from different sources supported each other was employed. One data collection method acted as a check on the result of another. To eliminate the inherent biases from using only one method within this research, interviews, focus group discussions and documentary evidence analysis were triangulated. Triangulation was not only to examine the same phenomenon from multiple perspectives, but also to increase understanding when new or deeper insight emerged. For instance, the researcher augmented documentary data by in-depth interviews with what was considered key informants such as the Heads of subject Departments (HODs). The weaknesses and limitations of one research method were complemented by the strength of the other. On several incidents, the researcher confirmed an informant's recall of a school-based CPD programme by checking the secretary's record of staff minutes of the same date.

"Contradictory research evidence (often known as deviant cases) must be sought out, examined and accounted for in the analysis to ensure that researcher bias does not interfere with or alter respondent perception of the data and any insights offered" (Anderson, 2010:2). No substantive inconsistencies or contradictions were picked in the research. The use of constant comparison meant that one piece of data, for instance, from interviews was compared with data from focus group discussion and not on its own, enabling the researcher to treat the data as a whole rather than fragmenting it (Anderson, 2010; Esch & Esch, 2013).

Even if the triangulated data sources slightly differed, it all the same enriched the picture of the issue at stake (Kielmann et al., 2012). Data triangulation was not limited to cross-validating data, but rather to capture different dimensions of the same phenomenon. Triangulated data was considered to be more superior to a single data source or instrument.

3.9.2 Credibility

Credibility refers to whether the research evidence is free from error and distortion (Mogalakwe, 2006; Ahmed, 2010). Credibility establishes whether the research findings represent plausible information drawn from the participants' original data and is a correct interpretation of the participants' original views (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Ideally, the researcher's portrayal of participants must match the participants' own

perceptions, thereby placing confidence in the truth of the research findings (Anney, 2014).

The researcher established rigour of the inquiry by adopting the triangulation credibility strategy discussed above. Triangulation had the advantage of giving the study higher validity, accuracy and reliability (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011) and thereby affirming the convincing authenticity and substance or credibility of the data collected (Abdullah & Raman, 2001; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005).

The researcher embarked on a prolonged engagement in the field of up to 5 months. The purpose of giving that gestation period was intently to establish if there was phenomenon change because of engagement into the research (Yin, 2009). Anney (2014:276) posits that the immersion of inquirer, *"…helps the researcher to gain an insight into the context of the study, which minimizes the distortions of information that might arise due to the presence of the researcher in the field."* My extended stay in the field improved trust with respondents and extended my understanding of the participants' operations. In addition, data collected over this period reflected the complexities of the case that would not have been perceptible if the data had been collected over a shorter period.

The researcher received regular feedback in the form of scholarly guidance from my supervisor and co-supervisor, and that helped to improve the quality of the inquiry findings. He allowed member checks to improve the quality of qualitative data. Qualitative researchers are required to include the 'voices' of respondents in the analysed data and interpretation made from the data. Lincoln and Guba (2013:314) claim that member-checks is a crucial process that any qualitative researcher should undergo because it is perceived to be the heart of credibility. The researcher resent to participants all analysed and interpreted data for them to evaluate the interpretations made, and suggest changes if they were unhappy with the interpretations made. Informants did not reject any interpretation made. The feedback from this members-check was therefore confirmed as reflecting the respondents' experiences and perceptions.

The researcher believes the documentary evidence received was prepared independently and beforehand as it merged with triangulated data. The belief is that

all documents were sincere, free from distortion and could not have been altered for the researcher's benefit. There is no reason to believe professional educators could deliberately 'doctor' documents in order to mislead me.

3.9.3 Transferability

Transferability is about the extent to which the study has made it possible for the reader to apply the findings in the situations investigated to such other similar situations (Anney, 2014; Lincoln & Guba, 2013). In other words, transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be transferred to other contexts or settings with other respondents (Anney, 2014). It is the interpretive equivalent of generalizability. However, it must be remembered that the possibility of generalization is irrelevant in a qualitative research because the context of the research is naturalistic and non-repeatable (Wadesango, 2013).

According to Bitsch (2005:85), the, *"…researcher facilitates the transferability judgment by a potential user through 'thick description' and purposeful sampling."* In support, Li (2004:305) states that, *"…to enable judgments about how well the research context fits with other contexts, thick descriptive data, i.e. a rich and extensive set of details concerning methodology and context, should be included in the research report."* As Shenton (2004:69) argued, *"…without this insight, [thick description] it is difficult for the reader of the final account to determine the extent to which the overall findings 'ring true'."*

The researcher provided thick descriptions of the study to ensure transferability of qualitative inquiry. The researcher and the supervisors critically assessed and commented on the results and the format of reporting. The thick description was geared at assisting other potential researchers to replicate the study using similar conditions in other contexts or settings (Anney, 2014). Purposive sampling helped the researcher to focus on educators as key informants who were particularly knowledgeable about CPD. In other words, informants were selected using purposive sampling techniques in order to maximise the information to be uncovered from few participants but not for generalisability (Cohen et al., 2011; Anney, 2014).

3.9.4 Dependability

Dependability rests on the quality of the data collection and analysis (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) and is shown by explaining that the research systematically studied what it claimed and purported to study (Ponelis, 2015). According to Bitsch (2005:86), dependability is about, *"… the stability of findings over time."* Dependability entails informants evaluating the findings and the interpretation and recommendations of the study to make sure that they are supported by the data received from the participants of the study (Cohen et al., 2011; Anney, 2014). Dependability in this study was established using an audit trail, a code-recode strategy and stepwise replication.

To facilitate an audit trail, the researcher assembled and kept all the raw data from interviews, focus group discussions and documentary analysis for crosschecking the inquiry process. This enabled him to account for all the research decisions by showing how the data were collected, recorded and analysed (Li, 2004; Bowen, 2009). In a way, the audit trail also established confirmability of the study. As part of the on-going audit, the researcher met regularly with the supervisor to review decisions made and any questions that arisen at collection and analysis of data stages as well during the report findings stage of the study. A record of such meetings was kept handy.

The code-recode strategy involved the researcher coding the same data twice, giving one week's gestation period between each coding (Anney, 2014). The results from the two 'codings' were compared. The coding results were in agreement rendering the dependability of the qualitative inquiry. This was intended to assist the researcher gain a deep understanding of data patterns and improve the presentation of participants' narrations (Bitsch, 2005; Cohen et al., 2011).

3.9.5 Confirmability

It is also important to systematically report all research evidence in order for the reader to confirm whether the findings flow from the data and experiences rather than from the bias and subjectivity of the researcher (Ponelis, 2015). Tobin and Begley (2004:392) posit that confirmability is, *"… concerned with establishing that data and interpretations of the findings are not figments of the inquirer's imagination, but are clearly derived from the data."* In essence, confirmability refers to the degree to which the results of the inquiry could be confirmed or corroborated by other researchers (Baxter & Eyles, 1997) in Anney (2014).

The researcher engaged audit trial and triangulation (discussed in other sections above) as confirmability strategies. In addition, confirmability was also established in this study using reflexive journal. The researcher kept a reflexive journal that included all the events that happened in the field. Audio recordings, field notes and documentary materials of the whole investigation were stored safe.

The researcher had to ensure that data provided by the informants was not false fabrication. The strategy engaged in an attempt to overcome misinformation, evasions and lies was to be sceptical with information that the researcher felt might not be correct. The prolonged engagement coupled with a user-friendly rapport ensured trust. Good interviewing techniques, safeguarding informant identity, researcher self-analysis and introspection together helped promote the integrity of research findings (Anney, 2014).

3.10 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics are the moral principles and guidelines that help researchers uphold moral treatment of participants in order to protect their integrity, dignity and right to privacy and protection (Cohen et al., 2011; Esch & Esch, 2013; Alshenqeeti, 2014). A primary responsibility of the researcher is to safeguard participants and their data, taking into cognisance that research subjects or participants are interpreters and co-producers of meaningful data (Goldkuhl, 2012; Halej, 2017). Data generation must therefore be viewed as a social interactive process of fellow human beings. Mechanisms for such safeguarding must be clearly articulated to participants and must be approved by a research ethics view board before the research begins (Sutton & Austin, 2015).

The researcher took the following steps to ensure that the study met appropriate ethical standards.

3.10.1 Permission to conduct the study

Ethical clearance was secured from the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) before the research was embarked on (Annexure J). Thereafter, permission was sought from the Department of Basic Education to negotiate entry into public schools (Annexures F, K and L) and permission was granted (Annexure L). Permission was also sought from the responsible authorities of independent schools through their

principals or School Governing Body (Annexure G) and was granted. To further gain access to the schools, official courtesy letters to the principals requesting to conduct study, and to the educators inviting them to participate in the research study, were despatched (Annexures G and H).

3.10.2 Informed consent

Informed consent is a mechanism for ensuring that research subjects understand what it means to participate in a particular research study so they can decide in a conscious deliberate way whether they want to participate (Cohen et al., 2011; Esch & Esch, 2013). This research was conducted on participant's freely volunteered informed consent. Informed consent implied researcher responsibility to explain fully and meaningfully what the research was about and how it would unfold and be disseminated (Corti et al., 2000). The participants' rights and interests were considered, and consent was sought. Consent was obtained without coercion, and the respondents were supplied with adequate knowledge and understanding of the research.

The researcher briefed participants on:

- Participants' right to voluntarily agree to participate.
- The right to refuse to participate.
- The respondents were not obliged to give a reason for refusing to participate.
- Awareness of the potential uses to which the data might be put (study benefits) was explained. Each respondent received a copy stating research purpose and objectives.
- The right to withdraw or re-negotiate consent was guaranteed.
- Freedom to agreeing or decline to interviews being audio-taped was guaranteed.
- Participation was consent-free from coercion or undue pressure.
- The right to refuse to answer any particular question without any consequences was guaranteed.
- Assurance of anonymity and confidentiality was given.

In addition, the researcher served all the participants with a Consent Form to sign in acknowledgement, herewith attached as Annexure E. The rationale for using consent

forms was to stress the importance of respecting the autonomy of the research subjects.

3.10.3 Confidentiality and anonymity

The notion of confidentiality is founded on the principle of respect for autonomy (Halej, 2017). Confidentiality ensured that the agreement between the researcher and participants was guaranteed. Identifiable information about individuals collected during the process of research was and will never be disclosed. In addition, confidentiality also meant not disclosing any information gained from interviewees (whether accidentally or deliberately) in ways that might identify the individual (Anney, 2014).

Anonymity refers to a guarantee from the researcher to the participants regarding the identity of respondents remaining concealed or anonymous. Providing anonymity of information collected from research participants meant that the study did not collect identifying information of individual subjects such as names, physical addresses or email addresses. In other words, the study did not link individual responses with participants' identities. The study does not reveal the names of the schools in which the study was undertaken.

The researcher undertook the following measures to ensure compliance with respondent confidentiality and anonymity:

- Protected the identity of research participants from third parties.
- Kept all personal details separate from interview responses.
- Participants could choose not to share their names with researcher.
- Password was protected to deny access to data stored on laptop.
- Qualitative data was anonymised by removing identifying details such as names of schools.
- All identifying details such as real names were removed.
- Real names were replaced with pseudonyms.
- Identifiers on paper documents were replaced or tippexed.
- Appropriate consent from all parties was sought in securing all relevant documents.
- Never videotaped, but audiotaped instead.
- Kept audio tapes under lock-and-key.

- An agreement between me as the researcher and participants as to how the information would be used was guaranteed.

3.10.4 Protection from harm

The informants' identification was also protected so that the information collected did not embarrass or harm them in any way. Ethical issues were considered at all stages of the study to date. Participants were never subjected to unusual stress, embarrassment or loss of self-esteem. None of the informants became upset or appeared uneasy. The risk to participants was always expected to be minimal. No post-interview, post-focus group discussion or post-documentary analysis negative reactions to informants have been picked up to date. In cases where the nature of the study may involve creating a small amount of psychological discomfort, counselling should be made available from a registered counsellor or psychologist at the researcher's expense even after the study is completed.

It was of significant ethical importance that participants did not feel coerced to participate either by myself as the researcher or by the principal of the school. The permission from each participant was granted without hesitation because my study would in turn be useful in the area of continuous professional development of educators.

3.11 CONCLUSION

This chapter was concerned with the whole process of the research methodology from qualitative research approach, interpretive research paradigm, case study research design, and target population, collection of data, data analysis, and quality control to ethical considerations. The chapter presented each step of the research methodology in detail and offered justification for employing the qualitative method, case study and interpretive paradigm. The chapter also addressed trustworthiness and ethical considerations as a constituent of the study.

Having presented the research methodology section, the study proceeded to Chapter 4, which focuses on the presentation of data, data analysis and discussions of the findings of the study.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Data analysis is central to credible qualitative research (Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). This chapter presents the key themes of findings, gleaned from 10 educators and 5 principals as participants involved in the study. Extensive data was generated through individual interviews and triangulated by focus group discussions and documentary evidence. The interviews were conducted on a one-on-one format, often taking place in the educator's classroom or staff-room. This setting allowed educators to be comfortable and secure in their surroundings.

This thesis entitled, "A formative evaluation of continuous professional development programmes in selected schools in Limpopo Province" focuses on the importance of CPD in enhancing student achievement. Central themes selected from the findings

are analysed and discussed in order to discover meaningful answers to the research questions, which are reiterated as follows:

1 What is the nature of professional development programmes prevailing in schools?

2 How are educators, as intended beneficiaries, consulted and involved in identifying professional development needs appropriate for promoting student achievement?

3 How are professional development programmes monitored and evaluated to check if they have attained the desired outcome on promoting learner achievement?

4 To what extent do professional development programmes influence student achievement?

In other words, this chapter presents key findings made in relation to the research questions.

Emergent from the data analyses, these themes are considered significant:

1. The concept and significance of CPD.
2. The nature of CPD programmes.
3. Consulting and involving educators in identifying professional development needs.
4. Monitoring and evaluating professional development programmes.
5. The extent to which CPD influences student achievement.

More and more, it is recognised that clear guidance is needed on the practical aspects of how to do qualitative research (Clarke & Braun, 2013). Braun and Clarke (2006) distinguish between a top-down or theoretical thematic analysis that is driven by the specific research question(s) and/or the analyst's focus, and a bottom-up or inductive one that is more driven by the data itself. The analysis herein is driven by a combination of both.

The initial coding process, as described in the methodology section, gave rise to several coded text segments from the interviews and focus group discussions. As Nowell et al. (2017) explain the lack of focus on rigorous and relevant thematic analysis has implications in terms of the credibility of the research process. The codes and associated texts of infrequently occurring codes were examined and reclassified. In

further rounds of analysis, these text segments were reviewed and commonalities identified which allowed further text reduction (O'Gormon & Drudy, 2011). In a subsequent round of analysis, the texts were regrouped and classified under the 5 themes above.

The discussion aims to develop robust theoretical explanations for the crucial themes from the findings. The themes are separate, yet inextricably interwoven. It is quite challenging to separate them.

4.2 RESPONDENTS PROFILES

In this study, 10 educator participants and 5 principal participants were purposefully selected. The socio-demographics dealt with in this study are basic demographic variables pertaining to age, employment status, and professional qualifications and teaching experience. The participants ranged in age from 30 to 60 years. These may be considered to be mature educators. This seems to suggest that the educators are mature enough to understand and appreciate the significance of CPD in schools in enhancing student achievement. One would want to assume that mature principals would execute their leadership and supervisory roles by directing and offering educators pathways to enriching instruction by engaging in CPDs of some sort.

All the respondents were professionally qualified, ranging from Diploma in Secondary Education (and its equivalent), Bachelor of Education to Bachelor of Science (Honours). The participants, therefore, hold suitable and appropriate qualifications for their profession. This also seems to suggest that they are in a better position to understand the concept of CPD.

The teaching experiences of respondents ranged from 6 to 28 years, and may safely be considered to be experienced in the profession. Their employment status ranged from senior teacher, heard of department (HOD), vice principal to principal. In the main, the participants interviewed were confident. Over the years, the participants are likely to have been exposed to CPD. Their experience, understanding and appreciation of CPD may be high, rendering their responses likely to be reliable and valid. Educators who had taught for 5 or more years were considered to be veteran educators. In other words, it is assumed that the more the number of years of teaching service, the more the number of CPDs the educator would have experienced.

Participants' experiences with the current school ranged from 1 year 4 months to 7 years. This assisted in ensuring that their responses to questions restricting them to their experiences with the current school in the past 12 months are substantive. The number of years-teaching has a significant effect with those educators having taught for 5 or more years more likely to have taken part and experienced the impact of CPD than new or novice educators.

Suffice to mention that both genders were represented. Although both sexes were represented, conclusions drawn in this study in relation to CPD may be biased towards the male participants who formed the majority. From the findings, however, there appears to be nothing suggesting that male respondents understood CPD more than the female counterparts, or vice versa. It is believed, however, that there may be no explanation for gender differences in the ability or inability to understand and implement CPD in schools.

4.3 RESEARCH FINDINGS

This research shares human experiences as lived experiences by the participants herein (Shields, 2007; Anderson, 2010; Anney, 2014; Halej, 2017). The sharing of this study's findings is an effort to enable readers to understand and appreciate the different dimensions of situations and experiences of the respondents in the study. The reader may then connect these experiences with their own values and experiences as far as CPD in schools is concerned. The researcher made an attempt to set aside his personal thoughts, beliefs and experiences in order to present a bias-free accurate presentation and analysis of the participants' lived experiences.

Focus group discussions and all the interviews were audio-recorded and later transcribed word-for-word. Significant statements found to be relevant to the study were identified with each statement given equal value. As alluded to earlier on, themes emerged upon careful and repeated examination of the clustered significant statements.

As is the practice with qualitative research, considerable time was devoted in the field as well as in thoroughly reflecting on the respondents' experiences. A thorough analysis was put to the respondents' divergent perspectives were applicable. The researcher was able to construct meaning of the participants' experiences as they narrated and described their involvement in CPD in schools.

4.3.1 Theme 1: The concept and significance of CPD

In being required to respond to an interview question referring to his understanding of the term continuous professional development, Principal X of School 1 had this to say,

> *The furthering of an educator's qualification; the deeper understanding of the teacher's job and general expectation. In simple terms, the enrichment that must be given to a teacher continuously to enhance effective teaching and learning of students as they practice in the field of education.*

Educator Z of School 1 underscored the above claim by stating that:

> *It is a drive to ensure that educators during their course of dispensing their duties are continuously updated on the new trends in the education or school sector. Keep educators up to date with new teaching methods or technology or syllabus, and develop them into better educators and be more effective in their endeavours.*

A thorough scrutiny of the above quotation appears to miss or lack the 'self-initiation' by the educator to professionally develop oneself. It sounded like 'someone' must provoke the educators and thus, "…keep educators up to date…" or put differently, "…develop them into better educators…"

Principal J of School 2 was concise in referring to CPD as, "*Activities that are aimed at imparting knowledge and skills to educators by means of training, support and basic orientation."*

An equally brief response came from Principal E of School 4 whose understanding of CPD was best explained by, "*Never stop learning, never stop developing yourself in your career. Sharpening your skills and broadening your knowledge is the way to go."*

A mean but concise response came from Educator K of School 2 in defining CPD as, *"Programmes meant to improve on the effectiveness of teaching."*

Similarly, Principal P of school 3 viewed CPD in the context of, "*The educator is a life-long learner; as a result, it simply explains that as educators we need to develop continuously because the education system keeps changing."*

In both the individual interview and focus group discussion questions, the researcher put forward the question, *"What are the benefits of CPD?"* The purpose of the question was an attempt to put respondents in a position to highlight the significance of CPD if it was at all important to them. Additionally, it was also to establish what benefits (if any) the respondents gained from participating in CPD. All participants overwhelmingly identified benefits to participation in CPD. The key benefits raised referred to improved teaching knowledge and skills, increased job satisfaction, enhanced career progression and improved student performance.

The question on participants' engagement in CPD activities in the previous 12 months was geared at establishing if there had been participation in CPD by respondents in that period. The majority claimed that they had. All the instruments; individual interviews, focus group discussion and documentary evidence substantiated the claims. This question was probed with, *"Would you like to participate in more or less CPD programmes?"* The purpose of the probe was to identify if respondents had motivation for engagement in CPD for the purpose of maintaining or improving professional competencies. The majority clearly indicated an interest in increasing participation in CPD. This tends to suggest that respondents had the motivation for participation in CPD. It may also suggest that they were perhaps being 'starved' of much needed CPD.

So far respondents' concept and understanding of CPD is in agreement and appears to merge, and is linked to literature reviewed in this thesis's chapter 2 (Steyn, 2010; Mizell, 2010; Osmundson, 2016; Cooper, 2016; Boudersa, 2016; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017). Educator N of school 5 put forward a more encompassing understanding of CPD as he went on to explain that:

> *It is the continuation of intellectual growth; meaning an educator must keep abreast of developments in the field. Not only limited to the school, but much broader; encompassing outside world in view of development, human relations and ethics, as a fellow citizen of the universe.*

When probed to explain a little further on his reference to, "…*encompassing outside world in view of development*…" the respondent above quickly referred to information technology as fast developing in the 'First World' hence 'Third World' countries needed to catch up. The 'catching up' is best served by educators in schools in their teaching endeavours.

The researcher quizzed, *"Are there any barriers to participation in CPD?"* and subsequently followed up with, *"Have you experienced any unsuccessful CPD?"* The purpose of these questions was to establish if there were any negative experiences related to participation in CPD programmes and if so, what could be done to remedy the situation. Overwhelmingly all respondents cited financial and time constraints. Financial constraints were mainly in respect of the teacher-initiated professional development activities. Participants highlighted a tight schedule in their daily teaching, and so CPD tended to be squeezed-in often disengaging them from their daily routines. Obviously, there was loss of production while staff attended CPD. The educators, as a result, then experienced backlogs in, marking and syllabus coverage, for example. The respondents were prompt to propose study grants, bursaries, scholarships or loans dispensed by the government, as a quick-fix remedy.

Yet another concise definition and hence understanding of CPD came forth from Educator Q of School 3 as she considered CPD in this view, "*To develop oneself holistically, hence continuously further one's qualifications. To empower oneself in an attempt to derive maximum benefit in your career."*

"*It's the process of documenting and acquiring the skills, knowledge and experience that one gains as they work. Developing yourself to keep up with policies and procedures related to the work you do,*" was Educator G of School 4's version of what CPD entails.

Educator R of School 3 succinctly stated that, "*Education is dynamic. CPD means we should continue to learn/study throughout our career."*

Educator F of School 4 appears to underscore the above claim by reiterating CPD, "*Is the process of documenting and acquiring the skills, knowledge and experience that one gains as they work. Developing oneself to keep up with the changing policies and procedures related to the work you do*." When asked to clarify on the,

"…*documenting*…" aspect, the above respondent had the view that all experienced CPD must be documented. He however, retracted on 'documenting' every CPD experienced through, for example, watching television or reading some newspaper article that may equip informally or unconsciously, an educator with some knowledge or skill reminiscent of CPD.

Simply put, Educator M of School 5's comprehension of CPD went, "*Teachers should keep on learning about subjects they are teaching in order to ensure that the information they give to the learners is relevant and up to date."*

The individual interview as well as focus group discussion question framed, *"Did you have to pay for any CPD sessions you attended in the past 12 months?"* was deliberately intended to establish who covered financial costs associated with CPD. Literature indicates that costs associated with professional development can increase or decrease participation (Shields, 2007; Mahlaela,2012; Shaha et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Bernadine, 2019;). If costs are transferred onto employees, attendance tends to decline, whereas participation tends to increase when facilitators or employers meet costs of CPD programmes.

In both the individual interviews and focus group discussions, respondents indicated that school-initiated and externally initiated professional development programmes are by-and-large sponsored by facilitators or Department of Basic Education, whereas the teacher-initiated CPDs are mainly self-sponsored by educators themselves. Literature suggests that subsidised funding as well as introduction of study bursaries, grants, loans or study scholarships tend to ease the financial burden associated with CPD participation on the educator, and thus tends to increase participation (Kennedy, 2009; Steyn, 2010; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017).

Respondents reported that CPD came as both compulsory and optional. Some CPD may have been declared compulsory because the skills and knowledge may have been perceived as crucial to enhance educator quality and competence as a matter of policy or law appliance. For instance, CPD on marking matric examinations would be deemed compulsory for any aspiring markers to comply with government standards and Umalusi stipulations.

