

**TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHER  
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES: A CASE OF NGAKA MODIRI  
MOLEMA DISTRICT IN THE NORTH WEST, SOUTH AFRICA**

By

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## **DECLARATION**

I, Dorcas Matsharara Phetla, declare that this study titled, Teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of Teacher Professional Development Programmes: A case study of Ngaka Modiri Molema Education District in the North West, South Africa submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of Masters of Education in Curriculum Studies is my work. This dissertation 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.

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**PHETLA D M (MRS)**

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**DATE**

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this thesis to God almighty who granted me the grace to start and finish the study. To you be all the glory. I want to thank my mother Boledi Tolo who always prays for me. I wholeheartedly dedicate this thesis to all my family especially my husband, Tshepo and my beloved children Katlego, Mmabatho and Mmatshepo.

I also dedicate this thesis to my friend Matsheliso Mokhele for encouraging and supporting me through this journey and all the people in my life who touched my heart.

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- Above all, I thank God Almighty for keeping me in good health and for sustaining me so I could complete this work

## **ABSTRACT**

Leaners' performance in schools is attributed to several factors that include Teacher Profession Development (TPD) programmes provided by teachers in various schools. Teachers expressed that they do not derive much satisfaction from them. Consequently, teachers continue to use their old, ineffective methods of teaching. Informally, teachers have referred to challenges around resources, time, and expertise of trainers and modes of implementation as contributing to their dissatisfaction in the programmes. This study sought to investigate the perceptions of teachers on the TPD programmes carried out in schools by the TPD facilitators. The study was conducted using the qualitative research approach which allowed for an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under review. Interpretive research paradigm was adopted as well as the case study research design. Six schools were purposefully selected in the district understudy; a teacher was picked to represent each school chosen. Data was collected through individual interviews. In the same vein, data collected in the interviews was deemed sufficient and rich by the researcher to conclude the project. Data was analysed and presented in themes and categories which enabled the researcher to cluster similar responses from the participants. The main findings of this study revealed that: teachers have different perceptions on the importance of TPD programmes, they also indicated that strategies such as more training time, use of technological devices during TPD training and teachers involvement in curriculum development are important in enhancing TPD programmes. The study recommended that principals should organise training seminars and workshops on the application of discipline strategies/methods, management strategies and intervention programmes.

**Keywords:** Teachers, professional development, training and programmes

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## **ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

AO - Area Office

CPD - Continuous Professional Development

CPTD - Continuing Professional Teachers Development

DoE - Department of Education

EMIS - Education Management and Information Systems

HOD - Head of Department

ICT - Information and Communications Technology

M Ed - Master of Education

Mrs - Missus

NW - North West

PD - Professional Development

Prof - Professor

QCA - Qualitative Content Analysis

SACE - South African Council of Educators

SACMEQ- Southern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality

SADEC- Southern African Development Community

SGB - School Governing Body

TD - Teacher Development

TPD - Teacher Professional Development

UL - University of Limpopo

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## CHAPTER ONE

### ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

#### 1.1. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Research conducted by Teacher Professional Development (TPD) scholars and the researcher's own experience, have shown that, in spite of teachers attending TPD programmes, very little and in most cases, no change is observed in their professional knowledge, methods, attitude and beliefs, as the teachers still utilize their old ideologies while learners continue to perform poorly (Centre for Educational Research and Training, 2009; SACMEQ, 2005). This observation concurs well with Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2012) finding that most TPD activities fail to achieve the most immediate and significant outcome of any successful TPD, which, according to them, is a positive impact in changing teachers' knowledge and practice. This, in turn, leads to improved learner performance. In fact, there are reports which show that performance and participation of learners in most Rural primary schools in Africa are disturbingly low (Milner, Chimombo, Banda & Mchikoma, 2001; SACMEQ, 2005). Ironically, Ngaka Modiri Molema Education Circuit in the North West Province, where the study will be conducted, is a rural circuit.

The media, as well as the researcher's own experience and informal reports from teachers and learners in South Africa, partly attribute this poor learner performance to teachers' inability to change their values, beliefs and attitudes about their teaching practices even after attending TPD programmes (Centre for Educational Research and Training, 2009; SACMEQ, 2005). In a study on Conditions of Schooling and the Quality of Education in Africa (SACMEQ II), it was reported that teachers do not appreciate a wide range of teaching strategies in their classrooms. The study further revealed that only 26.5% of the sample found in-service courses effective and that the few days spent attending TPD training were just a waste of time, as teachers did not derive any satisfaction from the courses (SACMEQ, 2005).