This chapter draws on findings and uses related literature to support research findings. The findings so far are consistent with current literature on CPD. Among the more rigorous studies of CPD put forward by Khan (2010:37) is an attempt to highlight the concept and significance of CPD thus:

> *CPD is the educational process by which members of any profession maintain, improve and broaden their knowledge, skill and personal qualities required in their professional life. It is a holistic commitment to structured skills enhancement and personal or professional competence. CPD can also be defined as the conscious updating of professional knowledge and the improvement of professional competence throughout a person's working life. It is the key to optimizing a person's career opportunities, both today and for the future.*

For South Africa, educator professional development is an aspect of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) policy document (Department of Education, 2003). The IQMS DBE policy document was availed to me for perusal by principals as documentary evidence of the schools' undertakings. Files containing school IQMS records were availed. Research findings in this study confirmed that IQMS is a developmental instrument and was positive in professionally developing educators. On the contrary, educators in the study conducted by Khumalo (2008) showed that they did not experience the anticipated actualisation of the contribution of the IQMS on educator development. A research study carried out by Mahlaela (2012) also refutes the benefits of IQMS. Claims coming out of Mahlaela research findings seem to suggest that achievements experienced in some schools were not necessarily as the result of IQMS, but rather due to educator commitment, adequate and appropriate resources, as well as teamwork, passion and sacrifices by educators. Most participants in the Mahlaela study claimed that they had not undergone IQMS training to prepare them for the undertaking, thereby rendering the whole exercise to be unclear and confusing.

As would be expected, in both the individual interviews and the focus group discussions, respondents appeared to have a fair in-depth knowledge of what entails CPD. Notably, respondents were well conversant on issues of educator life-long learning and the benefits thereof to enhance student achievement, as evidenced by the quotations above that substantiated the claims. Respondents were in agreement that CPD was designed to contribute to the continuous learning of those educators who had completed their initial educator education courses with colleges or

universities. For the majority of the participants, CPD referred to those programmes attended by educators with the sole purpose of enhancing professional knowledge, skills and attitudes that would put them in better positions to execute their teaching.

It was striking how educators positively viewed the positive impact of CPD. This was consistent with individual interviews as well as focus group discussions. If educators had felt that CPD had limited impact, it would otherwise discourage them from future participation. This was an important finding and unquestionably a strong or positive message or feedback to school leaders and DBE continuous professional development facilitators. Even if not all educators gainfully engaged in more formal or organised CPD, it was all the same reassuring that at some point educators engage in informal dialogue with colleague(s) to improve their teaching endeavour. The majority of respondents claimed that they frequently read professional literature as well as engaged in some professional dialogues of some sort with colleagues.

It was interesting to note that several respondents tended to refer to formal and informal CPD as separate experiences. Now, the researcher takes an interest in highlighting the concepts of formal and informal CPD.

Informal CPD tends to elicit critical thinking and meaningful learning as the educator becomes the active initiator and owner of the knowledge rather than a submissive receptacle (Boyer, 2004; Taylor et al., 2011). Cyboran (2005) and Vardi, (2000) claim that informal CPD tend to give some sense of control and empowerment in educators, thus increasing motivation. Whereas formal CPD allows for the potent combination of school-based as well as outside facilitated programmes (Taylor et al., 2011). In such a scenario, a designated facilitator or outside agent tends to encourage educators to indulge in CPD of some kind. Normally educators are encouraged to create new ideas about teaching and learning practices by combining their thinking with colleagues in the profession, mainly through sharing, collaboration and reflection.

Foley (2004) further clarified the concept of informal CPD by stating that it has much less structure to the learning process. The educator would be consciously trying to learn from his/her career experiences. Learning occurs through more informal relationships and structures such as in supervisor/supervisee relationships or mentor/mentee relationships.

Foley (2004:4) is quoted expressing his views on formal CPD as best described as, "…*organised by professional educators, having a defined curriculum and often leads to a qualification. It includes study in universities and colleges and sequenced training in workplaces."*

The researcher is of the view that formal and informal CPD occur alongside each other. Formal and informal CPD should ideally reinforce each other. In other words, CPD manifests itself in the co-existence of formal and informal knowledge.

Ideally, CPD should begin not only after the post-graduation; it should be a continuous process for acquisition of knowledge and skill throughout the learning period. In essence, it should start from the beginning of any professional education, and be continued throughout the professional career (Mestry et al, 2009; Steyn, 2010; SACE, 2013; Cooper, 2016; Avidov-Ungar, 2016). CPD theory posits that the significance of educators' professional development is a means to improve schools, increase teaching quality and improve students' achievements (Lessing & de Witt, 2007; Khan, 2010; Whitehouse, 2011; Vraca, 2014; Osmundson, 2016).

Overall, the participants believed that learning was on-going and to some extent, self-directed. When opportunities were open, the participants embraced the chance to learn. When opportunities at school and Department levels were scarce, some participants tend to venture and seek their own opportunities to further their studies. It was also the participants' view that professional development for educators was necessary, as new teaching information, techniques and methods are continually being updated and changed. Initial educator training and experience alone would not be sufficient to serve an educator throughout their whole career. CPD was seen in the context of reinvigorating or revitalising the educators' teaching career. In other words, professional development is about life-long learning and growing as an educator. Professional development is crucial, pertinent and outright important to teaching success and student achievement.

From the findings above, the respondents' awareness, concept and basic understanding of CPD is evident. Participants from the different schools in the study all expressed some substantial knowledge of CPD. Embedded in their explanations on understanding CPD; the respondents appeared to show some enthusiasm to

search for self-improvement in their career in order to fulfil their role of teaching. All respondents seem to agree that education is a never-ending process. Through continuing education, career-minded educators can constantly improve their knowledge and skills and become more proficient at their jobs. All participants appeared to be conscientious, and to some extent, exhibited some dire persistence in their pursuits of CPD as they defined it as, "…*life-long*…"

Some sacrifices must however, be made to attend professional development. Personal time may be sacrificed in accommodating studies of the professional development nature. More workloads often have to be added onto the massive teaching demands and tight schedules. In addition, financial commitments may have to be sacrificed especially with the majority of teacher-initiated continuous professional development activities. Educators often have to address these inhibitors and more. It is easy for educators to become burdened by the grind of teaching, but CPD must come handy in giving them an opportunity to step out of their routine.

The research findings highlighted restrictions on time to be of major concern to most participants. Many argued that they lacked sufficient time to implement CPD. These claims are also supported by the research findings of Berg (2001). Respondents further indicated that they were overloaded with work, thereby rendering CPD to be viewed as somewhat burdensome. Considering the time spent on average on a CPD programme, the issue of time remained a challenge.

The aim behind educator CPD is to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Without CPD, educators may become outdated, may not manage to cope with changes and may thus lose their ability to teach effectively and efficiently. Educators need to continuously update and refresh their knowledge and skills base. The role of the educator in student achievement is therefore unquestionable. Zombwe and Msigallah (2009) posit that the educator is the main actor in the learning process and, therefore, is supposed to have a broad updated knowledge, skills, and abilities to effectively help students achieve maximally.

Educators are considered as the backbone of quality education, and learning is perceived as an ongoing process. Efforts to improve educators' teaching skills and knowledge are highly needed and appreciated in the field of education. However, does understanding the concept and significance of CPD translate into effective

implementation by educators, resulting in student achievement? The rest of the thesis findings should endeavour to establish confirmation or disapproval of the above.

4.3.2 Theme 2: The nature of CPD programmes

The individual interview as well as focus group question on*, "What type of CPD have you participated in in the past 12 months?"* was basically intended to help identify the nature of CPD activities being pursued by educators and DBE alike. Respondents highlighted class management, deeper content knowledge in main subject(s), student assessment management and Information and Communication Technology (ICT). The responses suggest that maybe needs were identified in those aspects of CPD, no wonder initiating CPD to address perceived shortcomings. Nevertheless, when asked in which areas they needed CPD, the majority of educators indicated ICT and an enhanced computer literacy. One wonders if the educators were consulted in identifying CPD needs, or maybe employers do not have the capacity to amass ICT equipment to address deficiencies in computer literacy.

An employer may direct CPD practices, for example, or a professional body, or be self-directed (Collin et al., 2012). An investigation into the nature of CPD programmes prevailing in schools, however, revealed three broad approaches namely, school-initiated, externally initiated and educator-initiated CPDs. This links up well with espoused "Models of CPD" discussed under Review of Related Literature in chapter 2 of this study.

4.3.2.1 School-initiated CPD

The findings established that all schools, except one, had experienced school-based CPD programmes of some sort in the past twelve months and beyond (of school attendance). Documentary evidence in the form of staff-meeting workshops, records of some school-based CPD workshops were made available to the researcher to substantiate the claims. Naturally, what differed was the frequency and nature of the CPD, considering schools may address different challenges peculiar to their circumstances at different times.

Principals as well as educators claimed some form of orientation, familiarisation or induction was undertaken to support educators who were either novice or new to the profession or simply new to the school or environment. The main challenges faced by

new educators had mainly to do with class management and assessing student work as well as familiarisation with policies of the new school. Induction or mentoring programmes were designed to help new educators cope with such challenges. Several educators in focus group discussion bore testimonies to having been put through familiarisation of some sort. Induction courses were by-and-large found to be beneficial. This finding endorses that school leadership tended to support educator development activities in schools through induction. Some schools claimed that they had no documented or formal policy on induction, but they put their educators through familiarisation all the same.

In claiming school-based CPDs having run in his school, Principal X of School 1 had this to say:

> *We are very aggressive on that one, considering that most of the educators' time is taken up by daily school activities. Weekly on Wednesdays from 2 to 3pm, we effect school-based CPD as scheduled on our CPD annual programme that I will supply at the end of this interview. That calculates to about four times a term. We facilitate basically through the provision of time slot.*
>
> *We are guided by the philosophy of continuous learning for our educators. There is indeed provision for school-based CPD. Herewith our CPD programme for 2019 as our documentary evidence. CPD programmes are scheduled in advance, but others emerge during staff meetings or other service encounters.*

Indeed, the above claims were substantiated by documentary evidence and the two educators on the interview list from the same school corroborated the claims on separate interview sessions.

The researcher established that some of the school-based programmes undertaken in the school above in 2019 alone included the introduction of information technology (IT) through 'smart-boards'. At one school, the researcher had the privilege to view the smart-boards and PowerPoint presentations. Documented records of operating manuals and handouts of the programmes were made available to corroborate the claims. All educators attended CPD programmes towards empowering them with skills and knowledge to engage smart-boards in daily teaching and learning. Every educator had been supplied with a laptop to enhance smart-board utilisation. In addition, outside facilitators were hired to the school to professionally develop educators on alternatives to corporal punishment. Further, a fund-raising project was launched at the school to

raise money to enable educators to attend First Aid training workshops. It was compulsory for every educator to attend. First Aid experts were hired as facilitators.

Probing on why the school decided on the school-based CPD programmes enlisted, the principal explained:

> *From a wide range of possible CPD programmes, we picked those above in response to prevailing challenges in our school. We found them most pertinent in addressing immediate gaps to boast effective teaching/learning. In a nutshell, the majority of our educators somehow lacked in those aspects. Discipline or class management came top-most in creating a conducive learning environment. Ill-disciplined students tended to disrupt teaching/learning. First-Aid is in response to injuries that occur during sport. We have hostel students who may need First Aid at any moment whilst we wait for the paramedics or ambulance. We have witnessed especially on TV that some schools befell some calamities and First Aid rendered saved some lives. Lack of First Aid could be catastrophic or detrimental to the welfare of the learner. Basically, it was intended to boast school safety and security. White-boards were introduced as an attempt to keep abreast of technology. White boards save resources, especially with time as a resource. They also appeal to the wider senses of the student in a motivational manner. Most students already own cell-phones and laptops, so they can relate. White boards are more interactive in nature as students can go to the board to demonstrate or engage in some way.*

The two educator interviewees and the focus group discussion panel of School 2 enlisted class management workshop, duties of the HODs, leadership course facilitated by Schoemansdaal camp and teaching methods as the school-based programmes that had been undertaken in the past 12 months from June of 2019. The principal as well as documentary evidence confirmed this back up.

Principal X, on how much of his educators' the school-based programmes were fulfilling professional needs, he responded:

> *More internally as benefits tend to be skewed towards school-based. School-initiated CPDs have the exactness nature. These are our particular needs; we experience them. Outside professional development programmes are sometimes conscientised on us; like manufactured for us. They may sometimes sound remote, strange and far-fetched. Then we attend to satisfy obligations; we can't be seen to be rebels. It's based on speculation and assumption that we need tutoring or training.*

School Management Team (SMT) workshop on management of curriculum, lesson planning workshop facilitated by ALOE for SMTs, IQMS, learner assessment strategies, administration of examinations (grade 12 examination invigilation) and subject remediation are the school-based CPD programmes that had been undertaken by School 3 in the past 12 months from June 2019. However, the two interviewees' claims differed with one programme because not all departments had done subject remediation. Also, take note that not every educator was an invigilator to have attended the invigilation workshop. The documentary evidence was not also availed for the subject remediation with the interviewee claiming that it had not been documented. The focus group discussion and Principal P of the same school corroborated the claims.

Principal E of School 4 claimed that only one formal school-based CPD programmed had been undertaken in 2019 as of June 2019. Their target is to have one formal school-based programme in a term. Other informal school-based programmes may be accomplished through staff-meeting briefings when issues demanding agenda status emerge. This claim was endorsed by the two educator interviewees and by the documentary evidence. Since there is no benchmark from DBE, the school felt that once per term suffices for their needs. The school-based workshop was for the School Improvement Plan (SIP) educators and facilitated by a hired expert. It was on goal setting, but also touched on class management issues.

When queried on the school-based CPD programmes in the last 12 months as at June 2019, Educator M of School 5 had this in response, "*Well, non that I remember of*." His counterpart, Educator N agreed by stating that, "*Only briefings on subject matter pertaining to assessments. But I wouldn't really qualify that as CPD per say. Not really organised, just impromptu or spontaneous. In my opinion, there has not been much school-initiated workshops"*

The above claims were contradictory to the principal's claims that they held school-based CPD programmes now and again, without giving an estimated or accurate frequency. This is counter-productive and detrimental to the effective and efficient teaching and learning of the student, considering that there is always room to upgrade the educators' efficiencies through CPD in one way or the other.

Educator Y of School 1 preferred school-based to out-of-school CPDs, and attempted to defend his stance by claiming that, "*School-based tend to benefit more staff as opposed to a few representatives or an individual. School-based tends to address or zero-in to pertinent school needs*." Respondent F of School 4 agreed, adding, "*You get to deal with the real challenges prevailing in your particular institute. It is more relevant to our teaching practice."*

On being asked to respond to a question on how of his educators' the school-based programmes were fulfilling professional needs, Principal X responded excitedly:

> *The bulk. School-based are more focused and tend to address the real experienced prevailing needs. It's easier for educators to relate. Educators are quicker to respond to school-based needs because they assist in identifying them and they experience the short-comings in teaching/learning.*

Findings in this study support the view that professional development taking place in schools is often focused on improving teaching and learning. The findings are consistent with current literature on CPD as espoused in chapter 2 on literature review. Which confirm that CPD is a continuous process that contributes in improving teaching skills geared at improving student learning (Steyn, 2008; Mestry et al., 2009; Mizell, 2010; Steyn, 2010; Whitehouse, 2011; DeMonte, 2013; Tsotetsi & Mahlomaholo, 2013; Batista & Ortega-Ruiz, 2015; Shaha et al, 2015; Cooper, 2016; Osmundson, 2016; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017;).

Inferences from participant responses seem to suggest that school-based CPD is ideal for improving educator classroom practice, spilling over to student-enhanced performance. Marcelo (2009) underscores this claim by asserting that the most effective experiences for professional educator development are those based on the school, which are connected to the daily activities carried out by the educators. The school-based approach tends to ensure that prevailing educational challenges are identified and addressed at school level quicker. CPD needs are mostly initiated by HODs and principals because of IQMS, performance appraisal or supervision undertakings in general. Needs may also be gleaned from student performance indicators. As a result, the approach heavily depends on the value and commitment school supervisors attach to CPDs.

4.3.2.2 Externally initiated CPDs

The findings in this research confirm that in the past 12 months as of June 2019, all schools had attended some out-of-school CPD workshop or programme of some kind. All principals and educators interviewed claimed that they attended all Circuit or Limpopo Independent Schools Association initiated CPD programmes. Documented records of external CPD workshops attended also substantiated this. This is mainly made possible by despatching delegates to represent the school. The delegates would in turn professionally develop their colleagues on return. The Circuit initiated CPD sessions dealt mainly with courses/workshops on subject matter or methods and/or other education related topics. They also attended education conferences or seminars where educators and/or researchers presented their research results and discuss educational matters. The 2 independent schools in this study had both principals having attended all Limpopo Independent Schools Association (LISA) organised professional development workshops for principals. Attendance registers verified this, as documentary evidence.

When asked if ever he sent his educators outside the school to attend professional development programmes, Principal X of School 1 responded thus:

> *Yes, we send them out. We attended to all CPD programmes instituted and facilitated by the Department of Basic Education, at both cluster and head office levels. These are by and large organised by experts to address CPD pertinent issues picked at national, provincial or circuit levels. SACE workshops come to mind. Matric exam marking comes to mind. I think I was the first to attend as principal on exam marking. Other educators were later trained towards matric exam marking.*

The above claims were confirmed to by documentary evidence, focus group revelations and corroborated by the two educator respondents from his school.

Educator Z of School 1, when asked for his preference and why, between school-based and out-of-school CPDs, his response was, "*Out there you meet different people, different perspectives and new ideas thereby broadening one's scope of knowledge. School-based is rather limiting and restrictive."*

Principal J of School 2 lay claim to his school organising and attending an annual leadership and team-building course facilitated by Schoemansdaal, in addition to partaking in DBE organised CPD programmes. The assertion was substantiated by triangulation. Educator L of School 2 preferred out-of-school CPDs, and attempted to justify his assertion by stating, *"They offer platforms to network with colleagues;*

rubbing shoulders so to speak. More exposure is experienced by learning from others. School-based is too restrictive."

Principal P of School 4, lay claims to sending a few educators annually to attend ALOE CPD workshops on matters of subject and curriculum advice, in addition to the DBE programmes of a CPD nature. ALOE attendance comes at a cost to the school. This was endorsed by triangulation. School 4 also 'beefed up' Department workshops by instituting ALOE workshops attendance. The claim was backed up by the production of ALOE certificates of attendance. The hard-copy personal file of the principal was availed for my perusal.

Educator M of School 5 attended what he termed a, "…*fruitful…*" workshop for Pietersburg Circuit Matric Mathematics educators from the 5th to the 7th of August 2019. The workshop dwelt on a variety of topics that were deemed challenging for educators and students alike. Educator N of School 5 also attended a separate circuit-initiated workshop for matric educators.

Educator G of School 4 referred to externally initiated CPDs as being quite informative and fruitful, but declared that, *"…we experience information overload."* Asked to elaborate, she felt that the circuit came up with too much ambitious information that the beneficiaries cannot handle in a day. She proposed spreading over the workshops to two or more days.

Educator N of School 5 expressed his disfavour for out-of-school CPD programmes by firmly stating:

> *Allow me to say I find the school-based more effective as they tend to address our needs or concerns that we experience at school level. The Circuit or Head Office initiated tend to be prescriptive as opposed to interactive. It's as if our 'empty heads' must be filled with well packaged matter. It can be very monotonous. And you can see they are racing with time; no-one seems to care if we understood or not. They rarely deal with the methodological approaches to teaching, but rather scrap the surface on flimsy curriculum issues. You leave the workshop empty and wonder why you ever attended, because they are not addressing our issues. They assume we don't know. They are a misfit, sketchy briefings.*

In view of the expression of concern above (and several of this nature picked up in this research), it appears as if the out-of-school approach's merits tend to be compromised by some inherent limitations. It appears the approach fails to adequately recognise the

role that the educators can play in contributing to their own CPD. Besides, this approach seems to assume that once educators have been put through the proverbial professional development, they should be able to produce results. That may not be the case because it takes much more than being told about better ways to teach or run schools for one to acquire the capability to implement them.

Additionally, the CPD facilitators may prefer measurable outcomes to non-measurable outcomes despite their worth or value. For example, the educator's attitudes might be more crucial to goal attainment and yet they are not easy to quantify. The CPD programme providers or change agents (be they senior Circuit or Head Office officers) tend to control what is provided in professional development and how it is delivered. Accordingly, they examine educator or principal functions, and then proceed to design a programme to meet those functional needs. Thus, generally the approach leaves the choice of the content of professional development programmes to the non-practitioners.

4.3.2.3 Educator-initiated CPD

The findings of this study established that most educators embark on this CPD undertaking to earn SACE professional development (PD) points. The same sentiments were echoed in both the individual interviews as well as the focus group discussions. Additionally, the researcher had the opportunity to view and peruse the SACE PD point publication. However, much fewer educators upgrade their professional qualifications by studying with some private colleges and/or universities.

Participant responses indicated that not all CPD was free, especially with reference to educator-initiated CPD. However, the relation between financial support for participation in professional development and levels of participation was not a conclusive or straightforward one. Most participants complained of incurring costs in sponsoring their educator-initiated CPD studies. Financial constraints also tended to restrict respondents on embarking on CPD of their choices. The negative relation between the volume of professional development and the extent to which educators have to pay also suggests that provision of free professional development may not

satisfy demand. In such a scenario, educators chose to supplement CPD provision by paying, for their own additional development to meet particular or specific needs as opposed to common needs identified by the school or DBE.

Some respondents claimed that they had been prepared to part with hefty fees towards educator-initiated CPD because the activities tended to enhance future career advancement and opened up avenues for them to leave teaching for other professionals. In other words, CPD can be seen also as investment towards future careers. Maybe the educators had not experienced suitable professional development for their needs.

When asked which ones of his educators embarked on further studies by their own initiative and what studies they pursued, Principal X of School 1 responded thus:

> *The demography of our school portrays generally a young force. They are hungry for further studies to strengthen their professional power base, but are often restricted by financial handicaps. I don't have the numbers at hand, and also consider some educators may choose to study privately. What comes to mind is an educator pursuing a Master's degree in education. Several young educators are engaged in some studies of some sort especially with UNISA. One female educator is studying towards Special Education in Remedial Tuition.*

When queried on how he modelled his own professional growth to his educators, the principal excitedly answered:

> *I was the first to attend matric exam marking workshops, followed by engaging myself in marking exams. That opened up avenues for educators and in emulation I suppose, I witnessed some educators attending those CPD programmes and they are now engaged in marking. All our matric educators should be engaged in marking those exams at national level so that in a way they know what is expected to boast their teaching endeavours. We expect our pass-rate to rise significantly.*

Educator Y of School 1 lay claim to having recently abandoned his Bachelor of Education studies with UNISA due to financial constraints. However, to 'quench his thirst' for further education, he goes onto the internet to read literature on Natural Science and Technology, the subjects he teaches. He also claimed to engage in informal dialogues with colleagues on how to improve his teaching especially on the solar system.

Educator Z of School 1 is not presently studying privately in pursuit of a certificate, diploma or degree, but he reads educational material especially on the internet. He also frequently engages himself in informal dialogues with colleagues especially, *"On the contentious one on discipline or learner indiscipline."*

Principal J of School 2 is pursuing a Bachelor of Science degree with UNISA. The Economics and Business Studies educator in his school is privately pursuing studies with UNISA. The Mathematics educator had recently graduated with a UNISA BED (Mathematics). The Geography educator was pursuing some studies with North West University. The researcher substantiated all the claims. Educator L of School will resume his BED (English) studies with UNISA, funds permitting. He had temporarily 'shelved' the studies. Educator L continues to browse on the internet to enrich his prowess in teaching English as a subject.

Educator K of School 2 claimed to regularly read professional literature such as journals, evidence-based papers and circulars from DBE mainly from subject advisors. He also takes time to read newspapers on articles of an educational nature. In addition, he takes pleasure in informal dialogues with colleagues mainly on matters of class management, learner assessment and any subject matter of an enrichment nature.