The report further adds that one possible cause of these poor results could be teachers' inability to teach effectively and detect deficiencies in learners as they learn. Teaching effectively is one of the major skills that TPD programmes emphasize. Mokhele (2011) alludes to this as she attributes low quality of education to a number of factors, including a weak

teaching force. Ogunniyi (2010) contends that unless in-service education is properly provided to teachers, hopes of improving the quality of education cannot be realized. The idea that professional teacher development can foster improvements in teaching is widely accepted. TDP programmes are required by virtually every teacher and they need to participate in programmes consistently (Kennedy, 2016)

The researcher, who also works as a supervisor of student teachers while on practice has come across a number of teachers who have informally expressed a lot of dissatisfaction and concern over how TPD programmes are implemented in their schools. The concerns revolve around issues of resources, time, expertise of trainers and modes of implementation of the TPD programmes, among others. Further, the implementation process of TPD programmes does not take into consideration the issue of the varying contexts of rural and urban schools. However, according to the Education Management and Information Systems (EMIS), rural schools in most countries are the most poorly resourced in terms of materials, equipment and teachers (SACMEQ, 2005). Rural schools have high pupil-to-teacher ratios when compared to urban schools i.e. 97:1 against 51:1 in urban schools (SACNEQ, 2008).

Further, rural schools have limited opportunities for TPD programmes and the general environment in which rural teachers operate is relatively poor (Mokhele, 2013). Hence, in terms of learner performance, it is not surprising that rural schools perform poorly compared to learners in urban schools. SACMEQ (2005) concurs with this when it found that around four times as many learners from schools located in cities reached the minimum level of mastery than learners located in isolated areas.

In line with these concerns, studies have criticised the use of the cascade model in most formal Teacher Professional Development programmes (Dove, 1986; Engelbrecht *et al.*; 2007). They contend that 'cascading' of information results in the 'watering down' and / or misinterpretation of crucial information, hence, the messages become diluted and distorted at each level of the cascade model. Furthermore, the trainers during workshops, especially those involved in the model of training, lack confidence, knowledge and understanding to manage the training process (Engelbrecht *et al.*, 2007). Again, Maistry (2008) concluded that poor design and inadequate resources could limit the impact of school-based TPD. On the other hand, Gold (1998) contends that it is a challenge for school administrators to encourage a culture which ensures that the school is a vibrant learning environment.

If teacher professional development programmes are not achieving what they are meant to achieve and teachers are not changing their practice, the end result is poor participation in the classroom from both teachers and their learners (Maistry, 2008), hence no improvement in learner performance. Most studies on TPD in South Africa have focused on assessing the needs and preferences of teachers for TPD and the general environment in which the teaching and learning process takes place. Little has been done to explore issues of implementation of the TPD programmes. Therefore, this study intends to assess perceptions of teachers of the effectiveness of current teacher professional development programmes being offered in Ngaka Modiri Molema Education Circuit in the North West Province of South Africa.

## **1.2. PROBLEM STATEMENT**

The government of South Africa realizes the role that TPD programmes for teachers play in improving classroom practice and overall learning outcomes in schools (SACMEQ, 2005). TPD in the National Policy attempts to appropriately equip teachers to meet the challenges and demands of a democratic South Africa in the 21<sup>st</sup> century (Department of Education, 2007). It is underpinned by the principle that “teachers are the essential drivers of education” (Department of Education, 2007:3). However, despite the implementation of the TPD programmes, research has shown that teachers have not improved their classroom practices (Centre for Educational Research and Training, 2009; SACMEQ, 2005). As a result, there has been poor learner performance at all levels of the primary education system, particularly in the rural areas, to the extent that the country has not been among the best in international examinations for the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC) Region (SACMEQ, 2005).

The media, as well as informal reports from teachers in South Africa, partly attribute this poor learner performance to the way TPD programmes are implemented. Teachers expressed that they do not derive much satisfaction from them. As a result, teachers continue to use their old, ineffective methods of teaching. Informally, teachers have referred to challenges around resources, time, expertise of trainers and modes of implementation as contributing to their dissatisfaction. The SACMEQ (2005) report also alludes to this when it highlights that teachers found the few days spent attending TPD

programmes as just a waste of time as they were not deriving any satisfaction from the courses (SACMEQ, 2005). This also concurs with Clarke and Hollingsworth's (2002) finding that most of the TPD activities fail to achieve the most immediate and significant outcome of any successful TPD, which makes a positive impact in changing teachers' knowledge and practice. Effective TDP depends on the contextual realities, teachers' construction of meaning, and the availability of time to undertake TPD interventions and activities. So far, it appears that no thorough and conclusive studies to investigate the issues behind the apparent unsatisfactory implementation of the TPD programmes in South Africa have been conducted. Hence, this study intends to assess perceptions of teachers of the effectiveness of current teacher professional development programmes being offered in Ngaka Modiri Molema Education Circuit in the North West Province of South Africa.

### **1.3. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Two literature positions inform this study: social constructivism and literature on PD but the main focus will be on social constructivism. According to social constructivism, individuals (teachers and principals) search for an understanding of the lifeworld in which they live and work (Mokhele, 2013). Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences which are multiple and varied (Mokhele, 2013). The aim of such a study is, therefore, to rely predominantly on participants' views of a particular phenomenon; in this case, TPD. According to social constructivist learning theories, learning is viewed as constructive and learners build and construct new conceptualisations and understandings by using what they already know (Chalmers & Keown 2006; Payne & Payne, 2004).

In light of the above, TPD can be operationalised by means of the social constructivist approach, which recognises the following (Chalmers & Keown 2006; Paavola Lipponen & Hakkarainen, 2004; Wenger, 2007; Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005):

- 1.3.1 *The constructed meaning of knowledge and beliefs:* This is a process whereby individuals discover new knowledge, skills and approaches and then personally interpret their significance and meaning;
- 1.3.2 *The situated nature of cognition:* This aspect recognises the fact that TPD has to be strongly linked to the actual contexts and situations of individual schools. This



is also in line with Engestrom's model of expansive learning, which postulates that human beings do not live in a vacuum, but are embedded in their socio-cultural context (Paavola et al., 2004). As such, their behaviour cannot be understood independently of this context; and

1.3.3 *The importance of ample time:* New developments and change take time to be implemented.

In order to understand any PD initiative, such as TPD, it is necessary to have a clear understanding of PD.

## **1.4. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The purpose of this qualitative interpretive case study is to assess teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of teacher professional development programmes being offered in Ngaka Modiri Molema Education Circuit in the North West Province of South Africa.

The guiding research questions are:

- 1.4.1. How do TPD programme facilitators impart knowledge and skills to the teachers during the continuous professional development (CPD) programme training?
- 1.4.2. What monitoring and support programmes are put in place to ensure that teachers practice what they learn from TPD programmes?
- 1.4.3. What are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of teacher professional development (TPD) programmes offered in their schools in a contextual reality setting?
- 1.4.4. What are the strategies to improve the value of the TPD programmes being offered in schools?

## **1.5. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **1.5.1. Research design**

The researcher employed the qualitative interpretive case study design. According to Taylor and Bogdan (1984), the purpose of the qualitative interpretive research paradigm

is to describe and interpret the phenomena of the world in an attempt to get shared meaning with others. This research paradigm was relevant to this study since the researcher was interested in understanding the subjective experience and perceptions of teachers and school heads regarding the aspect of CPTD. The case study as a design was adopted. Case studies are said to be analyses of persons' events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions, or other systems studied holistically by one or more methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Plano-Clark & Creswell, 2008). The researcher adopted this design so as to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of teachers on the effectiveness of current teacher professional development programmes being offered in their schools. The researcher aimed to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and reasons that governed such behaviour as the study was conducted in a natural setting.

### **1.5.2. Sampling**

In this study, the researcher adopted purposive sampling. The researcher chose six schools using purposive sampling techniques, one teacher per school, making a total of six teachers for the study because they can purposefully inform an understanding of the research problem and central phenomenon in the study (Creswell, 2007). Denscombe (2014) adds that purposive sampling is based on the principle that solicits for the best information by focusing on a relatively small number of cases deliberately selected on the basis of their known attributes (i.e. not through random selection) such as age, ethnicity, occupation, country of origin, membership, nationality and so forth.

### **1.5.3. Data Collection**

In a qualitative approach, tools for data collection include interviews, focus group discussions and observations (Bryman, 2008; Lichtman, 2014; Creswell, 2013). Data in this study was collected through in-depth individual interviews.

#### **1.5.4. Data analysis**

Primary data was analysed using Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA). QCA involves systematically describing the meaning of data by building a coding frame and assigning categories (in the coding frame) to successive parts of the data. These are followed by primary data analysis that involves presentation and interpretation of findings (Ritchie et al., 2014).