Principal P of School 3 confirmed that one of his educators is studying towards a Post Graduate Certificate in Education (PGCE). The other educator is pursuing a BED (Honours in Management). The principal models his own professional growth to educators by attending ALOE self-sponsor workshops. On return, he voluntarily disseminates or passes on the information he would have acquired to HODs. The HODs would in turn pass on the information to all educators in their respective departments.

Educator Q of School 3 is presently part-time lecturing for the University of Free State as well as co-ordinating one of the university's local centres. The researcher witnessed one lecture session in progress. The educator claimed that she naturally reads a lot of evidence-based papers and lecture modules to prepare herself to tutor the university students, and that directly benefits her as an educator. Furthermore, she frequently engages in informal dialogues with colleagues on matters of class management to do

with student discipline, student guidance and counselling and on the pastoral role of an educator.

Educator R of School 3 is not studying towards any qualification programme such as a diploma, certificate or degree. However, he claims to be engrossed in browsing for any educational literature that might professionally empower him. He likes to identify major challenges faced by learners in Mathematics, and in the process, find methods to demystifying Mathematics.

Principal E of School 4 identified two educators privately pursuing Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE) studies. Asked on how she modelled her own professional growth to her educators in an attempt to encourage or motivate them, the principal asserted that she shared her experiences with her educators. On elaboration, she claimed that she attended ALOE courses/workshops on management/supervision at her own expense financially, but goes further to share the information with her HODs. She also shared any information she read about and found beneficial to the educator.

Educator G of School 4 finds it very beneficial to browse on the internet. She lay claim to having gained abundantly on assessing and scoring marks for the Life Orientation student on the internet and by discussing informally with colleagues. There were no claims put forward for any educator pursuing private studies at School 5. Educator F of School 4 browses on the internet for educationally fulfilling literature. He also lay claim to often engaging in informal dialogues with colleagues on aspects of remedial teaching as well as on how to upgrade teaching of English comprehension for matric students.

Respondents reported cost or financial constraints as a barrier to taking more professional development studies. This was most notable with the failure to embark on university studies for degree course acquisition. Fewer respondents claimed that professional development tended to conflict with their teaching time schedules and thus rendering that as a barrier to engaging in more CPD. Qualification programmes or courses tended to demand more time and attention. However, time schedules were created for school-initiated and externally initiated activities.

This study revealed that deliberate attempts by principals and HODs to initiate school-based CPDs featured regularly. However, inconsistencies among schools in their provision for CPD activities were identified mainly on issues of educator involvement and consultation at planning stage. The study also found out that there were (amongst schools) common deliberate practices in the school-based CPD approach that tended to address issues of juvenile delinquency or learner indiscipline through organised class management workshops. These issues were raised in both individual interviews and focus group sessions.

School-initiated CPD is made up of those programmes that are essentially initiated and run from schools. These consist of programmes at a particular school initiated and/or organised by the principal or HODs or subject associations/committees or individual educators or a combination of all or some of the personnel mentioned herein. Secondary schools are often organised around subjects to form departments, and as a result, CPD activities follow this pattern. The principal or HOD, for instance, with the assistance of a subject committee may identify a topic of concern and select educators to make presentations on the topic. The selected presenters are often tasked with determining the content and organisation of the presentations. Alternatively, the principal, HOD or educators may seek expertise or even resources that are necessary for undertaking a CPD programme.

Concisely, the activities herein are school-led to address, for example, common needs identified by a group of educators or the School Management Team (SMT) or individual HODs or principals. They then encourage educators in a school to work as a collective in responding to the school related CPDs. This approach encourages school-focused professional development, professional collaboration and collegiality within the school environment. Take note that they exclude activities offered by the employers.

The essential feature of the school-based approach is that the educators can determine their shortcomings or growth potential and set out to remedy them or seek to realise their growth. In addition, it is also in the view that largely, schools are primarily learning centres (Sparks, 2002). Thus, educators can work together to rectify, for example, their methodological deficiency or knowledge of subject content. In

extreme cases, this can even be done with or without the blessing of the principal. Villegas-Reimers (2003:57) had this to say in support of school-based CPD:

> *… to enable education systems to be reformed, teachers act not only as subjects, but also as objects of that reform. …the rationale of self-development is based on three factors; it is believed that schools and teachers will be more likely to commit themselves to change when they have initiated the change themselves; this change is more likely to become institutionalized when teachers are better prepared to plan and implement it; and needs and priorities will be identified more effectively at the local level, and thus the plan to change will respond to realistic rather than to perceived needs.*

As a result, opportunities for collaboration amongst the school personnel are abound considering that schools by nature are potential communities to facilitate CPD (Selemani-Meke, 2011). The school-based approach tends to work best in environments where it is much appreciated, clearly understood and planned for well in advance before execution. Fellow educators have their own role to play in nurturing a user-friendly school environment that would foster a culture of professional development. Educators need to co-operate, support and supplement the efforts of HODs and principals in instituting school-based CPD (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002; Marcelo, 2009; Selemani-Meke, 2011; Shaha et al., 2015; Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Bernadine, 2019).

Externally initiated CPDs on the other hand are activities that are initiated and offered by an employer or other providers. Employers are the 9 Provincial Education Departments, School Governing Boards (SGB) and Independent School Boards/Groups/Associations. Higher Education Institutions, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Professional Associations also often offer such services. Broadly, the activities include full qualifications, short courses and skills development programmes such as in computer literacy. Those CPD programmes mainly have to do with Department of Basic Education initiated through, for example, SACE, the Circuit or Head Office. They may also be connected to colleges of education or universities. The DBE or Independent School Boards may hire expert facilitation.

In particular, Circuit education officers often play a critical role in providing support necessary to initiate and sustain ambitious improvement efforts to schools within their jurisdiction. Circuit offices often articulate standards for student learning, leadership, teaching and the general CPD. They may then establish accountability and often

incentive systems related to those standards (Sparks, 2002). Circuit offices often have the capacity to analyse data such as in pass-rates, and then assist principals and educators in using the data to set goals and assess progress.

Inferences from participants' responses tend to suggest that the externally initiated approach may compromise effective implementation of CPD programmes considering that knowledge gaps could be created because of information or messages becoming distorted at the level of dissemination or cascade. In other research findings (Selemani-Meke, 2011; Mahlaela, 2012), claims evidently point out that IQMS effectiveness was compromised due to misrepresentation of crucial information by delegates reporting back to school. One participant in the Mahlaela (2012:61) report in reference to IQMS asserted:

> *Theoretically, it looks good, but the main problem is the way it has been brought to us; it has lots of loopholes… The mere fact that even the facilitators were not in a state where they could effectively train teachers made matters worse. Every corner you ask a teacher about the impact of IQMS, the only response you would get would be, "I don't understand IQMS," and that the facilitators are incompetent and that has contributed towards the ineffectiveness of IQMS.*

Although IQMS was instituted with good intentions, in some circles, it has not received the desired support and accolade from some educators themselves.

Admittedly, the 'learning out of school' CPD approach is relatively cheaper in terms of time and effort to be expended by the providers and organisers in their execution. Besides, they tend to cater for larger numbers. In essence, this delivery mode tends to provide new multiple perspectives to knowledge and skills that broaden and deepen understanding above school-based experiences. The main delivery methods of the out-of-school method and practice is mainly in-service courses, lecture methods, conferences, discussions/seminars, presentation workshops, demonstrations and at times simulations and observations.

The findings that educators have less say and control over initiating CPD under the externally initiated, indicates the dominance of 'top-down' approach as opposed to educator led initiatives. The 'top-down' approach is unlikely to promote effective professional development if educators are not in a position to take ownership of their own development needs. The externally initiated approach also tends to ignore the

importance of the educators' commitment to, and ownership of the envisaged changes to be accomplished through CPD. Educators have to feel a sense of programme ownership. They must feel that they are part of it. However, in the researcher's critical analysis herein, he must not lose sight of the fact that the same Circuit or Head Office education officers are more likely to be former educators and/or principals. They have been 'there', and all they may be trying to do (with all due respect) is to make a difference with their experience. That is the researcher's more positive stance.

The study noted that educators derived some satisfaction when their input is taken into account, rendering the need for consultation in CPD programme-design crucial. Furthermore, it is acknowledged that very much depends on the professional expertise of facilitators to promote an effective and efficient externally initiated CPD programme. Additionally, there is dire need for facilitators to address their course content in such a way that it incorporates input from educators themselves in an attempt to influence educators to own CPD programmes.

The educator-initiated approach advocates that the individual principal or educator define their own growth objectives and strive to achieve them (SACE, 2013). The essential feature of this form of CPD is that the educator can determine their shortcomings or growth potential and set out to remedy them or seek to realise their growth. Thus, the individual educator can enrol towards some study with an educational institute such as a university or college to acquire or broaden their knowledge of subject content or sharpen their skill in some teaching aspect. It can be done formally or informally such as in reading educational journals or embarking onto some short free internet courses. This can be done with or without the blessing or knowledge of the principal, Circuit Office or Head Office.

What also counts under educator-initiated is self-study through accessing various literature around a topic of interest. For example, countless books in libraries or on the internet provide insight into assessment processes in an outcome-based system. Additionally, improving personal learning or qualifications by attending voluntary self-funded workshops, or completing voluntary self-funded study programmes with private correspondence or part-time colleges counts as educator initiated. Researching and writing articles such as periodicals/journals, magazine or newspaper articles, falls

under this approach. Reading educational material from various educational publications and sources also tends to professionally develop individual educators.

The respondents who felt that a 50/50 balance must be struck on implementing both school-initiated and externally initiated CPD programmes wished to capitalise on benefits of both experiences. The school-initiated is more focused, whereas with the externally initiated, you gain colleagues' experiences by learning from their environments.

The research established that the participants gained support to pursue professional development through indulgence in self-initiated, school-initiated and externally initiated CPD activities. The knowledge and skills, as well as attitudes acquired was then fed into the classroom for the benefit of the learner. The research findings also recognised that there was a strong beneficial interplay between formal learning from school-initiated and externally-initiated professional development experiences and informal learning from self-initiated CPD engagements of naturally arising opportunities. As a result, the study showed that there was a co-existence of formal and informal professional knowledge, which reinforce each other.

In view of three broad approaches having been identified to present CPD programmes, suggestions were invoked from respondents on how best they felt CPD programmes should be implemented or delivered in schools. In particular was a response from Principal X who stated:

> *All CPD should be compulsory as in SACE PD point system. Strong finance base is of note, since most professional development programmes come at a cost. There is a dire need to sponsor especially young educators who wish to advance their studies. Even veteran educators need to be upgraded to keep abreast of changes in education. Department could source funds from government treasury to institute bursaries or scholarships in this regard.*
>
> *Private schools should ideally put aside some funds to sponsor their educators who would have embarked on some studies that are perceived to benefit students; even if it means only 50% of the fees. Educators should be rewarded financially or by way of certificate of attendance or competence after having undertaken CPD programmes, especially CPD programmes of a higher magnitude such as in matric examination marking.*

Few respondents highlighted the need for CPD programmes to be evaluated as a means of improving upon delivery and implementation of CPD programmes to realise

maximum benefit. This was despite the fact that all respondents found it pertinent to evaluate CPD programmes to assess their worth.

At this juncture, suffice to mention that all educators strive to earn and accrue professional development (PD) points from all the 3 types of CPD namely, educator-initiated, school-initiated and externally-initiated. PD points are a way of assigning numerical value to the educator's professional development activities. The South African Council for Educators (SACE) is the body established by law to uphold the teaching profession. SACE is mandated to register all professional educators and ensure that all educators conduct and uphold themselves ethically and professionally.

In its Handbook, SACE (2013:4) endorsed that, *"Like all professionals, teachers need to grow their knowledge and skills throughout their careers. Like all professions, teaching requires deep knowledge which is continuously updated and widened, and it involves complex skills that need to be continually adapted to new environments."*

In other words, educators need to continuously renew their commitment to their profession. Through the Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD) Management System, SACE promotes and facilitates the professional development of educators. SACE allocates PD points to the educators' professional engagements or activities according to a schedule of points approved by SACE. When an educator earns points for CPD activities, the points are reported to SACE and added to their Personal Professional Development Points Account (PPDPA).

Each educator is expected to achieve at least 150 PD points in every three-year cycle. SACE will issue a Certificate of Achievement to each educator who achieves a target number of PD points within the three years as follows:

- 150 points : Certificate of Achievement (Bronze)
- 151-300 points : Certificate of Achievement (Silver)
- 300+ points : Certificate of Achievement (Gold)

The main idea is to encourage educators to become more competent and better in every possible aspect of their jobs. Participation is compulsory/mandatory.

It was interesting to note that all schools had some policies in place to facilitate CPD. All schools managed to supply the policies as either soft-copies or hard-copy

documentary evidence. School 1 enlisted a detailed termly CPD programme dispensed to every educator as a guideline, weekly CPD session every Wednesday from 2 to 3pm, SACE PD point system, a General School Policy encouraging educators to upgrade themselves academically and professionally and only qualified educators are recruited with the unqualified educators only becoming assistant educators in a mentor/mentee relationship. The claims were substantiated by documentary evidenced in all respects.

To facilitate CPD, School 2 had Performance appraisal, Teacher self-evaluation tool, staff briefings every Tuesday, SACE PD point system, compliance on attending all DBE and circuit-initiated CPDs and the usual staff meetings as policies in place to facilitate CPD.

School 3 identified CAPS guidelines, DBE documented intervention strategies on CPD, IQMS, departmental staff meetings and SACE PD point system as policies guiding the facilitation of CPDs in their school.

School 4 had the SACE PD point system, performance appraisal, IQMS, and staff meetings handy as policies in place to accomplish CPD in their school.

School 5 produced the Vision and Mission statements and SACE PD point system as the guiding policies in effecting CPDs in their school.

4.3.3 Theme 3: Consulting and involving educators in identifying professional development needs

All principals in this study agreed that they involved and consulted educators on identifying CPD needs. However, all of the principals were quick to point out that some CPD matters came ready-packaged as DBE policy. For instance, on the invigilation of matric exams, there was not much to consult with educators. The policy had to be implemented without manipulation or deviation.

The question of how well educators' professional development needs were being met through CPD was considered by means of two indicators; educators who reported that they wanted more professional development than they received, and the extent to which they reported development needs in specific areas of their work. Sizable

proportions of educators reported that they had a high-level need for information and communication technology (ICT) as well as student discipline and behaviour issues.

When asked on how the school identified CPD needs in educators, Principal J of School 2 responded:

> *Through supervision and monitoring, I pick up flaws. HODs in their supervisory endeavours also pick up flaws. Student assessment through learner tests and examinations also point to CPD gaps. Exercise book inspections compliment. We engage a Teacher Self Reflection Tool where educators honestly identify their strengths and weaknesses and suggest way-forward for improvement. Performance appraisal compliments the tool mentioned above.*

When a direct question was put to the same principal if he received any support from educators to identify CPD needs, he stated, *"Yes. Teacher self-reflection tool 'speaks' to us; it suggests CPD needs. Performance appraisal tools help educators identify needs and feedback to us. Staff meetings are a forum to launch and identify needs."* In as far as, school-initiated CPD activities are concerned; Educator L and Educator K's responses were consistent with the claims put forward by their principal. This was also confirmed by triangulation.

Principal P of School 3 pointed out that they used Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) as a tool in reflecting educator performance standards, to identify development needs in educators. The school also engaged performance appraisals and departmental staff meetings as platforms for educators to identify CPD needs. Interview and focus group participants of the same school endorsed this assertion.

Principal E of School 4 lay claim to engaging IQMS to assist management to identify professional development needs in educators. The process involved educators completing Personal Growth Plans (PGPs) and Educator Improvement Plans (EIPs). The contents therein would reveal shortcomings demanding CPD attention. In essence, educators identify their challenges or needs by completing those forms, which are then analysed by management. Research respondents of the same school corroborated the claims.

On how the school identified CPD needs in educators, Principal X of School 1 gave a detailed account:

By and large we observe gaps through, for instance, class visits or lesson observation by the vice principal, principal or HODs. The supervision thereof informs us on what nature of CPD to embark on. Termly exam analysis is also a pointer to gaps. Low pas-rates in particular subjects. Sometimes complaints from parents or students themselves are pointers to desired CPD. Staff meetings are a platform for spontaneous issues to have CPD agenda status. Staff meetings can be quite informative especially with educator common needs; where CPD issues are unanimously seconded and endorsed by educators instantly. What comes to mind is the student discipline/indiscipline issue that came through a staff meeting although initially it was not on the agenda. We have a provision for 'Any Other Business'(AOB) at the end of staff meetings to give educators the forum to wonder and raise any other issues of critical importance in promoting effective teaching/learning.

On being probed, to give further details on how exactly educators identified their own CPD needs, Principal X reiterated:

As alluded to, through staff meetings and educator self-evaluation via performance appraisal. The needs of educators as far as CPD is considered are deliberately often raised 'bottom-up' through open channels of communication. This is to promote ownership and general support of CPD programmes by the intended beneficiaries; that is educators. This is to minimize resistance. Resistance is inevitable when you coerce educators into some CPD programme. Our educators technically endorse school-initiated CPD. Educators are the chief curriculum implementers; a crucial role indeed. We need their compliance.

A response on the question of how professional development needs were identified in his department or school, Educator M responded:

Student performance or under-performance is an indicator of a need, usually through learner assessment as in tests at school or matric pass-rates. Results-based approach by-and-large. We analyse results as a school to identify learning areas needing attention and upgrading. Intervention strategies, usually at department level follow.

Educator M and Educator N of School 5 agreed that it was crucial to consult and involve educators in identifying school-initiated CPD programmes. However, both respondents testified that they had not had any school-initiated CPDs in the past 12 months and further beyond. Both claimed that they only experienced what they termed, *"…briefings…"* which they however, could not qualify as CPD programmes in the true sense and in their understanding.

On externally initiated CPDs, Educator N of School 5 made clear his disappointment when he stated:

We are not consulted. The programmes are imposed on us. Maybe as a result of pass-rate results that may be low in some aspect. Why must it be assumed that when the pass-rate is low, it must have something or everything to do with the teacher or principal? These personnel become easy targets for accusation. The student's background or non-availability of textbooks is not an issue according to them. Very pathetic indeed.

If ever we are consulted, but we never get involved in the planning. We are mere bystanders waiting to be accused and blamed. They think for us, give us wrong advice, and come back to attack us and blame us for everything.

The research findings of this study established that there were unanimous sentiments echoed from all respondents that CPD programme organisers/facilitators of the externally initiated need to consult beneficiaries of CPD activities before implementation. Educator N underscored this claim by proposing, "*I think they determine for us the nature of the CPD programme based on pass-rate. It is not a bad idea in my view. But I wish they could find a way of identifying particular needs of schools during matric exam marking, then attempt to package CPD programmes designed for that school. It could be more beneficial, but maybe too cumbersome*."

When asked to identify professional development needs that would receive their immediate priority if given a choice, most educator respondents itemised the following:

- Student discipline and managing behaviour problems.
- Conducting remedial tuition in my subject/field(s).
- Student guidance and counselling.
- Information and Communication Technology (ICT).
- Deeper knowledge and understanding of my main subject(s).
- Student assessment management.

There are more subtle areas that some educators indicated needed CPD intervention, but the highlighted areas above were overwhelmingly on demand.

On being asked what nature of externally initiated CPD he would vouch, Educator Y was handy with this proposal:

Holistically boast the literacy level of our students. All subjects tend to depend on student literacy such as in reading and comprehending. Learner attitude levels appear to be down, often exhibiting low or nil levels of motivation. I am not sure if it is a South African problem, or provincial problem, but it is so alarmingly prevalent. Personally, I wish to embark on

some university degree study programme to boast my subject content/knowledge and skills base. But I am financially restricted.

Educator N of school 5, expressed a different but interesting deficiency needing CPD intervention:

Remediation tuition of my learners who exhibit learning deficiencies. At times am not sure what to do with them, but I always wished I could make a difference by tailoring subject matter to suit their consumption. It can be very frustrating. We are not equipped with such skills in teacher training colleges or universities. I believe some the challenges the students face area a result of their background, but how do I go about it considering I can't change their background?

Educator L appeared to be crying out for CPD intervention when he stated, *"I need smart-board, eBooks and ICT approaches in addition to the traditional chalk and board method. I need to sharpen my computer literacy and blend IT to modernise my teaching approach."* Every respondent had some outstanding CPD programme that he/she wished to take.

When asked if the educators would have wanted to participate in more school-initiated professional development activities, most educators advocated for more. When asked to explain why they needed more, several reasons were put forward. Some felt that they needed to be enriched on teaching methods and broaden their subject(s) knowledge base. Others felt that their computer literacy needed upgrading. However, when probed on why they did not put it to the attention of HODs and principals to institute more CPDs, all respondents acknowledged that they experienced tight schedules in their teaching mandate, and as a result, were time constrained. Others felt there was no initiative from management, and felt that proposing for more CPDs could be misinterpreted as interference in management matters. On the contrary, almost all respondents felt that the externally initiated CPD activities disbursed were sufficient.

It was interesting to note that most principals were consistent in their stance to consult educators in identifying CPD needs. The educator remained their main focus when they developed CPD programmes. Principals collectively emphasised the dire need to highlight challenges faced by educators in packaging school-initiated CPDs. They appeared to take into consideration educator competences, experience, qualification,

knowledge level and skill. They acknowledged that they mainly incorporated educator involvement in identifying needs through the HODs.

As if in contradiction, 2 principals appeared silent on educator needs as they highlighted the main factors they focused on when they developed CPD needs. They appeared to stress student needs. Some authorities of CPD in education appeared to always find it challenging to draw the line between educator and student needs. As one principal had this to say:

> *Results as in class tests, subject termly and annual exams and matric exam pass-rates inform us. Exams administered at Circuit level inform us. We are results driven on the totality of the child. Finance is a main factor too. Our CPD programmes should somehow be affordable within our budget limit or provision. Time is a critical factor too.*

One wonders if educators are ever consulted on budget matters. However, the study must also take cognisance of the fact that educators cannot be consulted and involved with every aspect of planning a CPD programme. Finance issues, for instance, are best left to the finance department of the school.

More testimonies put forward by respondents bore evidence of educators being consulted and involved in CPD matters. When respondents were asked to describe a typical planning for professional development in their respective schools, mention of the educator as a component of the planning always featured. Principal X attested, *"We identify the typical CPD programme with educator input. We identify facilitators. We identify educator beneficiaries… Then design a programme with time allocation. If required, funds are sourced. The venue is also considered."*

The research findings suggest that it is pertinent to consult and involve educators in identifying professional development needs. This view is consistent with the findings of other researchers (Moeini, 2008; Killion, 2009; Goe et al., 2012; Al-Qahtani, 2015). In professional development, information about training and learning needs has to be gathered to determine the professional development areas or content. As espoused in the review of related literature of this thesis, professional development needs identification and analysis is critical in discovering the gaps in educator knowledge, skills and attitudes. In other words, to improve educator quality and performance, professional development needs must be identified first.

Al-Qahtani (2015) underscores the claim that any professional development might not attain its purpose unless the educators' voices are considered. Based on the sentiments expressed in the research findings, the researcher agrees that the voices of educators are of upmost importance when deciding on the key components of CPD. The educators are the chief curriculum implementers responsible for translating knowledge into effective classroom teaching. CPD should ideally give educators an opportunity to contribute to programmes, which address their own upgrading or training needs.

Based on the premise that educator quality and competence is critical to student achievement, so the priority for CPD investment should ideally be educator growth based on evidence of student achievement (Moeini, 2008; Al-Qahtani, 2015). Educator and student needs go hand in hand. In other words, needs assessments for professional growth are embedded in student achievement or under-achievement. Put simply, what the educator needs is defined by what students need to be successful. Good as it may be that educators are consulted; the interests of the learner must not be side lined, but rather be incorporated.

The researcher reiterates that effective professional development of educators improves upon their knowledge base, skills and attitude. Therefore, as a result, student performance is the result of improved teaching skills. We cannot expect students to change what they do if we are content or satisfied for educators to continue to do what they have always done. Involving and consulting educators on teaching matters that challenge them would translate into benefiting the learner if those challenges are overcome. Consulting and involving the educator must be targeted at student success. In that way, educators would be assumed to be effective if students achieve and learn better.