This study began the process of data analysis by transcribing *verbatim* audio-taped interviews. The results were cross-checked with the participants. The study then arranged the question numbers on each research instrument to the research question it will answer. The raw data from interviews was coded so as to come up with data sets. Responses were treated according to the research questions they responded to and in the process, came up with data sets X and Y. To facilitate preparation of data sets for the interviews, the study referred back to the transcriptions and cut and paste the data listed under each research question. By so doing, the study was able to compile data sets for each research question and come up with the inductive themes related to each research question. Finally, the data obtained was presented in themes and categories (thematic analysis)

#### **1.5.5. Quality Criteria**

Mason (2013) describes credibility as being parallel to internal validity. In order to enhance the credibility of the research member checks were employed in this study. The researcher attempted to provide credibility in the study in the following four ways: a). Data was collected through individual interviews; b) by including several respondents from two different reference groups within each school site, a diversity of perceptions, of constructed realities of each case, was incorporated; c) the collection of data over a period of two months provided multiple opportunities for triangulation in each case. Data collected over this time period reflected the complexities of the case that would not have been perceptible if the data had been collected over a shorter period of time and at regular meetings with my supervisor; d) during data collection, analysis, and writing of the case

study reports, patterns of meaning, interpretations, and assertions was presented and debated.

#### **1.5.6. Transferability**

Transferability is described as being parallel to external validity. Transferability is relative and depends entirely on the degree to which salient conditions overlap or match. This is mostly verified through “thick” description. According to Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (1993:33), “effective thick description brings the reader vicariously into the context being described.” Before finalizing the study, research results were put through a “consensus stage” where the researcher and the supervisor critically assessed and commented on the results and the format of reporting. It must be remembered that the possibility of generalization is irrelevant in qualitative research because the context of the research is naturalistic and non-repeatable.

#### **1.5.7 Dependability and confirmability**

In order to enhance dependability and confirmability, an on-going audit was conducted as part of the study. As part of the on-going audit, during the data collection, analysis and writing stages of the study, the researcher met regularly with the supervisor to review decisions made and questions that arose; a record of such meetings was kept. The audit trail, “the residue of records stemming from the inquiry” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985:319), for this study, includes records of activities, decisions and concerns which occurred during all the phases of the study. This information was assembled such that it allows for other audits.

The audit trail, along with extensive member checks, input from the supervisor undertaken throughout the data collection, data analysis, and the writing stages of the study, are important techniques to enhance dependability and confirmability of the study.

## **1.6. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY**

The South African government is grappling with the triple challenges of apartheid education legacy, limited resources, and poorly skilled teachers unable to implement constantly changing curriculum. The important debate in scientific studies in the field of basic education have pointed are on the various TPD models that can be used to enhance the skills of teachers in South African schools. However, findings from a systematic literature review in the field of professional development found that successful TPD depends not only on objective analytical models but is also influenced by personal (psychological) factors including motivation and teacher cognition and organisational culture such as collaboration, positive relationships and communication and opportunities for teachers' learning and so forth (Caena, 2011). For TDP programmes to be effective, there is a need for ongoing training. Meaning TDP programmes must not be an event or a once of session, but they must take place on a regular basis and continuously. This study is unique as it provides aspects that can guide decision makers and practitioners in basic education policy formulation and school based practice in enhancing TPD among the teachers. This was done through an indepth interview from the participants to understand from their perceptions about the need to TPD in enhancing teacher development.

## **1.7. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Emmel (2013) explains that every researcher should be ethically sound in order to protect the participants from any physical or psychological harm and treat participants with respect and dignity. In this study, the researcher observed the ethical principles of beneficence, respect for human dignity, fair treatment, self-respect, protection of human rights, benefit and honesty in data processing.

The researcher described the nature of the study as well as the participants' rights to participate or refuse to participate in the study. Participants were informed that they could choose not to answer any questions that they felt uncomfortable in answering. Confidentiality was maintained as no names would be disclosed in the study. Consent forms were issued to participants, indicating their permission to participate in the study. The researcher sought ethical clearance from University of Limpopo, permission from

department of education in Ngaka Modiri Molema Education Circuit (rural) in the North West, the principals of the schools and SGB members to negotiate entry into the field.

## **1.8. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

**Teachers:** A teacher is a person who helps students to acquire knowledge, competence or virtue. A teacher is a role model to which the learners look up to and abide by their instructions.

**Professional development:** Professional development is a process of learning so as to obtain professional credentials such as academic degrees to formal coursework, attending conferences, and informal learning opportunities situated in practice.

## **1.9. PRELIMINARY CHAPTER DIVISION**

### **Chapter 1: Introduction**

The chapter presents the overview of the study, research questions, the aims and objectives of the study and the rationale of the study.

### **Chapter 2: Literature review**

The chapter presents relevant literature on learner misconduct in secondary schools.

### **Chapter 3: Research design**

The chapter presents the methodology and design processes that were used in the study.