All respondents seemed to be in agreement that as much as externally-initiated CPD was relevant in identifying CPD needs and attempted to put things right, it remained bureaucratic in nature and formal in approach. It assigns the role of the change agent to education officers who may not have direct contact with the learners. This was echoed in both the individual interview as well as the focus group sessions. The dominance of the CPD providers is prevalent, and has its top-down character as its major weakness. Given the fact that the range of educators' generalised competencies

and clustered behaviours (that incorporate knowledge, skills and attitudes) can be very wide, how are the change agents to know each educator's real needs? The approach appears to be based on the philosophy of schooling the educator by giving him/her information and/or skills. This is not to suggest that the externally initiated activities have no place in professionally developing the educator, but just to highlight that the approach seems to be based on faith.

The educators identified a high level of need in the use of ICT for instruction maybe as a reflection of the speed of technological change, which educators must surely keep pace with. This may signal a continuing challenge for schools to keep abreast of technology to enhance effective teaching and learning. The demand for class management skills may be a pointer to possible high student indiscipline and juvenile delinquency prevailing in schools.

It can also be important for educators to exercise their own professional development judgement by identifying and embarking on CPD activities, which they feel are most beneficial to them. Educators may also need course certification such as diplomas and university degrees for self-actualisation purposes, and maybe to enhance their chances of job leverages or promotions.

A low level of unsatisfied demands was echoed in this research, but the majority of participants agreed that their professional development needs were satisfactorily met. An important discovery was that, unsatisfied demand tended to always exist no matter what CPD programmes educators had been put through. This testifies that CPD is ongoing, lifelong and never ceases.

Identifying needs should be a shared task. It should neither be a top-down nor bottom-up model, but rather a combination of both. Research shows that peer support leads to effective school improvement (Moeni, 2008; Killion, 2009; Goe et al., 2012; Al-Qahtani, 2015). Analysis of the school's vision and mission statements in relation to meeting students' needs may assist in highlighting areas where professional development would be most beneficial. In addition, educators' reflection or evaluation of their own work may enable them to identify strengths on which they would like to build on, and weaknesses that they would want to redress.

Ideally, every area prioritised by the school will have its own professional development needs (be it, for instance, sports excellence or improved subject pass-rate). The resources would then be put together to address professional development needs. The evaluation stage of the school planning cycle may also reveal areas needing attention or areas where additional advanced expertise would be beneficial. Any educational policy or curriculum change that the school or DBE may wish to introduce should be accompanied by a proper educator professional development informed by identified training needs (Moeni, 2008).

CPD facilitators or co-ordinators must ensure that development programmes meet the needs of both individual educators and the school at large. Consulting and involving educators at all levels is the way to go, to harness their support. However, CPD can only be effective if is rooted in a commitment to evaluate and move forward individual educators' basic teaching competence (Goe et al., 2012; Al-Qahtani, 2015). Without involving educators in needs identification, school development is unlikely to occur at the speed required to ensure continuing improvement (Killion, 2009). Individual staff members' and school needs have to be brought together.

4.3.4 Theme 4: Monitoring and evaluating professional development programmes

Study findings showed that informal CPD evaluations prevailed in schools, but the majority of responses alluded to the total failure by schools to institute deliberate, formal, organised/planned and documented evaluations. In the majority of cases, what was confirmed were gleaned reflections and inferences from the general learner performance. The educators indicated that their students had benefited significantly from educator CPD indulgence, but there was no documentary evidence of a statistical nature, nor an improved pass-rate or improved student performance of any kind apart from improved learner discipline. Similar sentiments were raised in both the focus group discussions as well as individual interview sessions.

The research findings across the respondent spectrum established that there is little agreement about how CPD programmes should be evaluated. Considering that professional development must be measured both in terms of the training action itself and in terms of the behaviour change outside the training situation, evaluation is viewed as one of the most complex mental skills. However, evaluation has to

determine the effectiveness of the CPD programme so that future programmes can be improved upon. In other words, evaluation assigns worth or value to the CPD programme or activities. Evaluations determine if the needs of the programmes are being met and provide evidence that learner achievement has indeed improved.

When asked if they had any kind of monitoring, evaluation or supervision system for continuous professional development, all principals in the study acknowledged that they had. On being probed to give details, Principal X's response was:

> *We monitor to see if our professional development programmes have assisted us realise the desired output. Sometimes we have to wait for a year or two to check on professional development impact on pass-rate. With, for example, smart-boards, monitoring is continuous, it is on-going to gauge on impact and supply constant assistance to educators in need. Already, students were thrilled by the white-boards and disruptive tendencies in class has significantly declined. It has brought some sense of order and discipline, but we are not sure for how long.*

Principal J lay claim to monitoring CPD programmes through performance appraisal undertakings as well as through staff meetings when educators gave feedbacks on their experiences with particular professional development programmes. The principal pointed out that the evaluations therein were not formalised without much elaboration.

Principal P asserted that their school had developed a monitoring tool code-named "work-output" that checked on the number of students' written exercises as a curriculum coverage pacesetter. In their supervisory endeavours, HODs checked the work of educators for professional development compliance. They mainly checked learner written exercise books and reported to the vice principal who in turn reported to the principal.

Principal E acknowledged that their school had only embarked on earnest CPD in 2019, so they had not instituted a system in place to assess or evaluate professional development effectiveness. Principal O put claim that end of term staff meetings at departmental level were the only platform to discuss professional development effectiveness. However, there were no written documents to substantiate the claim. The educator respondents from the same school corroborated their principal's assertions.

Generally, educator respondents confirmed the claims put forward by their principals in as far as evaluating professional development effectiveness was concerned. Educator Y stated, *"Basically we engage educator feedbacks in departmental or staff meetings as a reflection mechanism. We analyse student performance via tests or exams to check for any disparities in performance prior to, and after professional development."* Educator Y went on to say, *"Formally…no, but informally…yes. We assess mainly through student performance. We just feel it or experience the positives or the negatives and sometimes pass on comments; but not in a formal caucus."* In agreement, Educator Z reiterated that student performance mainly through tests and examination analysis assisted in measuring professional development effectiveness.

Respondent M had this to say, *"When a delegate on externally-initiated CPD programme returns, he or she staff-develops colleagues. At some point, the school collectively or in departments reviews the impact of the CPD programme. Unfortunately, there is no documented reviews that I know of. It is mere discussions, sometimes informally in the staff room."* Once again, the character of the brand of 'evaluations' prevailing in schools is clear; CPD programmes tend to be informally evaluated.

With prompting and probing, most of the respondents seemed to view judging learner response or performance as the ultimate means by which to evaluate the effectiveness of any professional development that the school may have put through. Some respondents felt that the IQMS monitoring tool sufficed in gauging CPD impact. Others felt that learner attitude, reaction and change in response to the new dispensation was sufficient indicator to the effectiveness of the CPD activities that may have been put through.

As if to claim that they informally evaluated CPD effectiveness, many respondents put forward several challenges they experienced at the implementation stage of CPD programmes. Challenges raised during individual interviews were equally confirmed in focus group discussions. In a manner that could be considered, CPD programme 'evaluation', Respondent N stressed, *"On abolishment of corporal punishment, we are in a dilemma on how to put our students to order. The alternative methods and tactics don't ever seem to work. It can be very frustrating."*

Respondent F highlighted challenges he faced in implementing in the classroom setting what he had learnt from CPD as finance and time constraints as well as a general lack of resources. He also felt that student behaviour tended to hamper efficient implementation of CPD. In apparent support, Principal E equally felt that financial constraints to procure some CPD recommended gadgets was a stumbling block in maximising the benefits of CPD. Large unbearable class sizes, learner indiscipline and inadequate time are some of the major drawbacks frequently cited as hindrances to effective implementation of CPD.

Disruptive tendencies by students received the greatest emphasis as a major impediment. Respondent P echoed the complaint common among respondents when he stressed, “Serious challenges indeed coming from disruptive, in-disciplined students. Such students upset the teaching process in many ways; literally sabotaging educator attempts.”

To justify claims towards informal evaluations they carried out, respondent Y stated, *“Smart-boards are a challenge with the technical aspect. Am still in a learning process and have a lot to master. Learners tend to get carried away by the smart-board, often preferring to marvel at the intricacies of the board rather than listen to the educator. Attention becomes divided.”* Educator K similarly reiterated this claim by pointing out, *“New teaching methods demand modern technology such as PowerPoint or white-boards, but such is not available in this school.”*

Respondent Z informally evaluated a CPD programme he attended recently and put forward his pre-implementation evaluation as, *“Some facilitators really struggle with content. Put differently, the facilitator knowledge base was below mine. That’s easy to tell, but you can’t help it. One is expected to attend and pretend to benefit. These are some of the dilemmas we face as subordinates.”* Educator L felt that at times there was no need to evaluate at all because, *“The school does not always permit me to practice CPD acquired skills and knowledge; sometimes preferring to stick with the traditional chalk-and- board approaches. The school won’t procure the white-boards due to financial constraints.”*

By evaluating CPDs, it is possible to determine the weaknesses and shortcomings and hence come up with strategies for improving those weaknesses. Support of any programme hinges on monitoring and support mechanisms put in place to ensure

effective implementation (Guskey, 2002; Haslam, 2010; Selemani-Meke, 2011). Monitoring should be given adequate attention to ensure that any challenges educators may face at implementation phase may be shared with the programme facilitators (Mullins et al., 2010). Follow-up support should come handy (Guskey, 2002). CPD programme organisers need to provide continued follow-up support to educators to put in practice what they learnt from CPD. Support allows those engaged in difficult processes of implementation to tolerate the anxiety of occasional failures and revise their approaches (Selemani-Meke, 2011).

With prompting and probing, most respondents were able to articulate the effectiveness of CPD evaluations in that the desired outcomes of the programmes can be identified, and evaluation would determine whether they were accomplished. In so doing, the programme facilitators may be informed on how to improve professional development. Both findings and literature showed that evaluations assist in obtaining a better understanding of CPD. Additionally; evaluation provides adequate reviews and support in ensuring effective CPD. The apparent inadequacy in CPD evaluations in the findings suggest that CPD evaluations need to be implemented formally. It was interesting to note that focus group discussions as well as individual interviews raised similar sentiments.

Failure to evaluate professional development programmes mean that a lot of feedback may go missing to both the facilitators as well as the recipients. The criteria by which professional development programmes are evaluated should be determined by the training aim or objectives. Most training programmes attempt to accomplish several objectives. There is need to find out how well the participants have liked the programme then evaluate or investigate to establish their reactions. Considering the participants are the consumers of the service, their reaction and/or perception is an important indication of the worth or quality of the CPD programme. The reactions may be captured, collected or obtained when participants, for example, complete a simple questionnaire at the end of the workshop. The systematic investigation of the merit or worth also tends to establish the worth or merit of embarking on the CPD programme in the first place (Guskey, 2002).

On the other hand, how well participants grasp specific information should be evaluated just as students acquire knowledge and skills. The guiding question would

be, *"To what extent did the participants learn and retain the information or skills presented in the professional development programme?"* One could use the "true-false", multiple-choice questions or request a brief written account to establish the amount of learning that took place and was retained. If the CPD programme fails to satisfy intended beneficiaries' needs, a determination should be made as whether this was due to the design or the delivery of the CPD programme, or due to some other cause (Visser et al., 2013).

Additionally, change in behaviour can also be investigated. The guiding question would be, *"To what extent did the behaviour of the participants change as a result of the professional development programme?"* Observation is one way in which behaviour may be objectively be evaluated. Participants may also be given a self-report questionnaire where they assess their own changes in behaviour.

Lastly, we may want to establish the results that may have been achieved as a result of the professional development programme. Professional development programmes are crucial because they determine the performance of an organisation. There is need to find out whether the school actually now performs more effectively or efficiently because of the training effort or if there are other factors influencing performance. The guiding question would be, *"Does the professional development engagement result in reduced costs, improved production, more collegiality, more student achievement or some other factor?"*

Collin et al (2012: 156) underscore the importance of monitoring and evaluating CPD by stating:

> *…life-long learning or CPD is only possible where employees have systematic and valid information about their capabilities, that is to say, if they are able to form accurate self-perceptions, to carefully identify the qualities they need for future career success, and if they are able to adapt their behaviour accordingly.*

Professional development programmes associated with gains in student learning frequently provide educators with feedback and reflection as a means of empowering them with informed decisions on making changes to their practice (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Feedback and reflection, as in monitoring and evaluation, help educators move more thoughtfully toward the expert visions of practice that may have been learned about during CPD. Monitoring and evaluation may be facilitated through

analysing student work. Analysing student work collaboratively tends to give educators opportunities to develop a common understanding of what instructional strategies may or may not be working, and for whom.

4.3.5 Theme 5: The extent to which CPD influences student achievement

In both the individual interviews and focus group discussions, the research findings overwhelmingly recognised the importance of addressing the student's needs as a critical factor in leading to an awareness of the need for CPD to effect change. CPD was found to be most powerful when it focuses on results that can be expressed in terms of student achievement (Guskey, 2003a). A straight question was put to the respondents to ascertain the extent to which knowledge gained in CPD programmes influenced student achievement. Educator R claimed to have experienced a scenario where learners tackled the subject tasks much easier after he had implemented CPD acquired knowledge and skills. The respondent also claimed to have noticed a dramatic visible development and display of more confidence amongst the majority of his students. The school-based CPD was highlighted as being more beneficial because, "…*it makes us to focus and manage our school work and make our learners to perform better in various subjects."*

Educator Q had this to say in response, *"In general, quite positive. Students gained as witnessed in their performance. Students often exhibit some turn-around in willingness to learn."* Statistical or documentary evidence to claim on student improvement was not readily available, but the respondent remained adamant and positive that CPD had made significant improvements in student achievement. The respondent went on to assert that the students became less disruptive and more orderly as a result of class management CPD. Additionally, the respondent emphasised that the school-based programmes were more relevant and useful as they tended to address unique school problems and challenges in a more focused manner.

Respondent L was equally convinced that discipline in his school had improved because of educators having been exposed to a workshop on juvenile delinquency, class management, learner motivation and related issues. The respondent availed his CASS (continuous assessment) file where recorded learner marks were noticed to be on a gradual rise. The gradual improvement in student performance as witnessed by

scoring higher marks in tests and examinations was boldly attributed to CPD indulgence.

Similarly, Educator K echoed, *"Student enhanced performance and achievement. I am positive. Yes indeed, CPD attendance benefited the learner. I acquired new teaching methods which I found to be more effective than my old approaches."* He had more ideas to share on how to further improve student achievement, *"Improve upon frequency. More professional development programmes…"* The respondent underscored the claim by asserting that he had personally witnessed his Physical Science class improve in performance after he undertook a two-year block release course on Physical Science with North West University.

When requested to give precise indications of how students had directly benefited from CPD programmes, Educator Y responded, *"Impacted positively. Quite exciting for students in some instances, especially with the introduction of smart-boards. Student needs tended to be addressed. Pass-rate gradually rose. We witnessed student general positivity or attitudinal change."* To further enhance student achievement, the respondent felt that educator computer skills needed to be developed even further. He also advocated that his school should boost its finance base and facilitate educator scholarships to pursue studies of a CPD nature. Additionally, Wi-Fi should be installed to make it accessible to educators so that they can explore the internet. The educator made available his subject student-progress records on file, to substantiate the CPD had a direct bearing on student progress. Yes indeed, quick inferences suggested that some students' performances were on the rise in terms of higher marks or scoring because of the educator having attended Mathematics workshops.

Not to be outdone, Educator Z was all-out to attribute student achievement to educators undergoing CPD:

> *The attitudinal change is easy to measure; the desire to learn could easily be picked up with the introduction of the white-boards. School-based CPD precisely addressed pertinent issues within the school context; being more precise as opposed to generalized as needs were generated from within. But am afraid it's too early to apportion or gauge pass-rate benefits.*

Educator Z identified a major benefit of a particular CPD programme he undertook in the past five years, *"Administration of Geography student projects; quite an eye opener, quite informative. Giving students more time to embark on projects is the way*

to go. Make it interesting; not just for the purpose of awarding marks. Give timeous supervision and motivation through appreciation."

When Educator M was asked to qualify how knowledge and skills gained in CPD programmes impacted on student achievement, he was not hesitant to assert:

> *As a school, we recently in 2018 realised some improvement in our student pass-rate. But maybe it's too early to lay claims, maybe it was just a more brilliant and gifted class of 2018. I suppose one would need to research on that; I mean proper scientific research. In the long run, am positive we will realise positive results. It takes time.*

On the other hand, Educator N stood out as the only educator to doubt the positive effect of CPD on student achievement. He defended his stance by categorically stating that, *"It's 50/50. It has its hind-side. The impact can be limited. I think in our case, it is limited. There is not much positive impact to talk about, in all honesty."* When asked to explain himself a little further, the respondent had this to say:

> *When a programme is initiated by the school management or circuit for that matter, they can be very arrogant as they impose on us what to 'consume.' Educators tend to take it negatively, and as a result, ditch the programme before implementation. The students suffer, but management brags.*

In what appeared to be self-contradicting oneself, when the same Educator N was asked in his view if educators could improve their teaching practices and enhance student learning without CPD involvement, he stressed:

> *Not really. You see, college and university studies are never enough. Moreover, such studies wouldn't predict future curriculum or technology changes, for example. So, CPDs come handy to keep educators abreast of changes in the system. Teaching and education in general should be timeously redefined and checked to establish if it is still relevant. Educational programmes need to be monitored, modified and/or abandoned if they no longer serve our time. And educators need always fit into the current.*

Educator G testified*, "I gained more knowledge and transferred it onto the learner with the learner consequently benefitting in the process."* She identified a major benefit onto the learner as the Life Orientation workshop she attended. She further proclaimed that a broad-based and deep subject knowledge base in her Life Orientation main subject gave rise to her students' pass-rates.

Educator F felt that the knowledge he gained in professional development programmes influenced student achievement. He stated, *"Positive impact, especially with class management. I now put the learners confidently to order to maximize their attention. Naturally, that has a direct bearing."* He went further to defend his claims, *"Conducting teaching to a more disciplined and orderly class has all the benefits that go with. Gradual improvement in discipline resulting in more attention paid during lesson delivery, leading to more academic production and performance."* When asked for his views on how best to implement continuous professional development, he complained, *"Too much admin and paper-work is expected from educators. That eats into teaching, prep and marking. There is just too many records to keep, and I don't see how that benefits the child."*

It could be seen from the findings that the views of the educators and those of the principals were inseparable; they actually merged. Principal participants were emphatic about the need for educators to attend CPD workshops in order to receive the knowledge, skills and attitudes relevant to enhance learner achievement. Principals have the right to expect educators to sharpen their teaching practices through involvement in CPD. Moreover, principals themselves should be seen to direct and motivate educators towards CPD. The understanding of students' needs should always drive changes in teaching practices. When educators are exposed to quality and enriching professional development programmes, it often carries into the classroom to enhance student achievement.

Principal X was asked to qualify how CPD programmes addressed the instructional and learning needs of educators and students. Several claims were put forward such as that when educators are empowered with relevant knowledge, skills and attitudes, it tends to transfer onto benefitting the learner. The quality of teaching and learning would be improved resulting in better student results and performance. He put claim that CPD was geared at addressing needs, student needs inclusive. CPD would remove stagnation, promote progress, and assist in effecting change. School progress is witnessed through student progress as the two are supposed to be linked.

Principal X gave testimonies of directly observed performance changes in educators spilling-over to the student as a result of CPD:

> *With the introduction of white-boards, we witnessed enhanced class management control skills and immediate fastened syllabus coverage. It is surprising educators are reporting gradual performances in some subjects with higher scores recorded. Completion of tasks has dramatically improved. We saw turn-around in commitment from students.*

Principal X further explained on how their school measured performance change by laying claim to recording student performances through scores or marks they attained in test and/or examination assessments. Supervision reports on educators by HODs also indicated significant student improvements due to CPD interventions. Self-evaluations by educators on lesson deliveries further supported improved student performance.

When asked to express his views if educators could improve their teaching practices and enhance student learning without professional development, the principal gave an emphatic, *"No!"* He attempted to justify his response with examples and living testimonies from his school. Educators tended to cope with changes in education (in technology in particular) through professional development. Educators had to remain relevant through professional development. Some skills and knowledge became obsolete through syllabi changes. Professional development was at the centre of educators remaining relevant as they transferred their expertise onto the student to enhance achievement.

Principal J alluded to student assessment and performance as a measure to put claim on CPD programmes having promoted student achievement. It was undoubted in his view that Mathematics and Accounting pass-rates in his school were a direct benefit of CPD interventions. It was clear for him that classes suddenly appeared more business minded after a school-based CPD. In addition, he felt that educators were quicker and more confident to assess learners after attending a Circuit-initiated CPD programme on learner assessment. It was his view that educators would never enhance student learning or notable achievement without CPD intervention. In other words, continuous professional development programmes are effective in creating change in educators to do their work. CPD programmes would then address the needs of the educators who would in turn improve upon student performance.

Essentially, it was the same for other principals who shared the same sentiments. Such sentiments included that improved teaching methods and improved student

performance led to better results and success. Some behaviour changes in educators that were claimed to have directly enhanced student achievement was the aspect of educator punctuality. Punctuality put educators in a better position to prepare for their lessons. Punctuality ensured maximum utilisation of teaching/learning time when educators stay away from 'bunking' lessons themselves. All principals appeared to directly attribute class management CPD programmes to have made significant improvement to learner discipline. It was also notable that several claims were put to CPD programmes on having instilled some confidence in educators on lesson delivery, and that having a direct bearing on students benefiting.

Principal E felt that CPD sharpened educator-teaching skills and broadened their knowledge base, which came as a prerequisite in learner enhanced performance. The principal justified her claims by pointing out that SACE PD point system tended to keep educators reading to gain points. Unconscientiously they then widened their knowledge base with a direct bearing on student achievement.

Continuous professional development in schools should ideally have aims that relate to the needs, not only of the teaching personnel, but also of the students. All professional development efforts should contribute towards effectiveness in schools. Literature on professional development often characterises high effective schools as blending in well with sound professional development. This theory offers a possible explanation that is consistent with the data examined in this study. A common approach should be a student-centred view to education. Whatever the educators pursue in CPD should focus on the student. When a decision is made in the school, the guiding thought and question should be, *"What is best for the students? How will the students benefit?"* In other words, all professional development efforts should contribute towards effectiveness in the school with the student as the beneficiary of the development efforts.

In many aspects, the findings of this study complement wider international research in the area of continuous professional development of educators having a direct link with student learning and achievement. Promoting educators' professional development involves enhancing teaching effectiveness as in teaching all students at high levels. This confirms, for many, that classroom teaching is the reason behind all CPD

activities. The agreement is that, engaging in a particular CPD activity should provide a learning opportunity relevant to promote student achievement.

Literature emphasises that effective professional development programmes focus on student learning (Joyce & Showers, 2002; Broad & Evans, 2006; Fullan et al., 2006). This understanding puts student learning at the centre of all teaching practice. It further underscores the critical role of a skilled educator in supporting student achievement. Literature indicates that educators are motivated and willing to undertake learning that they believe will directly impact their teaching competence and ability to meet student needs and improve student learning (Broad & Evans, 2006; Lustick & Sykes, 2006). In other words, all CPD learning must be meaningful and relevant in influencing student learning and achievement.

Literature on effective professional development programmes often focuses on the development of “instructional expertise” or “instructional intelligence” being attentive to informing the instructional leader or educator on how best to promote student learning and achievement (Rolheiser & Bennet, 2004; Tomlinson, 2005; Fullan et al., 2006). In this literature, “teaching expertise” is viewed as central outcome of professional learning and development. The point of emphasis or conclusion drawn is that effective professional development programmes must be attentive to the needs of the learner in as far as student learning and achievement is concerned. Knowledge gained through CPD is key to the educators’ professional growth and improvement in student learning.

Elmore (2004) emphasises the need for CPD programmes to focus on concrete classroom practice and application of ideas by exposing educators to actual teaching practice. The underlying message is that the content of professional development needs to address and be attentive to real themes and issues in the day-to-day work of educators. The classroom is a professional development base as it provides learning and experience for the educator. By critically reflecting on what hindered the students’ learning, the educator can make some changes on particular aspects of teaching and learning.

To stress on the relationship between powerful professional development and student learning, Sparks (2002:9-3) posits:

> *The most powerful forms of professional development use information to determine staff development goals, to guide and motivate teacher learning, to monitor the impact of staff development on achievement, and to make appropriate mid-course corrections. It may also provide evidence to teachers that their changes in instructional practices are improving student learning.*

Every professional development proposal, therefore, should ideally be vetted based on the needs identified that indicate that if successfully accomplished, it would lead to higher student achievement. Effective professional development must equip educators with the knowledge and skills to overcome challenges and be successful in performing their duties to enhance student achievement. Effective professional development must also equip educators with classroom assessment skills to enable them to determine the effects of professional development on student learning. Just as it is that educators have at their fingertips various instructional strategies to effect student learning and achievement, so should professional development empower educators with appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes to bring about student achievement.

The importance of educators possessing deep knowledge of the subjects they teach is hereby stressed. Professional development should deepen the educators' subject-area knowledge. A deep understanding of the subject matter would ideally enable educators to support the learning of their students. Sparks (2002:10-4) agrees, adding that, *"The most powerful forms of professional development engage teachers in the continuous improvement of their teaching and expands the repertoire of instructional approaches they use to teach that content."* The consensus coming out of this study is that educators need to continuously improve the quality of their lessons in an attempt to assist all students to achieve high grades.

It is believed that:

> *…teachers have the most direct, sustained contact with students, as well as considerable control over what is taught and the climate of learning. It is reasonably assumed that improving teachers' knowledge, skills and dispositions is one of the most critical steps to improving student achievement.* (King and Newman, 2001:86) quoted in Steyn (2008:16).

This explains why educators are encouraged to engage in professional development to enable them to be more competent in their teaching endeavours in the classroom. By emphasising learning and the development of teachers, schools are able to ensure

that learning processes contribute to the attainment of goals and the enhancement of quality teaching and learner performance in schools (Steyn, 2008; Steyn, 2010; Mizell, 2010). The positive educator changes, supposedly inherent in professional development programmes designed for educators should result in effectively equipping educators with the teaching capacity to ensure that all students meet the required standards in their learning endeavours.

The notion of "teacher-change" is open to multiple interpretations, but linked to CPD, change may be viewed in the context of change directed at increased educator competence resultantly improving upon student learning to promote achievement and desired output in learners (Clarke & Hollingsworth, 2002). Clarke and Hollingsworth reiterated Guskey (2002) views by embracing that significant teacher changes in beliefs and attitudes are likely to take place only after positive changes in student learning outcomes are evident. Bringing about changes in educators' attitudes and beliefs is, for authors like Guskey (2002), another major objective of CPD.

Guskey's model for professional development and 'teacher-change' is the theoretical foundation for this case study. Thomas R. Guskey originally presented a model that describes the process of educator change through professional development in 1986. Guskey believes that teachers change instructional practices when they observe success in terms of student achievement. Student assessment is central to Guskey's model. According to the model, significant change in educators' beliefs and attitudes is likely to take place only after evident changes in student learning outcomes are positively identified (Guskey, 2002). Selemani-Meke (2011) reported similar findings that teachers are in pursuit of CPD because they believed that it would expand their knowledge and skills contributing to their growth, and that would in turn enhance effectiveness with students. "*The most significant outcome of any successful CPD is a positive impact in empowering educator knowledge and skills base, which in turn should lead to improved learner performance"* Selemani-Meke (2011:19). For the majority of educators in this study, becoming a better educator meant enhancing student-learning achievement.

The findings seem to concur with Guskey's assertion that most educators engage in CPD to improve their job performance. Educators tend to judge their effectiveness in terms of student performance. Participants spoke passionately of student

achievement being a ‘yardstick’ for excellent tuition. Good as it may sound; some issues in the teaching/learning process tend to militate against student achievement. Large classes are a hindrance as classes become unmanageable in respect of control and general discipline. Additionally, it is inhibitive to reach out to every student and personalise tuition in an attempt to remediate learning challenges. Participatory methods such as in science laboratory activities do not work with large classes. Moving around to supervise students in itself becomes cumbersome. Discussions often turn into commotions in congested environments.

A lot more challenges impinge on successful translation into practice of what was learnt or acquired at CPD sessions. For instance, sharing of textbooks or science laboratory equipment is inefficient and tends to retard fast grasp of concepts. It was also strange in the study that some educators had attended workshops on smart-boards or white-boards approach to lesson delivery, but three years down the line, white-boards had not been availed to their school. Such educators are in danger of being deskilled. The unavailability or inadequacy of pertinent resources may build a negative attitude in educators towards CPD.

Several researchers have also sought to understand why some CPD had proven insufficient to affect teaching practice and raise student achievement in schools (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). In their study, Bucznyski and Hansen (2010) discussed several barriers to the implementation of CPD. They challenged the notion that CPD was only as effective as an educator’s will to employ the knowledge and skills gained. In their research findings, they established that educators were willing to implement professional development practices in the classroom, but often faced hurdles that were beyond their control.

Among those barriers was the lack of time allocated to teaching curriculum that used the newly acquired skills and knowledge. Further barriers included classroom management issues and lack of resources such as curriculum materials, technology and science equipment. Of these barriers, the study’s authors noted that lack of resources was the largest barrier to CPD implementation; commenting that educators often had to pay for their own materials for their subjects or classes. The field of educator CPD has accumulated solid knowledge of what works on the ground and what does not when it comes to promoting educator learning (Bautista & Ortega-Ruiz,

2015). Some research has yielded disappointing results with regards to the effectiveness of CPD in helping educators improve their knowledge and instructional practices in impacting student learning and achievement (Borko, 2004; Garet et al., 2008; Powell et al., 2010; Garet et al., 2011). Borko (2004) based on his research findings, precisely argued that CPDs tended to be fragmented, inadequate and intellectually superficial as they were disconnected from classroom practices and were often unrelated to educators' actual needs and interests.

In this study, the researcher subscribes to the definition of professional development proposed by Avalos (2011:10), as it articulates a number of relevant topics that have been discussed in recent years by researchers in the field. As captured in Avalos's definition, the researcher considers that the focus and ultimate goal of educator CPD should be the benefit of students' learning and achievement:

> *…professional development is about teachers learning, learning how to learn, and transforming their knowledge into practice for the benefit of their students' growth. Teacher professional learning is a complex process, which requires cognitive and emotional involvement of teachers individually and collectively, the capacity and willingness to examine where each one stands in terms of convictions and beliefs and the perusal and enactment of appropriate alternatives for improvement or change.*

Shaha et al. (2015) carried out a quantitative research study on student achievement scores from 25 states and 78 school districts over multiple years for schools whose educators underwent CPD. The objective was to evaluate the degree to which student scores might improve, decline or plateau with educator participation in professional development over multiple years. The research findings concluded that the longer educators participated in professional development, the greater the gains they experienced for their students. Professional development can now be touted as an affirmative action for educators who seek to positively impact on student achievement. This explains that educators must be taken into consideration in the improvement of the quality of teaching that students receive (Marcelo, 2009). The benefits of professionally developing an educator are boundless, not just for the educator, but also for student achievement.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has attempted to answer the four research questions as spelt out in the chapter introduction. The findings offered meaningful answers to the research questions. Data has been presented in an objective manner to allow both the reader and author to arrive at independent findings and conclusions.

Emergent from the data analysis, five themes considered significant were presented for analysis and discussion. The discussions developed theoretical explanations for the crucial themes identified from the findings. Data analysis revealed consistencies across respondents on issues of giving credence to the significance of CPD.

All respondents held suitable professional qualifications and adequate experiences, putting them in a better position to understand CPD and thus give credible responses. All respondents expressed an in-depth knowledge of CPD in schools.

An investigation into the nature of CPD programmes prevailing in schools revealed three approaches namely: school-initiated, self-initiated and externally initiated. Prominent characteristics of effective CPD were mainly claimed on school-based CPD. The research findings suggest that it is crucial to consult and involve educators in identifying professional development needs.

The need for CPD to be adequately evaluated was stressed in the research findings. Systematic evaluation of CPD programmes as well as student achievement should be instituted. The study findings also established that all professional development efforts should contribute towards school effectiveness with the student as the beneficiary of the development efforts.

The triangulation of data sources served to decrease the interview shortcomings that could bring bias into the study. The main summary, conclusions and recommendations of this study are a subject for discussion in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This thesis on, *"A formative evaluation of continuous professional development programmes in selected schools in Limpopo Province"* sought to explore the influence of continuous professional development in promoting quality teaching and learning in South African schools. The study focused on the importance of CPD in enhancing student achievement. In this chapter, the research summarises highlights of the review of related literature, the research design, data collection procedures and findings of the study. Additionally, the study discusses some of the study implication in the conclusion and attempts to make recommendations for the study as well as provide suggestions for further study.

5.2 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 presented the following research questions, which provided the basis for the collection of data, type of instruments used and methodology adopted;

1. What is the nature of continuous professional development programmes prevailing in schools?

2. How are educators, as intended beneficiaries, consulted and involved in identifying professional development needs appropriate for promoting student achievement?

3. How are professional development programmes monitored and evaluated to check if they have attained the desired outcome on promoting learner achievement?

4. To what extend do professional development programmes influence student achievement?

Guskey's model for Professional Development and Change Theory was adopted as the theoretical and conceptual framework for this case study. Significant change in educators' beliefs and attitudes is likely to take place only after evident changes in student learning outcomes are positively identified (Guskey, 2002). An improved pass-rate, for instance, may trigger educator self-belief and attitude in the acquired professional development skill or knowledge. Guskey's view is that much change in the beliefs and attitudes of educators is contingent upon them gaining evidence of change in the learning outcomes of their students. The implication of the theory is that schools must embark on professional development programmes directly relevant in

addressing the teaching and learning shortcomings. The model was used in this study as a guide to determine the effectiveness of professional development programmes in South Africa.

Educator professional development in South Africa is an aspect of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) policy document (Department of Education, 2003). Although the IQMS policy has a programme of professional development, educators in the study conducted by Khumalo (2008) showed that they did not experience the actualisation of the contribution of the IQMS on teacher development. It was against this background that the study was conducted in order to explore the influence of continuous professional development programmes in promoting effective teaching and learning in South African schools.

The research is hoped to be of significance and interest to educators and principals in particular, and to others who regard it as their business to improve upon their work performance through professional development. The researcher's view was that it was pertinent that educators and principals became aware of the professional development programmes that may be embarked on to improve the quality of teaching and learning.

A review of related literature was done in order to have more insight into the problem under investigation. Literature review was designed to survey the content area of the study, that is, what knowledge was related to the main research questions. Several definitions of CPD from different authorities were examined in order to assist in establishing the nature of professional development prevailing in schools. The importance of professional development was viewed in the context of educator skills, knowledge and positive attitude in executing their duties. The process of professional development is therefore important in as far as, it provides educators with the opportunity to expand their skills and knowledge base (Vracar, 2014). There is consensus in the literature regarding the importance of effective professional development programmes for educators (; Guskey, 2000; Guskey, 2002; Lessing & de Witt, 2007; Steyn, 2008; Mestry et al., 2009; Khan, 2010; Whitehouse, 2011; Tsotesi & Mahlomaholo, 2013; Huish, 2014; Cooper, 2016). Increasing attention is being paid to the professional development of educators as they are seen as having great influence on student achievement.

The review of literature also touched on professional development needs identification and analysis. Any professional development programme should be a reflective activity that helps educators to improve their knowledge, skills and understanding. Professional development should ideally relate to the educator's need to improve upon their performance in their teaching endeavour. The perception or view the researcher held of needs in this study was that of a discrepancy. Literature confirmed that a need arises or exists where there is a gap between present and desired states or conditions that can be corrected or rectified (Moeini, 2008; Killion, 2009; Goe et al., 2012; Gates & Gates, 2014). In professional development, information about training and learning needs has to be gathered or collected by the principal or jointly in consultation with HODs and educators. When educators embark on something new or unfamiliar in their teaching endeavours, they have identified a need.

The approach to institute professional development programmes in schools is through the guidance of some professional development packages that have been tested and tried over time. The professional development models picked up and discussed in the review of related literature included educator-induction programmes, on-going professional development, observation/assessment, open classrooms, lesson study, study groups as training workshops, individually-guided professional development, mentoring and college/university courses. The models discussed were not all-inclusive, but they were considered to be potentially effective in implementing continuous professional development. Models of educator professional development in true practice do not appear in isolation at implementation phase, but there might be some considerable overlap amongst them.

Literature revealed that the monitoring or evaluation of continuous professional development programmes is geared at determining the effectiveness of the programme so that future programmes may be improved upon. In simple terms, evaluation is the systematic investigation of the merit or worth of a professional development programme (Haslam, 2010). The importance of an evaluation exercise is imbedded in allowing schools to discover if the needs and desires of the programme beneficiaries or participants were fulfilled. An evaluation can show principals and educators what went wrong according to plan, what did not and where opportunities for growth may lay. Literature identified two major purposes of professional development programme evaluation as for external reporting and for internal school

programme improvement. Literature survey also availed forms of evaluation as pre-implementation and evaluation, formative evaluation and summative evaluation. Six evaluation identified by Smith et al (2003:13) and discussed include participant feedback, classroom assessment techniques, surveys and interviews, professional consultants, observations and control groups. The review of related literature further identified several impediments on success of professional development.

Guskey and Yoon (2009) assert that research syntheses confirm the difficulty of translating professional development into student achievement gains despite the intuitive and logical connection. The complaints about professional development have been well documented and most often cite several shortcomings, barriers or impediments that tend to militate against effective and efficient implementation of educator continuous professional development programmes. The barriers to effective implementation of CPD identified and discussed in this study include time and financial constraints, lack of support by school leadership, lack of expertise, difficult working conditions. In addition, fragile and marginalised education systems, racially discriminatory tendencies, poorly designed professional development programmes, lack of ownership by educators and lack of policy frameworks at national level (Guskey, 2003a; Cole, 2004; Ingvarson et al., 2005; Caena, 2011; DeMonte, 2013; Burns, 2015; Gates & Gates, 2015; Macheng, 2016).

In chapter 3 under the research methodology, this research adopted a qualitative case study as its research design. Instead of surveying large groups, the researcher chose to take a close look at small groups in their naturalistic settings using in-depth case studies. The researcher employed the purposive sampling technique. The idea behind purposive sampling was to concentrate on participants with particular characteristics who would be better positioned to assist with the relevant data.

Five schools were drawn from the population to make a sample for study. The 5 schools comprised of 3 public secondary schools (considering there is more in the circuit) and 2 independent schools. Two public schools and one independent school of the sample 5 had an average pass rate of 90%+ for five years running (2011-2016). One public school and one independent school of the sample had an average pass rate of below 40% for 5 years running (2011-2016). All 5 schools sit for the DBE National Senior Examination. The sample consisted of 5 principals and 10 educators

(those that have been in the service for more than 5years) to give a total sample size of 15.

In chapter 3, the study developed instruments for data gathering from the field of the study. Individual interviews, focus group discussions and documentary evidence were employed to collect data. The data collection instruments enabled the researcher to gather data that brought a deeper understanding of issues of continuous professional development programmes in schools. In analysing data, the researcher chose thematic analysis. This entails arranging data according to themes evolving (Bowen, 2009). Researchers use thematic analysis as a means to gain insight and knowledge from data gathered. Braun and Clarke (2006:79) put forward the purpose of thematic analysis as, *"…identifying, analysing and reporting patterns (themes) within data."* Data was organised and described in detail. The researcher collected data through audio recording and note taking. Data was repeatedly read to search for meaning and patterns. Audio recordings of interviews and discussions were transcribed. The following themes were identified and named in relation to the research questions:

1. The concept and significance of CPD.
2. The nature of CPD programmes.
3. Consulting and involving educators in identifying professional development needs.
4. Monitoring and evaluating professional development programmes.
5. The extent to which CPD influences student achievement.

The credibility of a qualitative research is measured through its trustworthiness (Anney, 2014). Measures were undertaken to establish the credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability of the research findings. A prolonged engagement in the research field of up to eight months was intended to see if there was phenomenon change in the research. Use of peer debriefing and member checks ensured data and interpretations were continuously checked (Anney, 2014). Thick descriptive data by way of a rich and extensive detail concerning methodology was included in the research report. Dependability was established through an audit trail involving an examination of the inquiry process and product to validate the data where the researcher accounted for all research decisions and activities to show how data were

collected, recorded and analysed (Lincoln & Guba, 2013). The researcher engaged audit trial and triangulation as confirmability strategies (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000).

The researcher used multiple data sources to enhance the validity of the research findings. The triangulation of data allowed the researcher to check on inferences drawn from one source of data with the data from another source. This process allowed for checking up on any inconsistencies within the data from one of the research methods (Cohen et al., 2007).

In chapter 4, data obtained was presented, analysed and discussed in relation to the themes and research questions formulated for the study. Findings related to theme 1 established that the respondents appeared to have a fair in-depth knowledge of CPD. Notably; respondents were well conversant on issues of educator life-long learning and the benefits thereof to enhance student achievement. Findings related to theme 2 revealed that the participants gained support to pursue professional development through indulgence in self-initiated, school-initiated and externally initiated CPD activities. The knowledge and skills, as well as attitudes acquired was then fed into the classroom for the benefit of the learner. The research findings also recognised that there was a strong beneficial interplay between formal learning from school-initiated and externally initiated professional development experiences and informal learning from self-initiated CPD engagements.

The research findings of this study under theme 3 established that there were unanimous sentiments echoed from all respondents that CPD programme organisers/facilitators of the externally initiated needed to consult beneficiaries of CPD activities before implementation. The school-initiated CPD programmes were claimed to be the most relevant and beneficial to educators in their teaching pursuits.

Study findings under theme 4 showed that informal CPD evaluations prevailed in schools, but the majority response alluded to the total failure by schools to institute deliberate, formal, organised/planned and documented evaluations. The research findings across the respondent spectrum established that there was little agreement about how CPD programmes should be evaluated. Findings under theme 5 complemented wider international research in the area of continuous professional development of educators having a direct link with student learning and achievement. The agreement was that, engaging in a particular CPD activity provided a learning

opportunity relevant to promote student achievement. The bigger picture that emerged from the research findings was that CPD of educators was critical in enhancing student achievement.

The researcher took steps to ensure that the study met appropriate ethical standards. Ethical clearance was secured from the Turfloop Research Ethics Committee before the research was embarked on. Permission was requested and granted from the Department of Basic Education to negotiate entry into public schools, and from the responsible authorities of independent schools through their principals or School Governing Body. To further gain access to the schools, official courtesy letters to the principals requesting to conduct study, and to the educators inviting them to participate in the research study, were despatched.

This research was conducted on participant's freely volunteered informed consent. The researcher briefed participants on:

- Participants' right to voluntarily agree to participate.
- The right to refuse to participate.
- The respondents are not obliged to give a reason for refusing to participate.
- Awareness of the potential uses to which the data might be put (study benefits). Each respondent will receive a copy stating research purpose and objectives.
- The right to withdraw or re-negotiate consent.
- Agreeing to interviews being audiotaped.
- Consent free from coercion or undue pressure.
- The right to refuse to answer any particular question without any consequences.
- Give assurance of anonymity and confidentiality.

The rationale for using consent forms was to stress the importance of respecting the autonomy of the research subjects.

The researcher undertook the following measures to ensure compliance with respondent confidentiality and anonymity:

- Protecting the identity of research participants from third parties.
- Keep personal details separate from interview responses.
- Participants may choose not to share their names with researcher.

- Protect password to deny access to data stored on laptop.
- Anonymise qualitative data by removing identifying details such as names of schools.
- Remove all identifying details such as real names.
- Replace real names with pseudonyms.
- Replace or tippex identifiers on paper documents.
- Never videotape, but audiotape instead.
- Keep audio tapes under lock-and-key.

In addition, the informants were not subjected to unusual stress, embarrassment or loss of self-esteem in a move to protect them from harm of any kind.

5.3 CONCLUSIONS

The following conclusions can be drawn from the study:

1. The research findings conclude that educators' concept of CPD is very clear. Educators were convinced that CPD was important and they always found it to be useful. All educators were very clear that they needed CPD to improve teaching and influence student achievement. Largely, educators viewed CPD in the context of professional activities that would develop educators' knowledge, skills, attitudes and other related characteristics. Educators conceived CPD as necessary for the maintenance of life-long professional competencies. The research findings suggest positive benefits to participation in CPD for the school, the individual educator as well as the student. All respondents were agreed that the main purpose of CPD was to promote effective educator performance in schools, and thereby enhancing student achievement. Respondents were very candid in answering questions and appeared to be comfortable in their natural settings. Several participants after exposure to CPD programmes spoke passionately about the experiences and performance, which improve student performance. The findings from this study revealed that principals of schools were proponents of professional development and that they expected and prepared their educators to be professionally developed.

Participants viewed CPD as critical in encouraging educators to be life-long continual learners. Educator willingness to try out new things in the context of teaching and learning, and a refusal to remain stagnant in maintaining the status quo, could be

leveraged through engagement in CPD. All respondents supported the view that CPD programmes needed to be enforced. IQMS was overwhelmingly viewed as a beneficial approach.

2. The study recognised that CPD could be provided in many ways, ranging from formal to informal. CPD can be initiated at school level and offered as school-based. At school level, CPD may be served through observational visits, coaching/mentoring and sharing of excellent practices by colleagues as part of a formal school arrangement. Other CPD is made available through external expertise in the form of workshops, seminars or conferences. Educator-initiated formal qualifications are mainly accessed through educational colleges and universities. The internet also offers short courses mainly in line with computer literacy and ICT. Individual research on a topic of professional interest is another avenue open for educator-initiated CPD. Reading professional literature from journals, evidence-based papers, theses and engaging in informal dialogue with colleagues on how to improve teaching are other forms of educator-initiated CPD waiting to be exploited.

The study concludes that three main brands of CPD, namely, school-initiated, educator-initiated and externally initiated CPD prevailed. Respondents' vision of CPD was broad and mainly incorporated the three itemised above. Although all educators espoused the importance of professional development, they indicated least interest in the externally initiated CPD. A key finding was the educators' preference for the school-initiated programmes. In other words, prominent characteristics of effective CPD were claimed on school-based. Respondents advocated for more school-based activities as they were convinced it was the best way forward to address challenges unique to their school and to individual educators. Significant findings suggest that professional development that tended to utilise collegial type of approach was most favoured by the group, and the school-based was identified as the most ideal for that purpose.

The research concludes that some educators could not embark on CPD programmes due to financial constraints. Financial handicap featured most frequently. The research findings suggest that the development and implementation of more CPD requires greater state support especially with reference to the educator-initiated, college or university studies leading to the attainment of certificates, diplomas or degrees. All

participants placed high importance in certification and accreditation of educator learning outcomes through CPD.

Externally initiated CPD programmes tended to deal with curriculum orientations or emerging policy awareness issues, and as a result, may not precisely address daily class interactions. It was concluded that some externally-initiated CPD sessions were too large for effective interactions or too many for effective management by facilitators.

3. The research findings concluded that educators were satisfactorily consulted in identifying CPD needs at school-based level, but hardly consulted at the externally initiated activities. That became the participants' main concern, that consultation was minimal. Study findings also conclude that educators perceived their professional development as more effective and beneficial if they were included in the process by way of involvement and consultation. The information from findings gives policy makers, CPD programme organisers and facilitators some clear pointers for the need to involve and consult educators before packaging and parcelling out CPD programmes.

Respondents expressed a certain level of unsatisfied needs. It is natural that a certain proportion of educators will at some time not feel fully equipped to carry out their work effectively. Nonetheless, the extent of unsatisfied demand appeared small. The extent to which the shortfall in demand for more CPD undermined the effectiveness of the educator and compromised student achievement could not be measured in this study. However, it is always difficult to imagine that such deficits would not, to some extent, be detrimental to effective teaching and learning.

It was striking how consistently educators reported high student indiscipline and therefore, demanded more class management CPD programmes. This clearly concludes that educators do not feel properly equipped to handle student indiscipline or juvenile delinquency matters. An important discovery from this study was that unsatisfied demand for more CPDs exists no matter what activities educators have engaged in. In a way, this confirms that learning is a life-long undertaking.