### **Chapter 4: Data presentation and analysis**

This chapter focuses on the presentation of data from the findings and analyses and discusses the research findings.

### **Chapter 5: Conclusion and Recommendations**

This chapter provides conclusions and recommendations

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1. INTRODUCTION**

The first chapter outlined an overview of the study by presenting the background and problems attached to the study as well as the research questions and objectives posed for the study. This chapter, therefore, outlines the theoretical framework underpinning the study and reviewed literature in respect of teachers' perceptions of effectiveness of TPD Programmes. Creswell (2013) refers to literature review as a written summary of articles, books, and other documents that describes the past and current state of knowledge about a topic, organizes literature into topics, and documents needed for a proposed study. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) affirm that the review "illuminates the related literature to enable researchers to conserve time, avoid unnecessary repetition and duplication of already existing studies to identify and compare previous studies. Researchers gain more insight in studies through reading through the previous works carried out by other researchers (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Creswell (2008) cites literature review as a written summary of articles, books, and other documents that describes the past and current state of knowledge about a topic, organizes literature into topics, and documents needed for a proposed study. This chapter, therefore, aims at presenting a detailed and critical review of related literature on existing studies that have been carried out by other researchers. This is done in order to revise other views and see what to make of it in this study.

#### **2.2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

According to Botha (2013), theories refer to "ideas and views" which are purposefully formulated to describe a specific scientific knowledge. This means that the theoretical framework does not only describe the structure that can hold or support a theory of a research study, but also introduces and describes the theory that explains why the research problems under study exist. A theoretical framework provides theories that

explain, predict and create an understanding of the phenomena being studied and, in many cases, challenge and extend existing knowledge within the limits of critical bounding assumptions (Swanson, 2013). As indicated in Chapter 1, the study utilised the social constructivism theory. According to social constructivism, individuals (teachers and principals) search for an understanding of the lifeworld in which they live and work (Mokhele, 2013). Individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences which are multiple and varied (Mokhele, 2013). The aim of the social constructivist theory is to rely predominantly on participants' views of a particular phenomenon; in this case, TPD. According to social constructivist learning theories, learning is viewed as constructive and learners build and construct new conceptualisations and understandings by using what they already know (Chalmers & Keown, 2006; Payne & Payne, 2004). This means that TPD can be operationalised by means of the social constructivist approach, which recognises the following (Chalmers & Keown 2006; Paavola Lipponen & Hakkarainen, 2004; Wenger, 2007; Hodkinson & Hodkinson, 2005).

### **2.2.1. The constructed meaning of knowledge and beliefs**

This is a process whereby individuals discover new knowledge, skills and approaches and then personally interpret their significance and meaning Österholm (2010) assert that individuals in the field of education strive to analyse and discover new knowledge, choose any of the knowledge to construct ideas in teaching. McLeod and McLeod (2012) argued that sometimes it might seem impossible for educators to create new knowledge from what they have discovered, there is a need for collaborations and development of teachers to explain how new ideas can be created to attain the needs of the learners. Thomas (2010) confirms that constructivism is a philosophy of learning based on the premise that knowledge is constructed by the individual through his or her interactions with the environment, including other learners.

Additionally, educators in the study of belief need to have a pure constructivist mind in the content they teach, knowledge they impact on the learners, classroom behaviour, solving activities and describing and explaining problems (Speer, 2005). Thus, depending on what social community one belongs to, one can have different views on what is seen as knowledge, what is seen as construction of knowledge and belief (Österholm, 2010).



Bonanno (2012) affirms that for educators to be able to socially construct ideas and knowledge, information and belief should be embedded in them so they can be able to realise their potentials and ability to construct new ideas in the classroom.

### **2.2.2 The situated nature of cognition**

This aspect recognises the fact that TPD has to be strongly linked to the actual contexts and situations of individual schools. This is also in line with Engestrom's model of expansive learning, which postulates that human beings do not live in a vacuum, but are embedded in their socio-cultural context and ability to construct and impact knowledge on others (Paavola et al., 2004). As such, their behaviour cannot be understood independently of this context. Roth and Jornet (2013) assert that a new way of ensuring that the TDP achieves its aim is theorizing human performance through a continuous human development and increase in level of cognition. Brown *et al.* (2018) added that educators are socially curious beings, and many learn through interaction with others. This social interaction involves context, culture, activity, discourse, people and so on. Understanding the situated nature of cognition, Dewey (2010) mentioned that the social environment of the teacher should be educative in its effect in the degree in which an individual shares or participates in some conjoint activity. This will enable the educators to effectively construct meanings from the TDP and apply them in their areas of expertise in teaching.