Educators expressed a need for externally initiated professional development that is tailored to the school and educators' specific needs. Once more, this concludes a desire by educators for more consultation. Participants highlighted negative feelings

mostly linked to the “one-size-fits-all” approach that fails to take into account the educators’ existing knowledge, skills, experience and needs. Furthermore, participants conveyed that they needed sufficient amount of time to assimilate the new knowledge and skills into their teaching practice. This tends to conclude that, maybe the CPD programmes are too close together in terms of delivery, and therefore need to be spaced apart to accommodate effective transmission onto the learner. Research findings were conclusive on that CPD programmes could not be effective if they cannot be seen to relate to the individual educator’s aspirations and potential progression and career advancement. Although the ultimate mission of CPD is the successful delivery of instruction to enhance student achievement, there is need for the educators to feel that sense of ownership at all stages of the process of CPD programme implementation.

4. Research findings conclude that there was no formal monitoring and evaluation of continuing professional development programmes in all the schools. No school could produce documentary evidence of monitoring and evaluation of CPD activities whatsoever. Instead, schools claimed to have held informal reflections on some CPD programmes when they saw it fit to do so. However, all respondents echoed the importance of monitoring and evaluation as support and feedback mechanisms to enhance the effectiveness of educators’ CPD. All participants were agreed that CPD would be more meaningful if it were monitored and evaluated to check if the desired impact was being realised.

Some respondents claimed that the practice of informal self-reflection on CPD programmes all the same allowed them opportunities to inquire into their own practice as well as on student performance. In other words, participants claim that they engaged informal self-reflection as a means of measuring if the needs of the CPD programmes were being realised. In the spirit of CPD programme evaluation, findings further suggest that changes in educators’ practice and student outcomes need to be viewed as an interactive process as improvement in one area further reinforces changes in the other, and that this process works both ways (Aminudin, 2012). All respondents agreed that positive feedback realised through CPD programme evaluation enhanced educator confidence in changing teaching practices and developing knowledge and skills base. Concisely, the need for CPD to be formally and adequately evaluated received high approval from all participants. It was the wish of

respondents that systematic evaluation of CPD programmes on educator knowledge and skills as well as student achievement be instituted.

5. This study established a positive relationship between professional development and teacher-change leading to student achievement. Research findings revealed that student success in relation to CPD experiences tended to facilitate the development of educator belief in CPD practices. This suggests that changes in positive teaching practices were more likely to be sustained if educators were convinced that their professional development experiences helped them to raise student achievement. Guskey (2002) who claims that educators' perception of success is defined by the student's success supports this finding.

The focus of this study was to examine the relationship between the potential change in educators' instructional strategy implementation and professional development programmes that presented knowledge, skills and attitudes to facilitate student achievement. The research findings were conclusive in that educators are motivated by student achievement, leading to positive change in educator beliefs, resulting in change in classroom practices that in turn would enhance student-desired performance.

It has to be acknowledged that the Review of Related Literature of Chapter 2, in many aspects, was directly related to the findings of this study.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Ideally, any type of CPD should meet a need that has been identified beforehand. In other words, all CPD programmes should be driven by identified professional development needs for the educator as well as the learning needs of the student. This approach would ensure positive outcomes for both the educator as the chief curriculum implementer, as well as the student as the resultant recipient of the teaching process. Identifying CPD needs ensures that a realistic professional development programme would be built. This also assists in setting training goals and objectives against which the CPD programme can be evaluated at a later stage. Additionally, identifying needs also doubles up in determining the professional

development subject or content matter. At school level, IQMS and performance appraisal instruments may be used to help identify needs.

Closely related to needs identification is the concept of needs analysis. Needs analysis is envisaged to reveal any differences between the present condition of educator knowledge, skills and attitudes compared to the conditions of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are necessary for CPD accomplishment. In other words, needs analysis would help determine whether there is need to introduce CPD after all. In such a scenario, hard questions would have to be posed such as, “Does a performance discrepancy exist?”, “Is the identified discrepancy important to the school?”, “Can we correct the discrepancy in performance through CPD?” and/or, “Is CPD the most cost-effective solution that can be applied?”

Whitehouse (2011) and Timberley et al. (2009) recommend that students’ learning needs be identified first. The researcher subscribes to that school-of-thought. Procedurally, once the students’ learning needs are identified, a similar audit of their educators’ professional development needs is then enforced. The thinking behind it all is to gather information for the national government, local government, school, class or subject/department to use the results to focus on areas requiring/demanding improvement.

2. In seeking to meet educators’ CPD needs, policy makers, school leaders, CPD organisers and facilitators must consider how to support and encourage participation, as well as ensure that programmes match educators’ perceived needs. The educators’ needs must also match the wider goals of school development and must endeavour to promote student achievement. There must be a deliberate attempt to close the misalignment gap between CPD rendered to educators and the perceived needs espoused by educators themselves.

3. Involving educators in the identification of CPD needs as well as student learning needs helps to remove suspicion and promote cooperation. Involvement of the target group in needs assessment ensures that the course content focuses on the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are required for improving job performance. Whitehouse (2010) emphasises that involving educators acknowledges them as adult learners possessing self-direction, experience of their classroom environments and students, and puts them in a readiness-mode to learn the CPD initiatives that would

help them solve any prevailing challenges of a pedagogy nature. Research indicates that the more involved an adult learner is with learning, the more likely they are to engage with it and report a successful outcome (Bolam & Weindling, 2006; Trotter, 2006; Drago-Severson, 2008; Malik, 2016).

One of the strongest findings from this research is that CPD needs to be collaborative in nature. Whitehouse (2010: 7) underscores this claim by stating that, “Teaching is a reflective practice that improves with discussions which challenge personal theories of practice in safe, non-judgemental environments.” That means educators and CPD sponsors or CPD facilitators at DBE head-office, circuit level or school level have to work together in partnership. Most efficient and effective CPS are realised out of a cooperative venture between supervisors and supervisees so that the individuals’ and institutional interests can be served in a tension-free atmosphere. The rationale for this stance is very simple. Whereas, for instance, the principal has to account for the resources and student performance levels, the educators have to do the teaching jog that produces learning.

CPD whereby needs are identified by the participants ties in well with collaboration, cooperation and partnership. However, the researcher is not suggesting that needs identification should be the exclusive preserve of the participants. Rather, the input of both parties both got their place. CPD must be seen as a cooperative rather than a manipulative process. Status or positional leaders such as circuit mangers and their subordinates must work together towards a common end. In essence, maximum utilisation of participants’ talents and capabilities is a worthy approach to effective CPD.

4. CPD evaluation has to be undertaken to determine the effectiveness of the programme so that future programmes may be improved. The criteria by which professional development programmes are evaluated should be determined by the CPD objectives. Most CPD programmes attempt to accomplish several objectives such as knowledge upgrading, skills development, changing behaviour, policy clarification or providing new teaching methods or information towards some aspect of teaching/learning. Consequently, CPD evaluation should pursue such key result areas.

As alluded to earlier on, a key factor in ensuring CPD is effective is the matching of the programme to particular professional needs. It is important therefore that any evaluation of CPD needs to take careful account of the important relationship between purposes and outcomes in order for evaluation to be related and meaningful (Harris et al., 2017). The researcher proposes that evaluation of CPD take two broad approaches of summative and formative evaluation. Summative evaluation would check to establish if the programme improved outcomes, whereas formative evaluation would serve to monitor the programme and suggest on how best to improve the programme. At all levels of evaluation, useful feedback should be provided to the participants at all times to keep them motivated as well as reduce possible anxiety. To minimise bias, data must be collected from a variety of participating individuals and schools.

CPD programmes must be evaluated in a systematic way. Guskey (2002) identified a major weakness in CPD evaluation where evaluation consists merely of summarising activities undertaken as part of professional development. Such an evaluation exercise does not give an accurate indication of the effectiveness of CPD. Similar superficial CPD evaluations merely gauge whether participants consider the event enjoyable and successful, but fails to engage with issues of knowledge gains in student outcomes. The issue is not the educator's happiness or satisfaction, but rather what effect CPD would have on student learning (Broad & Evans, 2006; Kelleher, 2003).

Rigorous evaluation incorporating student assessment data is ideal. Other aspects to be evaluated include checking on the content of CPD if it is in step with CPD needs. Method of training must be examined for its appropriateness for the subject and learning styles of participants. Facilitator training skills and attitude need in-depth analysis. The CPD must be checked if it satisfied declared objectives. Any material, which was included in the programme, but deemed not essential, must be flushed out. Above all, the efficiency and effectiveness of the educator's service because of CPD programme must be established beyond any reasonable doubt.

5. Professional development can be a great vehicle for teaching improvement and general upgrading of the education system at large. Use of external expertise always comes handy in enriching educator competence. External expertise can be hired to boast educator knowledge base and skills at school-based level. Sourcing expertise

from colleges, universities or other institutes is also recommended. There is always a limit to local personnel at a school can supply all the knowledge and skills on demand. Generally, experts provide up to date knowledge of pedagogy and on-going support in transferring pedagogical knowledge into the classroom (Whitehouse, 2010). Computer literacy and related ICT are examples of the areas some educators might need external expertise. As a matter of policy, all facilitators for CPD must be competent and experienced in the area of professional development.

6. Another consideration necessary for the success of CPD is the provision of rewards. A well-articulated system of rewards and incentives are required to motivate and give recognition to those who participate in CPD. These rewards could be intrinsic or extrinsic. Among those rewards termed extrinsic can be found the award of certificates of attendance or attainment, enhanced promotional opportunities or improved remuneration or pay. This would be in addition to the SACE instituted PD points, with a big chance that educators may value such rewards more than mere PD points. Intrinsic rewards on the other hand, are derived from competence (self-esteem) or success/satisfaction, which is also known as self-actualisation. When educators realise higher student pass-rates because of exposure to some CPD, it tends to give them some job satisfaction. In other words, the intrinsic motivation is inherent in the job itself. All the means of achieving success must be built into all CPD programmes.

7. There must be continuity and logical sequencing of CPD activities. Sessions and other forms of CPD activities must be so planned as to deliberately facilitate building on previous learning in an accumulative manner. The initial activity might comprise making educators aware of a new teaching method such as in the use of eBooks or white-boards. The second activity could then show how the new procedure works, and finally, educators could practice the new procedure. Having too many CPD programmes arranged at too close intervals may affect the educator's ability to cope with and sustain the rampart changes.

8. There must be a massive drive to empower educators with student motivation strategies and class-management skills to enable them to handle disruptive delinquent students. The researcher views students as a vital component in the teaching process to enhance CPD. Students' conduct is a crucial factor as it can influence the teaching process by either hindering or facilitating smooth flow. The students' unwillingness to

do assignments and related tasks, for example, can negatively affect student achievement. The students' lack of responsibility in learning and their low motivation to learn could hinder teaching effectiveness; hence, the dire need to motivate the students.

9. Promoting a positive school climate is likely to have a significant benefit to both educators and students. Harmony amongst the teaching staff and management is ideal for effective implementation of CPD in schools. Educators are more likely to take part in CPD when they work in user-friendly school environments. There is therefore a strong case for CPD support to foster a whole-school approach in dealing with harmony in general and student behaviour precisely.

10. The findings from this study revealed that principals were proponents of CPD and that they expected their educators to attend CPD programmes. The proverbial 'leading by example' ensures that principals play pivotal roles in shaping educator effectiveness to enhance student achievement. Principals who role model by themselves embarking on CPD are more likely to influence educators to engage in CPD. The influence of principals on educator take-up of CPD is further evidence of the need to ensure greater encouragement of life-long learning. If a principal is engaged in CPD and shares his/her excitement with educators, the educators are more likely to buy into attending CPD.

Additionally, principals must avail all relevant information pertaining to upcoming CPDs. Opportunities for educators to attend CPD programmes must be provided. In the case of a few school delegates attending CPD programmes/sessions, the principal must always create an opportunity for the delegates to share information with colleagues who remained behind at school. This is to ensure that all educators benefit. Where principals have direct control over allocation of the school budget, sufficient funds must be set aside to allow educators to attend CPD occasions.

11. The researcher's advice to the DBE is to establish and operate provincial CPD committees to advise on policy priorities, resource allocation, funding and budget matters and to monitor progress of CPD implementation plans. In addition, the committees must undertake training needs analysis, monitor, and evaluate the effectiveness of CPD. The annual budget plan should include clear fund allocations for educator scholarships/bursaries/grants and loans at provincial level. Priorities

should be given on merit to identified aspiring, highly competent, much younger teaching force that may be financially constrained or underprivileged. The DBE must link educator promotions, advancement and financial rewards to successfully attended and completed CPD as well as work performance.

12. Time constraints was highlighted in this research as prohibitive to effective implementation of CPD. Some respondents in this study admitted that there was often too much information that had to be dispersed in a brief period, often leading to information overload and possible frustrations. Providing a variety of opportunities for professional development could make the much-desired difference. Internet studies and providing study-leave to attend full-time college and university courses could be another option. There is need to resolve issues inherent on time restrictions.

13. Any barriers preventing the participation in CPD need to be removed or at least minimised. A number of mechanisms can be employed by the DBE to encourage participation. As earlier stated, introduction of study loans, bursaries, grants or scholarships could ease the burden on aspiring educators needing to embark on CPD studies of some kind.

5.4.1 Recommendations for future studies

This research report provides significant findings regarding CPD participation among educators. The research results highlight some key areas where further research could be carried out in the future.

- Future research is needed to establish the extent to which educators in the Republic of South Africa access and participate in informal learning opportunities, particularly given the increasing emphasis on this type of learning in CPD literature.
- Studies also highlight how lack of sufficient time is a factor influencing educator take-up of CPD. Future research could explore this issue in a Republic of South Africa context, in order to identify ways in which CPD participation could be incorporated into the school year and relief could be provided for educators to attend.
- This research was restricted to Pietersburg Circuit secondary schools. Future research could venture and encompass rural schools and primary schools in

exploring the impact of CPD on learner performance. By so doing, it would broaden perspectives in the relationship between socio-cultural and economic realisms.

- Future research must consider incorporating the students' views. The students' views in addition to performance analysis by educators may just provide an amplification of how best CPD can connect to students' learning.

5.5 CONCLUSION

This chapter firstly gave a detailed summary of the thesis. Conclusions were drawn and recommendations offered. The directions for future research were proposed, bringing the research study to a close.

This case study provided the researcher with multiple avenues to examine the relationship between professional development and student achievement. Educators who participate in sustained CPD are likely to have effective instructional practices. The data was triangulated with rich detail to enhance the validity of the research findings.

REFERENCES

Abdullah, S.H. and Raman, S. (2001). “Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods: Some Strengths and Weaknesses.” *School of Educational Studies: University of Science Malaysia, Vol 17, pp 120 – 134.*

Ahmed, J.U. (2010). “Documentary Research Method: New Dimensions.” *Indus Journal of Management and Social Sciences, 4(1): pp1 -14.*

AL-Qahtani, H.M. (2015). “Teachers’ Voice: A Needs Analysis of Teachers’ Needs for Professional Development with the Emergence of the Current English Textbooks.” *English Language Teaching. Vol. 8, No. 8, pp 128-141.*

Alshenqeeti, H. (2014). “Interviewing as a Data Collection Method: A Critical Review.” *English Linguistics Research, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp 39-45.*

Alzahrani, H. (2016). “The Prevalence of Key Needs Assessment Tasks as Perceived by Human Performance Practitioners.” *Detroit, Wayne State University Dissertations*.

Anderson, C. (2010). “Presenting and Evaluating Qualitative Research.” *American Journal of Pharmaceutical Education 74 (8) 1 – 7.*

Anney, V.N. (2014). “Ensuring the Quality of the Findings of Qualitative Research: Looking at Trustworthiness Criteria.” *Journal of Emerging Trends in Educational Research and Policy Studies 5(2): 272 -281.*

Anderson, C., Day, K., and McLaughlin, P. (2006). “Mastering the dissertation: Lecturers’ representations of the purposes and processes of Master’s level dissertation supervision.” *Studies in Higher Education, Vol. 31, No. 2, pp 149-168.*

Atieno, O.P. (2009). “An Analysis of the Strengths and Limitations of Qualitative and Quantitative Research Paradigms.” *Problems of Education in the 21st Century Journal, Vol 13, pp 13-18*

Atkinson, P. and Coffey, A. (2011). *Analysing Documentary Realities*. (3rd Ed). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Avalos, B. (2011). “Teacher professional development in teaching and teacher education over ten years.” *Teaching and Teacher Education, 27 (1), 10-20.*

Avidov-Ungar, O. (2016). “A model of professional development: teachers’ perceptions of their professional development.” *Routledge;Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, Vol. 22, No. 6, 653-669.*

Baker, L.M. (2006). “Observation: A complex Research Method.” *Library Trends, Vol. 55, No 1, pp 171-189.*

Barbour, R. and Schostak, J.F. (2005). “Interviewing and Focus Groups.” *Research Methods in the Social Sciences, London Sage Publications, pp 41-48*

Bautista, A. and Ortega-Ruiz, R. (2015). “Teacher professional development: International perspectives and approaches*.” Psychology, Society and Education, 7(3), 240-251.*

Baxter, P. and Jack, S. (2008). “Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers.” *The Qualitative Report, 13(4), pp544-559*

Bazeley, P. (2009). “Analysing Qualitative Data: More than ‘Identifying Themes’” *Malaysian Journal of Qualitative Research, vol. 2, pp 6-22*.

Berg, B.L. (2007). *Qualitative research methods for social sciences*. London: Pearson.

Berg, B.L. (2012). *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. (8th Ed). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Bernadine, G. G. K. (2019). “Challenges faced by educators in the implementation of Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPTD).” *Gauteng Province: Teacher Education in the 21st Century, pp 1-7.*

Berry, B., Daughtrey. A. and Wieder, A. (2010). *Teacher Leadership: Leading the Way to Effective Teaching and Learning***.** New York: Center for Quality Teaching.

Bitsch, V. (2005). “Qualitative research: A grounded theory example and evaluation criteria.” *Journal of Agribusiness, 23 (1), 75-91.*

Blaikie, N. (2007). *Approaches to Social Inquiry*. (2nd Ed). Cambridge: Polity.

Boaduo, N. A. P. (2010). “School-based continuing professional teacher development: A study of alternative teacher development initiative in the Eastern Cape.” *The African Symposium Journal of the African Educational Research Network, Vol. 10, No. 2, pp 75 – 83.*

Bolam, R. (2000) “Emerging policy trends: some implications for continuing professional development.” *Journal of In-service Education*, *26 (2). pp 17-31.*

Borko, H. (2004). “Professional development and teacher learning” Mapping the terrain*.” Educational Researcher, 33 (80, 3-15.*

Bowen, G.A. (2009). “Document Analysis as a Qualitative Research Method.” *Qualitative Research Journal, Vol. 9, No 2, pp 27-40.*

Bowen, G.A. (2009). “Supporting a grounded theory with an audit trail: An illustration.” *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, 12 (4), pp305-316.*

Boyatzis, R. (1998). *Qualitative information: thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Boyer, N.R. (2004). “Using social, self-directed learning frameworks to engage and transform aspiring school leaders.” *Scholar-Practitioner Quarterly, 2(4), 77-88.*

Boyle, B., Lamprianou, I. and Boyle, T. (2005). “A longitudinal study of teacher change: What makes professional development effective? Report of the second year of the study.” *School Effectiveness and School Improvement, 16 (1): pp1 – 27.*

Braun, V. and Clarke, V. (2006). “Using Thematic Analysis in Psychology.” *Qualitative Research in Psychology. Vol. 3 (2), pp77-101.*

Broad, K. and Evans, M. (2006**).** *A Review of Literature on Professional Content and delivery modes for experienced teachers***.** Ontario: University of Toronto.

Buczynski, S. and Hansen, C. B. (2010). “Impact of Professional Development on Teacher Practice: Uncovering Connections.” *Teaching and Teacher Education, 26 (3) 599-607.*

Burke, K. (1997). “Responding to participants’ learning styles during educators’ development.” *Clearing-House*, *70(6): pp 299-301.*

Burns, M. (2015). *4 Barriers to teachers’ professional development in fragile contexts*. Washington: Global Partnership for Education.

Burns, M. (2014). “Five models of staff development.” *Global Partnership for Education, pp1-4.*

Caena, F, (2011). *Literature Review Quality in Teachers' Continuing Professional Development.* London: European Commission.

Cheng, M.M.H., Cheng, A.Y.N. and Tang, S.Y.F. (2010). "Closing the gap between the theory and practice of teaching: implications for teacher education programmes in Hong Kong." *Journal of Education for Teaching, Vol. 36, No. 1, pp 91-104.*

Chowdhury, M.F. (2014). "Interpretivism in Aiding Our Understanding of the Contemporary Social World." *Open Journal of Philosophy, 4, 432-438.*

Clarke, D. and Hollingsworth, H. (2002). "Elaborating a model of teacher professional growth." *Teaching and Teacher Education 18, 947 – 967.*

Clarke, V. and Braun, V. (2013). "Teaching thematic analysis: Overcoming challenges and developing strategies for effective learning." *The Psychologist, 26(2), 120-123.*

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2000). *Research Methods in Education*. (5th Ed). London: Routledge Falmer.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2007*). Research Methods in Education.* (6th Ed). New York: Routledge.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in Education*. (7th Ed). New York, NY: Routledge.

Cole. P. (2004**).** *Professional Development: A great way to avoid change.* Melbourne: IARTV.

Collin, K., Van der Heijen, B. and Lewis, P. (2012). "Continuing professional development." *International Journal of Training and Development, ISSN pp 1-6.*

Coolahan, J. (2002). "Teacher education and the teaching career in an era of lifelong Learning." *OECD Education Working Paper, Number 2. Education Directorate*.

Cooper, D. (2016). *Professional Development: An Effective Research-based Model.* Houghton: Mifflin Harcourt.

Corti, L., Day, A. and Backhome, G. (2000). "Confidentiality and Informed Consent: Issues for Consideration in the Preservation of and Provision of Access to Qualitative Data Archives." *Qualitative Social Research, Vol. 1, No 3, Art 7. Pp1-11.*

Creswell, J.W. (2013). *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing among Five Approaches*. (3rd Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Creswell, J.W. (Ed). (2014). *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Approaches*. (4th Ed). Los Angeles: Sage

Creswell, J.W. and Plano-Clark, V.L. (2011). *Designing and conducting mixed method research*. (2nd Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: sage.

Creswell, J.W., Hanson, W.E., Plano, C., Vicki, L. and Morales, A. (2007). "Qualitative research designs: Selection and implementation." *The Counselling Psychologist, 35 (2), 236-264*

Crossman, A. (2017). *An overview of Qualitative Research Methods*. Phoenix: Arizona State University.

Cyboram, V.L. (2005). "The influence of reflection on employee psychological empowerment: Report of an exploratory workplace field study." *Performance Importance Quarterly, 18(4), 37-49.*

Darke, P., Shanks, G. and Broadbent, M. (1998). "Successfully completing case study research: combining rigour, relevance and pragmatism." *Info Systems Journal, Vo. 8, 273-289.*

Darling-Hammond, L., Hyler, M.E. and Gardner, M. (2017). *Effective Teacher Professional Development*. Palo Alto, CA: Learning Policy Institute.

Darling-Hammond, L. (1999). "Target time toward teachers." *Journal of Staff Development, 20 (2), 31-36.*

Darling-Hammond, L. and McLaughlin, M.W. (1995). "Policies that support professional development in an era of reform." *Phi Delta Kappan, 76(8), 597 – 604).*

Darling-Hammond, L. (2006). "Constructing 21st century teacher education." *Journal of Teacher Education, Vol. 57, No. X, pp 1-15.*

Darling-Hammond. L. and Richardson. N. (2009). "Teacher Learning: What Matters?" *Research Review: Feb 2009, 65 (5), 46-53.*

David, M. and Sutton, C.D. (2004). *Social Research: The Basics.* London: Sage Publications.

DeMonte, J. (2013). *High Quality Professional Development for Teachers*. Michigan: Center for American Progress.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. (Eds). (2000**).** *Handbook of Qualitative Research.* (2nd Ed). London: Sage Publication Inc.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds). (2005). *Handbook of Qualitative Research*. (3rd Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds). (2011). *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications.

Department of Basic Education. (2017*). Analysis of Results-Pietersburg Circuit Polokwane*: Government Publications.

Department of Education. (2003). *Integrated Quality Management System*. Pretoria: Government Printers.

Department of Education. (2007). "National Education Policy Act, 1996 (Act no. 27 of 1996)." *Volume 502, Number 29832. Government Gazette 26 April 2007. Pretoria: Government Printer.*

Desimone, L.M., Smith, T.M. and Ueno, K. (2006). "Are teachers who sustained content-focused professional development getting it? An administrator's dilemma." *Educational Quarterly, 42(2): 179-215.*

Dinham, S. and Scott, C. (2003). "Benefits to Teachers of the Professional Learning Portfolio: a case study." *Teacher Development. Vol. 7. No 2.*

Drago-Severson, E. (2008). "Four practices serve as pillars for adult learning." *National Staff Development Council, Vol. 29, No. 4, pp 60-63.*

Drew, C.J., Hardman, M.L. and Hosp, J.L. (2008). *Designing and Conducting Research in Education*. LA: Sage Publications.

Driscoll, L.D. (2011). *Introduction to Primary Research: Observation, Surveys and Interviews*. California: Creative Commons.

Dunne, K. A. (2002). *Teachers as Learners: Elements of Effective Professional Development*. Massachusets: NES Publications.

Edutopia (2008). “Why is Teacher Development Important? Because students deserve the best**.”** *New York: George Lucas Educational Foundation*.

Eliahoo, R. (2016). “Teacher educators: proposing new professional development models within an English further education context.” *Professional Development in Education. IPDA Vol. 43, No 2, 179-193*.

Elliot, K. (2015). “Teacher Performance Appraisal: More about Performance or Development*?*” *Australian Journal of Teacher Education. Vol. 40 (9). pp102 – 116.*

Elmore, R.F. (2004). *School reform from the inside out: Policy, practice and performance.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Etikan, I., Musa, S.A. and Alkassim, R.S. (2016). “Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling.” *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics. Vol. 5, No 1. Pp 1-4.*

Evans,L. (2002). “What is Teacher Development?” *Oxford Review of Education, Vol. 28, No 1, Carlax Publishing.*

Fereday, J. and Muir-Cochrane, E. (2006). “Demonstrating rigor using thematic analysis: A hybrid approach of inductive and deductive coding and theme development.” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 5(1), 80-92.*

Flick, U. (2007). *Designing Qualitative Research*. London: Sage

Foley, G. 2004. (Ed.). *Dimensions of adult learning: Adult education and training in a global era.* Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Fraser, C., Kennedy, A., Reid, L., & Mckinney, S. (2007). “Teachers’ continuing professional development: Contested concepts, understandings and models.” *Professional Development in Education, 33* (2), 153 – 169.

Fraser, C., Kennedy, A., Reid, L., & Mckinney, S. (2007). “Teachers’ continuing professional development: Contested concepts, understandings and models.” *Professional Development in Education, 33* (2), 153 – 169.

Freitas, H., Oliveira, M., Jenkins, M. and Popjoy, O. (1998). “The Focus Group, a qualitative research method. Reviewing the Theory and providing Guidelines to Planning.” *Information Systems Research Group Working Paper, No 010298, pp 1-22.*

Fullan, M., Hill, P. and Crevola, C. (2006). *Breakthrough*. Corwin Press.

Garet, M. S., Cronen, S., Eaton, M., Kurki, A., Ludwig, M., Jones, W. and Sztejnberg, L. (2008). “The impact of two professional development interventions on early reading instruction and achievement.” *Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Evaluation and Regional Assistance.*

Garet, M. S., Wayne, A.J., Stancavage, F., Taylor, J., Eaton, M., Walters, K. and Doolittle, F. (2011). “Middle school mathematics professional development impact study: Findings after the second year of implementation.” *Washington, DC: National Center for Educational Evaluation and Assistance.*

Gates, B. and Gates, M. (2014). Teachers Know Best: Teachers’ Views on Professional Development.

Gentles, S.J., Charles, C., Ploeg, J. and McKibbon, K.A. (2015). “Sampling in Qualitative Research: Insights from an Overview of the Methods Literature.” *The Qualitative Report, Vol. 20, No 11, pp 1772-1789.*

Goe, L., Biggers, K. and Croft, A. (2012). *Linking Teacher Evaluation to Professional Development: Focusing on Improving Teaching and Learning***.** Washington: National Comprehensive Center for Teacher Quality.

Goldkuhl, G. (2012). “Pragmatism vs interpretivism in qualitative information systems research.” *European Journal of Information Systems (21), 2, 135-146.*

Grace. D, (1999). “Paradigm lost and regained.” *Independent School, Vol 59 (1), 54-57.*

Grant, C. and Osanloo, A. (2014). “Understanding, selecting and integrating a Theoretical Framework in dissertation research: Creating the blueprint for your ‘house.’ “*Grant and Osanloo Publications, Vol. 4, Issue 2, pp12-26.*

Gray, D.E. (2004). *Doing Research in the Real World.* London: SAGE.

Gray, S.L. (2005). *An enquiry into continuing professional development for teachers*. London: Esmée Fairbairn Foundation.

Green, S. (2008). *Business Research Methods*. London: Ventus Publishing

Guskey, T. (2003a). "Scooping up meaningful evidence; backward planning, combined with collecting evidence each step of the way, helps staff developers meet goals of the No Child Left Behind." *National Staff Development Council, 24(4), 27-30.*

Guskey, T.R. (1986). "Staff development and the process of teacher change." *Educational Researcher, 15 (5), 5-12.*

Guskey, T.R. (2002). "Professional Development and Teacher Change. Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice." *Vol 8, 381-391.*

Guskey,T.R. (2000). *Evaluating professional development.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Guskey,T.R. (2002). *Does it Make a Difference? Evaluating Professional Development.* Thousand Oaks CA: Corwin.

Guskey,T.R. (2003). *What Makes Professional Development Effective?* Chicago: PHI Delta Kappan.

Guskey, T.R. (2003c). "How classroom assessments improve learning." *Educational Leadership Journal, 60(5), pp7-11.*

Guskey,T.R. and Yoon, K.S. (2009). "What works in in Professional Development?" *Phil Delta Kappan, Vol. 90, No 07, pp 495 – 500.*

Guskey. T.R. (1995). "Results-oriented professional development: in in search of an optimal mix of effective practices." *North Central Region Educational Laboritory.*

Halej, J. (2017). *Ethics in Primary Research (focus groups, interviews and surveys).* London: Equality Challenge Unit.

Hancock, B., Ockleford, E. and Windridge, K. (2009). *An Introduction to Qualitative Research.* Yorkshire: NIHR RDS for the East Midlands.

.

Harris, A., Day, C., Goodall, J., Lindsay, G. and Muijs, D. (2017). “What difference does it make? Evaluating the impact of continuing professional development in schools.” *Research-gate Publication, pp91-99.*

Harris, B. (2000). “A strategy for identifying the professional development needs of teachers: a report from New South Wales.” *Journal of In-Service Education, 26: 1, pp25-47.*

Harrison, H., Birks, M., Franklin, R. and Mills, J. (2017). “Case Study Research: Foundations and Methodological Orientations.” *Forum: Qualitative Social Research, Vol. 18, No 1, Art 19, pp 1-12*

Haslam, M.B. (2010). “Teacher Professional Development Evaluation Guide**.”** *Washington D.C. Maryland State Department of Education.*

Heaton, J. (2004). *Reworking Qualitative Data*. London: SAGE Publications.

Helm, M. (2000). *The Spectrum of Qualitative Research – the use of Documentary Evidence.* Coventry: Coventry University Publishers.

Higgs, G.L. (2013). “Theory in Educational Research and Practice in Teacher Education.” *UNISA, College of Education, pp105-111.*

Hirsh, S. (2005). “Professional development and closing the achievement gap.” *Theory into Practice, 44(1): 38-44.*

Holstein, J.A. and Gubrium, J.F. (2011). *Animating Interview Narratives*. (3rd Ed). London: Sage.

Huggins, J.T. (2015). “The importance of theory, analysis and practice to integrated disaster research: Introduction to the IRDR Conference.” *Australasian Journal of Disaster and Trauma Studies, Vol. 19, Special Issue, pp3-7.*

Hughes, D. and DuMont, K. (2007). “Using focus groups to facilitate culturally anchored research.” *Ecological Research to promote Social Change, Springer US, pp 257-289.*

Hughes, J. and Sharrock, W. (1997). *The Philosophy of Social Research*. London: Routledge

Huish, J. (2014). "Importance of Staff Development." *NYU Steinhardt newsletter*: *School of Culture, Education and Human Development, pp1-2.*

Idowu, O.E. (2016). "Positivism versus Interpretivism: Fire-war on the Methodological Approach in the Study of Organisational Culture." *International Journal of Human Resource Studies, Vol. 6, No 4, pp178-187.*

Ishak, N.M. and Baker, A.Y.A. (2012). "Qualitative data management and analysis using NVivo: An approach used to examine leadership qualities among student leaders." *Educational Research Journal, Vol. 2. (3) pp 94-103*.

Javadi, M. and Zarea, K. (2016). "Understanding Thematic Analysis and its Pitfall." *Journal Home, Lexis Academy, Vo. 1, Issue 1, pp 33-39.*

Johnson, R.B. and Christensen, L.B. (2007). *Educational Research: Quantitative, Qualitative and Mixed Approaches*. New York: Sage Publications.

Joyce, B. and Showers, B. (2002). *Student Achievement Through Staff Development*. (3rd Ed). Alexandria: ASCD.

Joyce, B. and Showers, B. (2003). *Student Achievement through Staff Development.* New York: National College for School Leadership.

Jugder, N. (2016). "The thematic analysis of interview data: an approach used to examine the influence of the market on curricular provision in Mongolian higher education institutions." *Hillary Place Papers: University of Leeds.*

Kawulich, B.B. (2005). "Participant Observation as a Data Collection Method." *Forum: Qualitative Social Research, Vol. 6, No 2, Art. 43.*

Kelleher, J. (2003). "A model for assessment-driven professional development." *Phi Delta Kappan, 84 (10), 751-756.*

Kennedy, A. (2009). "Models of Continuing Professional Development: a framework for analysis." *Journal of In-service Education, Vol. 31, No 2.*

Khan, W.A. (2010). “Continuing professional Development (CPD); What should we do?” *Bangladesh Journal of Medical Education, Vol. 01, No. 01, pp 37-44.*

Khumalo, N.I. (2008). “The implementation of Integrated Quality Management System challenges facing the DSGing in Vryheid District of KwaZulu-Natal” *Unpublished mini-dissertation. University of Johannesburg: Johannesburg*.

Kielmann, K., Cataldo, F. and Seeley, J. (2012). *Introduction to Qualitative Research Methodology: A Training Manual*. London: Department of International Development.

Killion, J. (2002). *Assessing impact: Evaluating staff development.* Oxford OH: National Staff Development Council.

Klette, K. (2011). “The Role of Theory in Educational Research.” *The Research Council of Norway Report, pp3-7.*

Killion, J. (2009). *Needs Assessments for Professional Learning*. Washington: National Staff Development Council.

Kosgei, K.K. (2010). “Challenges facing staff development and training: A survey of secondary schools in Kericho County.” *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Intervention. Vol. 4, No 2, 34-47.*

Krueger, R.A. (2002). *Designing and Conducting Focus Group Interviews*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Labuschagne, A. (2003). “Qualitative Research: Airy fairy or fundamental?” *The Qualitative Report, 8(1), Article 7.*

Langer, J.A. (2004). *Getting to Excellent: How to Create Better Schools.* New York: Teachers’ College Press.

Langer, J.A. (2004). *Getting to Excellent: How to Create Better Schools.* New York: Teachers’ College Press.

Leedy, P.D. and Ormrod, J.E. (2005). *Practical Research: Planning and Design*. (8th Ed). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Lee, H. (2005). “Developing a Professional Development Program Model Based on Teachers’ Needs.” *The Professional Educator. The Ohio State University-Lima. Vol. XXV11. No 1 and 2.*

Lessing, A. and de Witt, M. (2007). “The value of continuous professional development: teachers’ perceptions.” *South African Journal of Education. Vol. 27 (1) 53-67.*

Leung, F.H. and Savithiri, R. (2009). “Spotlight on focus groups.” *Journal of The College of Family Physicians of Canada, Vol. 55 (2), 218-221.*

Lezaun, J. (2007). “A market of opinions. The political espistemology of focus group.” *Sociological Review, Vol. 55, 130-151.*

Li, D. (2004). “Trustworthiness of think-aloud protocols in the study of translation processes.” *International Journal of Applied Linguistics, 14 (3), 301-313.*

Lincoln, Y. and Guba, E. (2013*). Naturalistic inquiry***.** Beverly Hills, CA: Sage

Lodico, G.M. Spaulding, T.D. and Voegtle, H.K. (2006). *Methods in Educational Research.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Longo, G. and Soto, M.A. (2016). “Why do we need theories?” *Progress in Biophysics and Molecular Biology, pp1-8.*

Lustick, D, and Sykes, G. (2006). “National Board Certification as professional development: What are teachers learning?” *Educational Policy Analysis Archives, 14(5), 1-45.*

Macheng, P. (2016). “Continuing Professional Development of Teachers in Junior Secondary Schools in Botswana.” *Research and Reviews. Journal of Educational Studies. Vol. 2. Issue 3.*

Mack, L. (2010). “The Philosophical Underpinnings of Educational Research.” *Polyglossia Journal of Educational Research, Vol 19, pp5-11.*

Maguire, M. and Delahunt, B. (2017). “Doing a Thematic Analysis: A Practical, Step-by-Step Guide for Learning and Teaching Scholars.” *All Ireland Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education, Vol. No. 3.*

Mahlaela, I.K. (2012). *Teacher assessment for teacher professional development.* University of Stellenbosch: Master of Education Dissertation.

Malik, M. (2016). “Assessment of a professional development program on adult learning theory.” *Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, Vol. 16, No. 1, pp 47-70.*

Marcelo, C. (2009). “Professional Development of Teachers: past and future.” *Educational Sciences Journal, Vol. 8, pp 5-20.*

Mason, J. (2002). *Qualitative Researching*. (2nd Ed). SAGE Publications: London.

McDonough, A., Clarkson, P. and Scott, P. (2010). “Shaping the future of mathematics education: Proceedings of the 33rd annual conference of the Mathematics Education Research Group of Australia.” *Fremantle: MERGA*

McLaughlin, M.W. and Talbert, J.E. (2000**).** *Building School-Based Teacher Learning Communities: Professional Strategies to Improve Student Achievement.* New York: Teachers’ College Press.

Merriam, S.B. (1998*). Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. (2nd Ed). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Mestry, R., Hendricks, I. and Bisschoff, T. (2009). “Perceptions of teachers on the benefits of teacher development programmes in one province of South Africa. “*South African Journal of Education, Volume 29: 475 – 490.*

Mewborn, DS & Huberty, PD. (2004). “A site-based model for professional development at the elementary school level.” *Pythagoras*, June, 2-7.

Miller, J. and Glassner, B. (2011). *The “Inside” and the “outside”: Finding Realities in Interviews*. (3rd Ed). London: Sage.

Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. (2013). *The Planning, Implementation and Evaluation of Professional Learning*. Missouri: US Department of Education.

Mizell, H. (2010). *Why Professional Development Matters.* Oxford: Learning Forward.

Moeini, H. (2008). “Identifying Needs: A Missing Part in Teacher Training Programs.” *International Journal of Media Technology and Lifelong Learning. Vol. 4. Issue 1, pp1-12.*

Mogalakwe, M. (2006). “The Use of Documentary Research Methods in Social Research.” *African Sociological Review, 10, (1), pp 221 – 230.*

Moonasar, A. and Underwood, P.G. (2018). “Continuing Professional Development opportunities in Information and Communication Technology for academic librarians at the Durban University of Technology.” *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science, Vol. 84, No. 1, pp 47 – 55.*

Morehouse, R. (2011). *Beginning Interpretive Inquiry: A step-by-step Approach to Research and Evaluation*. New York: Routledge.

Morgan, D.L. (1996). “Focus groups.” *Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. 22, 129-152.*

Morgan, D.L. (1997). *Focus-groups as qualitative research*. (2nd Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Moriarty, J. (2011). *Qualitative Research Methods*. London: School for Social Care Research.

Mullins, D., Lepicki, T. and Glandon, A. (2010). *A Professional Development Evaluation Framework for the Ohio Able System***.** Ohio: The Ohio State University.

Nind, M. and Todd, L. (2011). “Prospects for educational research.” *International Journal of Research and Method in Education. 1 (34), 1-2*

Nowell, L.S., Norris, J.M., White, D.E. and Moules, N.J. (2017). “Thematic Analysis: Striving to Meet the Trustworthiness Criteria.” *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 16(1), 1-13.*

O’Gorman, E. and Drudy, S. (2011). *Professional Development for Teachers working in Special Education/Inclusion in Mainstream Schools: The Views of Teachers and other Stakeholders*. Dublin: University College of Dublin.

O’Leary, Z. (2014). *The essential guide to doing your research project*. (2nd Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Opdenakker, R.J.G. (2006). “Advantages and disadvantages of your interview techniques in qualitative research.” *Qualitative Social Research, 7 (4) Art 11.*

Ormston, R., Spencer, L., Barnard, M. and Snape, D. (2013). *The Foundations of Qualitative Research*. Washington DC: SAGE

Osmundson, E. (2016). *7 Reasons Why Professional Development is Important***.** Iowa City: PORK Network.

Ospina, S. (2004*). Qualitative Research*. London: SAGE Publications.

Palinkas, L.A., Horwitz, S.M., Hoagwood, K., Green, C.A., Wisdom, J.P. and Duan, N. (2013). “Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research.” *Administration and Policy in Mental Health Services Research D01 10. 1007/5 10488- 013-0528-y*

Palys, T. (2008). “Purposive Sampling.” *The Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods. Vol. 2, pp697-698: Los Angeles: Sage.*

Parker, A. and Tritter, J. (2006). “Focus group method and methodology: current practice and recent debate.” *International Journal of Research Method in Education, Vol. 29 (1), 23-37.*

Patton, M.Q. (2002). *Qualitative evaluation and Research Methods*. London: Sage

Patton, M.Q. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice*. (4th Ed). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Patton, M.Q. and Cochran, M. (2002). *A Guide to using Qualitative Research Methodology.* London: Medecins Sans Frontiers.

Payne, G. and Payne, J. (2004). *Key Concepts in Social Research*. London: Sage Publication.

Phothongsunan, S. (2010). “Interpretive Paradigm in Educational Research.” *Galaxy Journal of Education, pp1-4.*

Plummer, K. (2001). *Documents of Life 2: An Introduction to a Critical Humanism*. London: Sage.

Ponelis, S.R. (2015). “Using interpretive qualitative case studies for exploratory research in doctoral studies: A case of Information Systems research in small and medium enterprises.” *International Journal of Doctoral Studies, Vol. 10, pp 535-550*

Pope, C. and Mays, N. (2006). *Qualitative Research in Healthcare*. (3rd Ed). Oxford: Wiley Blackwell

Powell, D.R., Diamond, K.E., Burchinal, M.R. and Kochler, M.J. (2010). “Effects of an early literacy professional development intervention on head start teachers and children.” *Journal of Educational Psychology, 102 (2), 299-312.*

Rahman, S. (2017). “The Advantages and Disadvantages of using Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches and Methods in Language Testing and Assessment Research: A Literature Review.” *Canadian Center of Science and Education; Journal of Education and Learning, Vol. 6, No 1, pp 102-105*

Rasmussen, L.M. (2017). “The Role of Theory in Research.” *SAGE Handbook of Educational Research, pp 1-6.*

Reading First Notebook (2005). “Professional Development: The Newsletter for the Reading First Program.” *Washington DC: Department of Education*.

Rennekamp, R.A. and Nall, M.A. (2002). *Using Focus Groups in Program Development and Evaluation*. Lexington: University of Kentucky.

Rude, H.A. and Brewer, R.D. (2003). “Assessment of professional development systems: Improving rural special education services.” *Rural Special Education Quarterly, 22 (4), pp20-28.*

Ruiz, J. (2017). *Collective Production of Discourse: an approach based on the Qualitative School of Madrid.* Madrid: IESA-CSIC.

SACE (2013). *The CPTD Management System Handbook*. Centurion: SACE

Salo, J.P. and Ronnerman, K. (2013). “Teachers’ professional development as enabling and constraining dialogue and meaning-making in Education for All.” *Professional Development in Education, Vol. 39, No. 4, 596-605.*

Sammons, P. and Bakkum, L. (2011). “Effective Schools, Equity and Teacher Effectiveness: A Review to the Literature Journal.” *University of Oxford: Department of Education. Vol. 15, No 3. pp 11-26.*

Samsujjaman, M. (2017). “Principle and significance of teacher education.” *International Journal of Engineering Development and Research, Vol. 5, Issue 2, 1995-2000.*

Sandelowski, M. and Leeman, J. (2012). “Writing usable qualitative health research findings.” Qualitative Research, Vol. 22, pp 1404 – 1413.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P. and Thornhill, A. (2012). *Research Methods for Business Students.* (6th Ed). Washington: Pearson Education Limited.

Schwille, J. & Dembelé, M. (2007). *Global Perspectives on Teacher Learning: Improving Policy and Practice,* Paris: IIEP/UNESCO.

Seale, C., Gobo, G., Gubrium, J.F. and Silverman, D. (2007). *Qualitative Research Practice*. London: Sage.

Selemani-Meke, E. (2011). “An assessment of the implementation of CPD programmes for primary school teachers in Malawi: A case of Zomba rural education district.” *Thesis in the School of Postgraduate Studies, Faculty of Education: University of Fort Hare.*

Shaha, S. H., Glasset, K. F. and Ellsworth, H. (2015). “Long-term impact of on-demand professional development on student performance: a longitudinal multi-state study.” *Journal of International Education Research, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp 29-34.*

Sharma, G. (2017). “Pros and cons of different sampling techniques.” *International Journal of Applied Research, Vol. 3 (7), pp 749-752.*

Sharma, S. (2010). *Qualitative Methods in Statistics Education Research: Methodological Problems and Possible Solutions*. Auckland: The University of Wakato.

Shenton, A.K. (2004). “Strategies for ensuring trustworthiness in qualitative research projects.” *Education for Information. Vol. 22, pp 63-75.*

Shields, D.B. (2007). “Teacher Efficacy in the Implementation of New Curriculum supported by Professional Development.” *Theses, Dissertations, Professional Papers. Paper 946.*

Shuttleworth, M. (2008). *Case Study Research Design*. London: Explorable.

Silverman, D. (2004). *Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice*. London: Sage Publications.

Smith, C., DeVol, M. and Stetson, N. (2003**).** *Evaluating Staff and Organisational Development.* California: Community League College of California.

Smithson, J. (2000). “Using and analysing focus groups: limitations and possibilities.” *International Journal of Social Research Methodology, Vol. 3, No 2, 103-119.*

Sparks, D. and Loucks-Horsley, S. (1989). “Five Models of Staff Development.” *Journal of Staff Development. Vol. 10, No 4, 1-34.*

Sparks, D. (2002). *Designing Powerful Professional Development for Teachers and Principals***.** Oxford: National Staff Development Council.

Starman, A.B. (2013). “The case study as a stype of qualitative research.” *Journal of Contemporary Educational Studies, Vol. 1, pp 28-43.*

Steyn, G.M. (2008). “Continuing professional development for teachers in South Africa and social learning systems: conflicting conceptual frameworks of learning.” *Koers, 73(1), 15-31.*

Steyn, G.M. (2010). *Educators’ perceptions of continuing professional development for teachers in South Africa: a qualitative study*. Pretoria: UNISA

Sutton, J. and Austin, Z. (2015). “Qualitative Research: Data Collection, Analysis and Management.” *The Canadian Journal of Hospital Pharmacy, Vol. 68 (3): 226-231*

Talbert, J.E. & McLaughlin, M.W. (2000). “Teacher professionalism in local contexts.” *American Journal of Education*, *102, pp 1-17*

Taylor, P.C. and Medina, M.N.D. (2013). “Educational research paradigms: From positivism to multi-paradigmatic.” *Journal of Meaning-Centered Education, 1*

Taylor, M., Goeke, J., Klein, E., Onore, C. and Geist, K. (2011). “Changing leadership: Teachers lead the way for schools that learn.” *Teaching and teacher Education, 27(5), 920-929.*

Teddlie, C. and Reynolds, D. (2000). *The International Handbook of School Effectiveness Research*. London: Palmer.