### **2.2.3. The importance of ample time for implementation of constructed ideas**

New developments and change take time to be implemented. For example, the current education system after the post-apartheid requires educators to be lifelong learners, integrate knowledge into learning with real life experiences (Molapo, 2017). As such, the new shift will require more time and development training for the educators. Thomas (2010) emphasizes the importance of time in implementing the constructed ideas obtained by the education. To him, the time should be realistic and the implementation should not be delayed.

Therefore, in order to understand perceptions of teachers on the TPD programmes, it is important to utilise constructive social theory to be able to understand from the teachers viewpoints how the TDP impact in their teaching and learning.

The next section provides an overview of the TPD program.

### **2.3 OVERVIEW OF TPD PROGRAMS**

Day (1999) explains Professional Development as all natural learning experiences and those conscious and planned activities which are intended to be of direct or indirect benefit to the individual, group or school and which contribute, through these, to the quality of education in the classroom. The TPD program is a process of innovation where the feedback of the teachers is regarded as significant to provide an improved product, service, process, business models, or policies in an existing context or adapting them from one context to another to achieve desired impact (Botha & Herselman, 2018). TPD courses are developed for teachers in schools so as to improve their innovation and teaching skills and an observed enhancement in classroom practice (Botha, 2014). Qualitative professional development programmes are the key components in almost every modern proposal for improving education (Guskey, 2002).

Professional development develops the teacher's skills, knowledge, expertise and other professional behaviour (DoE, 2007). The roles and functions of every school in many countries is to ensure that the teachers are professionally developed, and the items taught in TPD programs can be effectively implemented for a better learners performance (OECD, 2005). Teachers are expected to teach in increasingly multicultural classrooms to: place greater emphasis on integrating learners with special learning needs in their classrooms; make more effective use of information and communication technologies for teaching; engage more in planning within evaluative and accountability frameworks; and do more to involve parents in schools (OECD, 2005).

Therefore,

*“Effective professional development is on-going, includes training, practice and feedback, and provides adequate time and follow-up support. Successful programmes involve teachers in learning activities that are similar to ones they will use with their students, and encourage the development of teachers’ learning*

*communities. There is growing interest in developing schools as learning organisations, and in ways for teachers to share their expertise and experience more systematically” (OECD, 2009:49).*

TPD is most successful when teachers are actively involved and reflect on their own teaching practice. When teachers’ developmental activities are well coordinated and sustained leadership and support are present, the TPD system essentially strives to contribute to the improvement of teacher’s teaching skills. It does so by equipping them to effectively execute their essential and demanding tasks. This is done to continually improve their professional competence and performance to enable and empower them by improving their professional confidence, learning area/subject knowledge, skills and classroom management, to improve their professional status and assist them in identifying suitable professional development (PD) programmes that may contribute towards their professional growth (Department of Education, 2007).

According to the European Commission (2012), knowledge about teaching and learning has changed tremendously, taking into consideration the time the experienced teacher now takes to acquire initial teacher training. In-service TPD is a mechanism which the DoE uses to update the skills of teachers in the country. TPD programmes are offered using formal approaches (courses and workshops) and informal approaches (with other teachers or by participation in extracurricular activities) (OECD, 2013).

The South African Council for Educators (SACE) statutory body for professional teachers has an overall responsibility for quality assurance, implementation and management of the continuous professional teacher development (CPTD) (DoE, 2007). All teachers registered by SACE have to earn PD points by selecting approved PD activities that meet development needs (Department of Education, 2007).

The policy framework identifies four types of TPD activities, namely, school-driven activities, employer-driven activities, qualification-driven activities and others offered by approved organisations. A distinction is also made between compulsory and self-selected

PD programmers. The former are paid by the education authority involved, while teachers may receive bursaries for self-selected PD Programmes (Department of Education, 2007:3).

According to OECD (2009), the TPD programs includes aspects such as:

- courses/workshops (e.g. on subject matter or methods and/or other education-related topics);
- education conferences or seminars (at which teachers and/or researchers present their research results and discuss education problems);
- qualification programme (e.g. a degree programme);
- observation visits to other schools;
- participation in a network of teachers formed specifically for the professional development teachers;
- individual or collaborative research on a topic of professional interest; and
- reading professional literature (e.g. journals, evidence-based papers, thesis papers); and

It remains a concern that teachers in some schools do not fully get the majority of these programs. Others indicated that the TPD do not cater for all aspects of the programs (OECD, 2009).