Teddlie, C. and Yu, F. (2007). “Mixed methods sampling: A Typology with examples.” *Journal of Mixed Methods Research. Vol. 1, No 1, pp 77-100.*

Thanh, N. C. and Thanh, T. T. L. (2015). “The interconnection between interpretivist paradigm and qualitative methods in education.” *American Journal of Educational Science. Vol. 1, No 2, 24-27.*

Thomas, J. and Harden, A. (2007). “Methods for the thematic synthesis of qualitative research in systematic reviews.” ESRC National Centre for Research Methods, No (10/07) pp 1 – 13.

Tomlinson, C. (2005). “Travelling the road to differentiation in staff development.” *Journal of Staff Development, 26 (8), 8-12.*

Tongco, M.D.C. (2007). “Purposive Sampling as a Tool for Informant Selection.” *Ethnobotany Research and Applications. Vol 5: pp 147 - 158*

Travers, M. (2008). *Qualitative Research through Case Studies*. London: Sage Publications

Trochim, M.K.W. (2008). *Research Methods Knowledge Base*. New York: CENGAGE Publishing

Trotter, Y. D. (2006). “Adult Learning Theories: Impacting Professional Development Programs*.” Ohio: The Delta Kappa Gramma Bulletin, pp1-4.*

Tsotetsi, C.T. and Mahlomaholo, S.M.G. (2013). “Teacher Professional Development programmes: What is missing?” *Journal of Educational Studies, Volume 12 (1), pp89-102.*

Vaismoradi, M., Jones, J., Turunen, H. and Snelgrove, S. (2016). “Theme development in qualitative content analysis and thematic analysis.” Journal of Nursing Education and Practice, Vol. 6, No 5, pp 100-110.

Vaismoradi, M., Turunen, H. and Bondas, T. (2013). “Content analysis and thematic analysis: Implications for conducting a qualitative descriptive study.” *Journal of Nursing and Health Services, Vol. 15, pp 398-405.*

Van Esch, P. and Van Esch, L. (2013). “Justification of a Qualitative Methodology to Investigate the Emerging Concept: The Dimensions of Religion as Underpinning Constructs for Mass Media Social Marketing Campaigns.” *Journal of Business Theory and Practice, Vol. 1, No 2, pp 214-243*

Vanderstoep, S.W. and Johnson,D.D. (2009). *Research Methods for Everyday Life: Blending Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. San Fransco: Jossey-Bass.

Vardi, Y. (2000). “Psychological empowerment as a criterion for adjustment to a new job.” *Psychological Reports, 87 (3f), 1083-1093.*

Veal, A.J. (2005). Business Research Methods: A Managerial Approach. (2nd Ed). Sydney: Pearson Education.

Villard, J. (2002). *Use of Focus groups: An effective tool for involving people in measuring quality and impact*. Ohio: The Ohio State University.

Villegas-Reimers, E. (2003). “Teacher Professional Development: an international review of the literature**.”** *Paris: UNESCO: International Institute for Educational Planning.*

Visser, T.C., Coenders, G.M., Terlouw, C. and Pieters, J. (2013). “Evaluating a Professional Development programme for implementation of a multidisciplinary science subject.” *Journal of Education and Training Studies. Vol. 1, No 2.*

Vracar, A. (2014). “Three reasons why staff development matters.” *Nashville Annual Conference: Learning Forward.*

Walsham, G. (2006). “Doing interpretive research.” *European Journal of Information Systems, Vol 15, pp 320-330*

Wanzare, Z & Ward, KL. (2000). “Rethinking educators’ development in Kenya: agenda for the twenty-first century.” *The International Journal of Educational Management*, 14(6):1-14.

Weber, R. (2004). “The Rhetoric of Positivism vs Interpretivism: A Personal View.” *MIS Quarterly, Vol 28 (1), p111 –X11*

Wei, R. C., Darling-Hammond, D. L. and Adamson, F. (2010). *Professional Development in the United States: Trends and Challenges*. Dallas, TX: National Staff Development Council.

Whitehouse, C. (2010). “Effective continuing professional development for teachers.” *Manchester: AQA Centre for Research and Policy, pp1-13.*

Wilkinson, s. (2011*). Analysing Focus Group Data.* London: SAGE Publications.

Wilson, L. and Easen, P. (2006). “Teacher-Needs and Practice Development implications for in-classroom support.” *Journal of In-Service Education, 21:3, pp273-284.*

Willis, J.W. (2007). *Foundations of Qualitative Research: interpretive and critical approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage

Yanow, D. and Schwartz-Shea, P. (2011). *Interpretive Approaches to Research Design: Concepts and Processes*. Amsterdam: Routledge

Yazan, B. (2015). “Three Approaches to Case Study Methods in Education: Yin, Merriam and Stake: The Qualitative Report.” *Vol. 20, No 2, pp134-152*

Yen, C.L. (2010). “A Discussion of Paradigms and Research Methods.” *Journal of Wufeng University, Vol 19, pp 357-366*

Yin, R.K. (2009). (4th Ed*). Case Study Research*. London: SAGE Ltd.

Yin, R.K. (2011). *Qualitative research from start to finish*. New York: Guilford Press.

Yin, R.K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods*. (5th Ed). Thousand Oaks: sage.

Zainal, Z. (2007). “Case study as a research method.” *Jurnal Kemanusiaan bil. 9. Malaysian University of Technology.*

Zombwe, G. and Msigallah, F. (2009). “The significance of quality teacher training for the development of quality education: preparing teachers for the ever-changing world.” *Tanzania HakiElimu Position Paper 03, pp 1-22.*

Zuber-Skerrit, O. (1992). *Professional Development in Higher Education: A Theoretical Framework for Action Research***.** London: Kogan Page Ltd.

Zucker, D. (2009). *How to do Case Study Research*. University of Massachussets: CNF Publications.

ANNEXURES

Annexure A: Educator interview guide

Educator profile

1 Choose an age bracket that you fall in from this range.

(under 25) (25-29) (30-39) (40-49) (50-59) (60+)

2 What is your teaching status/position? (e.g. HOD, senior teacher, part-time etc)

3 What is your highest educator professional qualification?

4 For how long have you been working as an educator?

5 For how long have you been working as an educator at this school?

Interview questions

1 What is the nature of professional development programmes prevailing in schools?

1.1 What is your understanding of continuous professional development?

1.2 From the list supplied below, indicate the nature of professional development activities that you attended in the last 24 months.

- Courses /workshops on subject matter or methods and/or other education related topics.
- Education conferences or seminars where educators and /or researchers presented their research results and discuss educational matters.
- Qualification programme such as a diploma or degree.
- Participated in a network of educators formed especially for CPD.
- Individual or collaborative research on a topic of interest to you professionally.

- Mentoring and/or peer observation and coaching as part of a formal school arrangement.

1.3 Did you have to pay for any CPD session you attended in the last 12 months?

1.4 When and how do the CPD programmes come as **optional** or **compulsory**?

1.5 In the last 12 months;

- What professional literature such as journals, evidence-based papers did you read about?

- What informal dialogue with your colleagues on how to improve your teaching did you engage in?

1.6 Have you received some professional development programmes in this school in the past 12 months?

And please state the ones you recall.

1.7 Did you get any incentives for participating in these programmes?

And what nature of incentives were they?

1.8 Where do you prefer to have your CPD programmes?

In the school……or outside….and why?

1.9 How do the facilitators/instructors conduct the programmes?

1.10 What policies are in place in your school to facilitate CPD?

2 How are educators, as intended beneficiaries, consulted and involved in identifying professional development needs appropriate for promoting student achievement?

2.1 How are professional development needs identified in your department and in your school?

2.2 What areas of your teaching do you wish to improve upon?

2.3 Thinking of your own professional development needs, indicate the extent to which you need support in each of the areas listed using;

[**None**] [**little**] [**lots]**

- Content and performance standards in my main subject field(s).
- Student assessment management.
- Class management.
- Knowledge and understanding of my main subject(s).
- ICT.
- Teaching students with special learning needs.
- Conducting remedial tuition in my subject/field(s).
- Student discipline and behaviour problems.
- Teaching in a multicultural setting.
- Student counselling.

2.4 In the last 12 months, did you want to participate in more professional development than you did?

Please explain.

2.5 If “Yes” in 2.4 above, what prevented you from participating in more CPD than you did?

2.6 Should CPD be compulsory or voluntary?

State reasons.

2.7 Describe the planning for professional development in your school.

2.8 How are educator staff meetings aligned with content, pedagogy, collaboration and reflection with reference to CPD?

2.9 Do you have opportunities for your own professional development enhancement?

Please specify.

2.10 Can you identify any other areas of your teaching that you wish to improve upon?

3 How are professional development programmes monitored and evaluated to check if they have attained the desired outcome on promoting learner achievement?

3.1 What are the challenges or difficulties that you encountered while trying to practice the new knowledge or skills that you gained from the professional development programme(s) you attended in this school?

3.2 In general, how do you assess the effectiveness of the CPD courses you attend?

3.3 Do you have a system in place in your department or school to evaluate professional development effectiveness?

Which system do you have in place?

3.4 What follow-up and support services do you normally receive after professional development programmes?

3.5 What challenges, if any, did you face in implementing in the classroom setting what you learnt from continuous professional development?

3.6 What barriers exist to prevent educators from meeting, planning, reflecting and working together?

3.7 How much time is allocated to professional development in your school?

Is it sufficient or insufficient?

State reasons.

3.8 Think about your most memorable experiences with professional development. What made the sessions so ***memorable and effective?***

3.9 Think about your most memorable experiences with professional development programmes.
What made the sessions ***least favourable?***

3.10 How well conversant and knowledgeable were the facilitators of the CPD sessions you attended most recently?

4 To what extend do professional development programmes influence student achievement?

4.1 How has knowledge gained in CPD programmes impacted on your student achievement?

4.2 Were the school-based professional development programmes relevant and useful to you as an educator?

Why do you say so?

4.3 How have your students benefitted from the CPD programmes?

4.4 What are your suggestions for improving professional development in your school?

4.5 Can you identify a major benefit of a particular CPD programme you undertook in the past 5 years?

4.6 Have you experienced any unsuccessful impact of professional development in your teaching?

Please explain.

4.7 What factors, if any, improve your confidence in professional skills enough to effect change?

4.8 How has your involvement in professional development assisted in the implementation of curriculum?

4.9 Suggest on how best to implement continuous professional development.

Sincere thank you

Annexure B: Principal interview guide

1 What is the nature of professional development programmes prevailing in your school?

1.1 What is your understanding of the term continuous professional development?

1.2 What opportunities do you provide to professionally develop your educators?

1.3 In the last 12 months, in which school-based CPD programmes did your educators participate in?

1.4 In 1.3 above, please explain why?

1.5 If you ever send your educators outside the school to attend professional development programmes; please specify the places or institutions they go to.

1.6 Which of your educators embarked on further studies by their own initiative?

What studies did they pursue?

1.7 How often do educators in your school meet, plan, reflect and work together on matters of CPD nature?

1.8 How do you model your own professional growth to your educators?

2 How are educators, as intended beneficiaries, consulted and involved in identifying professional development needs appropriate for promoting student achievement?

2.1 How do you identify professional development needs in your educators?

2.2 What are the main factors that you focus on when you develop CPD programmes for educators?

2.3 Do you focus on their professional needs as individuals or common needs of educators?

And why?

2.4 How do you identify CPD needs for the school in general?

2.5 Do you receive any support from educators to identify those needs?

And how?

2.6 How do you select and inform educators to participate in those programmes?

2.7 Describe the typical planning for professional development in your school.

2.8 How are educator staff meetings aligned with content, pedagogy, collaboration and reflection with reference to CPD?

2.9 What policies are in place in your school to facilitate CPD?

2.10 Do you have opportunities for your own professional development enhancement?

Please specify.

3 How are professional development programmes monitored and evaluated to check if they have attained the desired outcome on promoting learner achievement?

3.1 Do you have any kind of monitoring/evaluation/supervision system for continuous professional development?

Please give details.

3.2 Do you have a system in place to assess or evaluate professional development effectiveness in your school?

What system do you have in place?

3.3 If you could change anything about the way your school conducts CPD, what would it be?

3.4 What challenges do educators face in the implementation of knowledge and skills gained through CPD?

3.5 What CPD monitoring mechanisms does your school engage in?

3.6 What CPD support mechanisms does your school engage in?

4 To what extent do professional development programmes influence student achievement?

4.1 How do CPD programmes address the instructional and learning needs of educators and students?

4.2 If there is any educator without a professional qualification in your school, how do you prepare them to cope with instructional expectations?

4.3 How much of your educators' professional needs are being fulfilled by the school-based programmes?

4.4 How much behaviour change in your educators have you noticed as a result of attending professional development sessions?

4.5 Have you observed any performance changes in your educators after they participated in some professional development programmes?

How do you measure the performance change?

4.6 Which student improved performances have you noted and recorded after educators' professional development programmes?

4.7 Do you feel that continuous professional development programmes are effective in creating change in educators to do their work?

Why……and how?

Justify by giving examples from your school.

4.8 In your view, can educators improve their teaching practices and enhance student learning without professional development involvement?

Justify your response with examples from your school.

4.9 Based on your experience, provide suggestions on how best to implement/deliver CPD in schools.

Sincere thank you.

Annexure C: Focus group discussion guide

1.1 What is your understanding of continuous professional development?

1.2 What policies are in place in your school to facilitate CPD?

1.3 Have you received some professional development opportunities in the past 24 months?

And please state the ones you recall.

1.4 In the last 12 months, in which school-based CPD programmes did you participate in?

2.1How are professional development needs identified in your department and in your school in general?

2.2 Describe the planning for professional development in your school.

2.3 In the last 12 months, did you want to participate in more professional development than you did?

Please explain.

If you needed more programmes, what prevented you from participating in more CPD than you did?

2.4 What areas of your teaching do you wish to improve upon?

3.1In general, how do you assess the effectiveness of the CPD courses you attend?

3.2 Do you have a system in place in your school or department to evaluate professional development effectiveness?

Which system do you have in place?

3.3 What follow-up and support services do you normally receive after CPD programmes?

3.4 What challenges, if any, did you face in implementing in the classroom setting what you learnt from CPD?

3.5 What CPD monitoring mechanisms does your school engage in?

4.1 In your view, can educators improve their teaching practices and enhance student learning without CPD involvement?

Why do you take that stance?

4.2 How has your involvement in CPD assisted in the implementation of the curriculum in general?

4.3 How has knowledge and skills gained in CPD programmes impacted on your student achievement?

Qualify your claims.

4.4 Have you experienced any unsuccessful impact of CPD in your teaching?

Please explain.

THANK YOU.

Annexure D: Documentary evidence guide

Continuous professional development programmes will be analysed with reference to the following;

- The methods used in professionally developing educators.
- Credentials of continuous professional development trainers or facilitators.
- Materials /resources used.
- Materials handed to participants for use in their teaching.
- Duration of the programmes.
- Motivational aspects for the participants.
- Any awards or certificates for the participants.
- Logistical arrangements for the CPD sessions in reference to the welfare of participants.
- Starting times for the CPD sessions.
- Challenges met during sessions.
- Gaps between theory and practice.
- Evaluation of the continuous professional development programmes.
- Follow-ups on sessions.
- Any other issues resulting from the above aspects.

Annexure E: **Informed consent form**

I, the undersigned, confirm that;

- I have read and understood the information sheet and have had the opportunity to ask questions. I had all my questions answered to my satisfaction.

- I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time without giving any reason and without there being any negative consequences. In addition, should I not wish to answer any question or questions, I am free to decline.

- I understand that my responses will be kept confidential. I understand that my name will not be linked with the research materials, and will not be identified or identifiable in the report or reports from the research.

- I agree for the interview and focus group discussions to be tape-recorded. I understand that the audio recording made will be used only for analysis. I understand that no other use will be made of the recording without my written permission, and that no one outside the research team will be allowed access to the original recording.

- I agree that my anonymised data may be kept for future research purposes.

- I have been given a copy of this consent form.

- By signing below,h I am indicating my consent to participate in the research. I understand that the data collected from my participation will be used primarily for the PhD thesis.

_____	_____	_____
Name of Participant	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Name of Researcher	Signature	Date

Annexure F: Department of Education authorization request

P O Box 441
Polokwane
0700
……

The Chief Director
Department of Education
P/ Bag X9489
Polokwane
0700

Sir /Madam

REQUEST TO CONDUCT STUDY

I am a doctoral student in Educational Management studies with the University of Limpopo. The topic of my thesis reads, “A formative evaluation of continuous professional development programmes in selected schools in Limpopo Province.”

A request is hereby made for collecting qualitative research data at 5 secondary schools within Pietersburg circuit for a scheduled period of 5 months which is, October to November 2018 and January to March 2019. The respondents shall be 5 principals and 10 secondary school educators. Data will be collected after office hours so as not to disturb the teaching and learning in schools visited. Pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of the schools and participants included in the study.

The primary purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore the influence of continuous professional development in promoting quality teaching and learning in South African schools. Since the goal of educational institutions is to enhance student learning, this study will share educators’ perceptions on the relationship between continuous professional development involvement and enhanced student achievement.

Thank you for your consideration in providing permission to include schools within your jurisdiction as part of this study.

Yours sincerely

_____
Rio Hasha (Mr) [072 401 1889 / 060 819 8840]

Annexure G: Principal authorization request

P O Box 441
Polokwane
0700
…….

Dear Principal

REQUEST TO CONDUCT STUDY

I am a doctoral student in Educational Management studies with the University of Limpopo. The topic of my thesis reads, “A formative evaluation of continuous professional development programmes in selected schools in Limpopo Province.” The primary purpose of this qualitative case study is to explore the influence of continuous professional development in promoting quality teaching and learning in South African schools.

Through this research, I offer principals and educators the opportunity to give voice to their knowledge and opinions with a view to gather feedback on continuous professional development in secondary schools. Your professional opinion is indeed valued.

I am requesting permission to elicit data from you and 2 of your educators. All interview responses, focus group discussions, observations or documentary evidence analysis will be treated in the strictest confidence and anonymity in that there will be no identification of individual schools, principals or educators whatsoever.

Find attached a copy of the Department of Education authorization letter and my university Ethical Clearance certificate.

Thank you in advance in appreciation of your time and significant contribution to this study.

Yours sincerely

_____
Rio Hasha (Mr)
[072 401 1889 / 060 819 8840]

Annexure H: Educator cover letter

P O Box 441
Polokwane
0700
……

Dear Sir /Madam

EDUCATOR INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE IN THE RESEARCH STUDY

The above matter refers.

I am a doctoral student in Educational Management studies with the University of Limpopo. The topic of my thesis reads, “A formative evaluation of continuous professional development programmes in selected schools in Limpopo Province.”

I am requesting your professional assistance in the provision of data by allowing me to interview you and engage you in focus group discussions. Your participation is entirely voluntary and anonymous. Reporting of results in this study will be used only for my research study and will not identify individual participants, schools or jurisdictions. Your professional opinion and knowledge is indeed valued, bearing in mind that it is the front-line educator who is the gateway to change and student achievement.

I am aware of the heavy time constraints and commitments facing you at this time of the year, but please be assured that your co-operation is highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely

_____
Rio Hasha (Mr)

[072 401 1889 / 060 819 8840]

Annexure I: Faculty approval of proposal

University of Limpopo
Faculty of Humanities
Executive Dean
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 4895, Fax: (015) 268 3425, Email:Satsope.maoto@ul.ac.za

DATE: 19 July 2018

NAME OF STUDENT: **HASHA, R**
STUDENT NUMBER: **[201720667]**
DEPARTMENT: **PhD – Educational Management**
SCHOOL: **Education**

Dear Student
FACULTY APPROVAL OF PROPOSAL (PROPOSAL NO. FHDC2018/1117)

I have pleasure in informing you that your PhD proposal served at the Faculty Higher Degrees Meeting on 20 June 2018 and your title was approved as follows:

TITLE: A FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Note the following:

Ethical Clearance	Tick One
In principle the study requires no ethical clearance, but will need a TREC permission letter before proceeding with the study	
Requires ethical clearance (Human) (TREC) (apply online) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	√
Requires ethical clearance (Animal) (AREC) Proceed with the study only after receipt of ethical clearance certificate	

Yours faithfully
MaotoRS
Prof RS Maoto,
Executive Dean: Faculty of Humanities

Director: **Prof LT Mabasa**
Supervisor: Prof N Wadesango (CAE)
Co-supervisor: Prof O Chabaya (CAE)
Prof TN Mafumo

Finding solutions for Africa

Annexure J: TREC clearance certificate

University of Limpopo
Department of Research Administration and Development
Private Bag X1106, Sovenga, 0727, South Africa
Tel: (015) 268 3935, Fax: (015) 268 2306, Email: anastasia.ngobe@ul.ac.za

TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MEETING:	**09 October 2018**
PROJECT NUMBER:	**TREC/182/2018: PG**
PROJECT:	
Title:	A formative evaluation of continuous professional development programmes in selected schools in Limpopo Province.
Researcher:	R Hasha
Supervisor:	Prof N Wadesango
Co-Supervisor/s:	Prof O Chabaya Prof T N Mafumo
School:	Education
Degree:	PhD Educational Management

PROF TAB MASHEGO
CHAIRPERSON: TURFLOOP RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Turfloop Research Ethics Committee (TREC) is registered with the National Health Research Ethics Council, Registration Number: **REC-0310111-031**

Note:
i) **Should any departure be contemplated from the research procedure as approved, the researcher(s) must re-submit the protocol to the committee.**
ii) **The budget for the research will be considered separately from the protocol.**
PLEASE QUOTE THE PROTOCOL NUMBER IN ALL ENQUIRIES.

Finding solutions for Africa

Annexure K: DBE Head office research conduct approval

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

Ref: 2/2/2 Enq: MC Makola PhD Tel No: 015 290 9448 E-mail:MakolaMC@edu.limpopo.gov.za

Hasha R
226-228 Harley Street
Eduan Park
Polokwane
0700

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

1. The above bears reference.
2. The Department wishes to inform you that your request to conduct research has been approved. Topic of the research proposal: **"A FORMATIVE EVALUATION OF CONTINUOUS PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN SELECTED SCHOOLS IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE".**
3. The following conditions should be considered:

3.1 The research should not have any financial implications for Limpopo Department of Education.

3.2 Arrangements should be made with the Circuit Office and the schools concerned.

3.3 The conduct of research should not in anyhow disrupt the academic programs at the schools.

3.4 The research should not be conducted during the time of Examinations especially the fourth term.

3.5 During the study, applicable research ethics should be adhered to; in particular the principle of voluntary participation (the people involved should be respected).

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: HASHA R

CONFIDENTIAL

3.6 Upon completion of research study, the researcher shall share the final product of the research with the Department.

4 Furthermore, you are expected to produce this letter at Schools/ Offices where you intend conducting your research as an evidence that you are permitted to conduct the research.

5 The department appreciates the contribution that you wish to make and wishes you success in your investigation.

Best wishes.

07/12/18

Ms NB Mutheiwana
Head of Department

Date

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: HASHA R

CONFIDENTIAL

Annexure L: Circuit research-conduct approval

LIMPOPO
PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENT
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION

CAPRICORN SOUTH DIST
PIETERSBURG CIRCUIT

Enq: TLADI NP
Tel No: 015 290 9484/ 082 954 3476
Date: 14 February 2019

To: Principals of the of schools
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Dear Sir/ Madam

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH: HASHA R

1. The above mentioned student attached to UNIVERSITY OF LIMPOPO, has been granted permission to conduct research in schools in this Circuit .Your school has been identified as one where she could conduct the research.

2. The student is encouraged to come to your school to make final arrangements with you. Ensure that this research does not disrupt teaching and learning in the school.

3. Attached kindly find the permission from Head of Department (signed on the 07/12/2018) and application letter from the student.

4. I hope and believe you will be of assistant to the researcher.

CIRCUIT MANAGER: RATALE SM

15/02/2019
DATE

"We Belong, We Care, We Serve"

Annexure M: Letter confirming editing

Teaching and Learning Centre
Office No 7
Henderson Hall
Tel: 040 602 2701
Email:fmudehwegonhovi@ufh.ac.za

University of Fort Hare
Together in Excellence

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I hereby confirm that I have proofread and edited the following article using the Windows "Tracking" system to reflect my comments and suggested corrections:

A formative evaluation of continuous professional development programmes in selected schools in Limpopo Province

Florence Mudehwe-Gonhovi (*Dr*) FHEA(UK)

English Editor