#### **2.4. THE EXTENT OF TPD PROGRAMMES BEING OFFERED IN SCHOOLS**

The post-2015 development agenda for schools is focused on the ability of schools raising quality teachers for good teaching and learning (UNESCO, 2014). There is increasing consensus that African teacher education needs to focus on more effective and culturally appropriate pedagogical practices, both in the classroom, and in TPD initiatives. However, prevailing TPD models tend to focus on one-off ‘top-down’ teacher development ‘interventions’ that are now recognised as being ineffective (Moon et al., 2013; Bett, 2016). This means that schools offered TPD programmes but do not cover required aspects needed for proper teacher development.

Orr *et al.* (2013) mentioned that an ongoing classroom trialling and sufficient scaffolding sustained are favourable regarding cost, scalability and effectiveness of TPD programmes. TPD must recognise “everyday realities of the classroom, and motivation and capacity of teachers to deliver in the classroom” (Hardman *et al.*, 2011). Guskey (2002) indicates that TPD is important, and its main purpose is to facilitate the enhancement of teacher quality through engagement in a systematic programme geared to bring about change in three main areas.

Various researchers on TPD programmes consistently make the point that many TPD programmes are ineffective and will continue in this vein unless these programmes are realigned to the needs of teachers (Hunzicker, 2010). Guskey (2002) also indicates that the majority of TPD programmes are ineffective because they do not take into account two crucial factors: (1) what motivates teachers to engage in professional development and (2) the process by which change in teachers typically occurs. Field (2011) warns that unless the TPD programme involves a systematic process of reflection, its impact on professional learning is compromised, and this, in turn, compromises the sustainability of any change on the teachers’ part.

Van Niekerk (2009) mentioned that the provision of TPD programmes should be emphasised in schools with more emphasis Professional development, change in teachers’ classroom practices, change in student learning outcomes and change in teachers’ beliefs and attitudes. This will help the teachers to understand the process of teaching and learning and aspects that inculcate teaching and learning in school.

## **2.5 CHARACTERISTICS OF EFFECTIVE TPD LEARNING**

Effective TPD is seen as structured learning that leads to drastic change in teachers’ knowledge and practices and improvement in learning outcomes (Darling-Hammond *et al.*, 2017). Thus, formal PD represents a subset of the range of experiences that may result in professional learning.

Publications of TPD in the last decade have shed light on effective TPD programmes that develop teachers’ knowledge and skills, improve teaching practice and raise learners’

performance (Desimone et al., 2006; Wanzare & Ward, 2000). In support of this, Hirsh's study on effective PD reveals two important characteristics of TPD learning: (2) Individual beliefs of a teacher play an important role in the development process and (3) a detailed plan for introducing new content and practices and facilitations of follow up action is required.

Traditional approaches of TPD included: workshops, seminars and conferences that adopted a technical and simplistic view of teaching and believed that teachers' knowledge and skills could be improved by using experts from outside the school system (Boyle et al., 2005; Lee, 2005). These proved not to be effective because they did not sufficiently change teachers' subject knowledge or pedagogical skills (Newborn & Huberty, 2004), which explains why some authors suggest that the provision and sponsoring of ineffective TPD programmes that do not lead to the improvement of teaching and learning should be discontinued (Mundry, 2005; Desimone et al.; 2006). Darling-Hammond *et al*, (2017) identified seven characteristics of effective TPD. Specifically, we find that it should be:

- Content focused;
- Incorporate active learning utilizing adult learning theory;
- Support collaboration, typically in job-embedded contexts;
- Use models and modelling of effective practice;
- Provide coaching and expert support;
- Offer opportunities for feedback and reflection; and
- Have sustained duration.

In addition, effective TPD will enable teachers to analyse any subject taught, teaching and improve pedagogy, illustrates job-embedded and content-focused (Roth et al., 2011). In a program studied by Allen *et al*. (2011), teachers collaborated with a one-on-one coach as an example of an effective TPD. TDP programmes that are successfully implemented are those that changes teachers attitudes and beliefs. They believe it works because they have seen it work, and that experience shapes their attitudes and believes. This, according to Guskey (1989), is the key element in teacher development. Guskey (1989) further states that significant change in teachers attitudes and believes becomes clearly evident in the improvement of the outcomes of their learners. The next section of the study will review literatures relating to the purpose of TDP.

## 2.6. PURPOSE OF CONTINUED TDP

Continuous growth of professional knowledge and skills is an essential part of improvement in all professions, and teaching is no exception (Boyle Lamprinou & Boyles, 2005; Fletcher & Zuber-Skerritt, 2007). In education, it focuses particularly on the teacher as the key to improving learner performance (Desimore, Smith & Cleno, 2006; Knight & Wiseman, 2005; Gold, 1998). King and Newman (2001:86) believe that as “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 assumed that improving teacher’s knowledge, skills and dispositions is one of the most critical steps of improving student achievement”. It is very important to, therefore, find appropriate TPD approaches to ensure that all teachers, even experienced ones, are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills for improving learners’ performance (Hirsh, 2005; Shaw, 2003).

The following are identified by the DoE (2018) as the general purpose of TPD:

- Professional development transforms teachers into better and more apt educators by enabling them to create relevant and tailored course instructions for today's students;
- Helps to create better learning outcomes;
- Good implementation plans;
- Teachers learn better ways to teach;
- Teachers develop better organising and planning skills;
- Teachers gain more knowledge and other insight; and
- To create lifelong learning for teachers.

Hirsh (2005) asserts that education is a never-ending process that does not stop after earning a degree and starting a career. Through continuing education, career-minded individuals can constantly improve their skills and become more proficient at their jobs. Therefore, it is of utmost importance that TPD programs are organised to improve the knowledge of the teachers. James et al. (2013) identified the following as a reason for teachers to participate in TPD programmes:

**Table 2.1. Reasons for participating in TPD**

<b>Professional Enhancement</b>	<b>Personal and Pragmatic</b>
Enhancement of skills	Personal development
Improvement in their collaborations and teaching skills with students	Accreditation/certification for promotion
Attaining a better outcome	Gaining better student subject pass rates

The next section will review various factors mitigating successful implementation of TPD programmes.

## **2.7. FACTORS MITIGATING AGAINST SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF TPD**

In the first two decades, TPD developments were a one-size-fits-all model; this is now changing to more continuing, content and pedagogically-focused programmes (Brandt, 2003; Mundry, 2005; Silverman, 2011). The importance of teachers' experience and knowledge with regard to student learning is increasingly being realised (Knight & Wiseman, 2005). It is also unfortunate that most TPDs concentrate rather on the content or on teaching methods said (Van Eekaln Vermunt & Boshuizen, 2006)

Research has also indicated that many continuous professional development (PD) programmes for teachers are unsatisfactory and have not met intended goals (Boyle, 2005; Newborn & Huberty, 2004). Steyn (2008) blames ineffective TPD programmes on research, since many programmes are based on faulty assumptions of such research, or even no research at all.

For education to be transformed in South Africa, it is necessary for teachers to be appropriately equipped to meet its evolving challenges and needs (DoE, 2007). The President's education initiative research project reports that the most critical challenge for teacher education in South Africa is the *limited conceptual knowledge of many teachers* (Department of Education, 2007).



The Ministerial Committee of Rural Education (2005) also *identified teachers' limited access* to TPD (Department of Education, 2007). The National Policy Framework 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). Its ultimate aim is to enable learners to learn well and equip themselves for further learning and for satisfying lives as productive citizens.

Botha and Herselman (2018) mention lack of integration of technology in the TPD programme as a factor mitigating the success of the program. Technology and, in this instance, mobile tablets are often regarded as the magic wand needed to facilitate technology-enhanced, student-centred teaching environments. Teachers should be exposed in the TPD on how to use these gadgets in teaching learners to make learning interesting. In those cases, the TPD program should include some kind of training component, the focus might be on computer literacy, rather than how to use the technology as a tool for teaching and learning (Were et al., 2011).

The next section will review methods used by TPD programme facilitator to impart knowledge and skills to the teachers.

## **2.8. METHODS USED BY TPD PROGRAMME FACILITATORS TO IMPART KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO TEACHERS**

Literature review that the methods used by the TPD program facilitators depends on the subject or department of the teacher. For example, science teachers need to be exposed to pedagogical and content knowledge relevant to the disciplines they will teach. Many teachers training colleges do not have the educational background necessary for teaching the existing teacher training curriculum effectively (Colburn & Clough, 2017). Unless science TPD facilitators take a thoughtful and strategic systemic approach to reform efforts the result will be poor (O-saki, Hosea & Ottevanger, 2014).

To make science learning meaningful, teaching should be explained as something that engages students with performing tasks, investigations, discoveries, inquiry and problem-solving (Tilya, 2003). For science teachers to teach in new ways, a regular re-education

process is necessary to transform their knowledge and skills pertaining to the subject matter, pedagogy, their conceptions of how knowledge is constructed and their views on learning (O-saki, 2004).

A large number of international studies on professional development practices of science teachers was conducted. It was found that TPD facilitators emphasized that teachers need more continuous support in improving their knowledge and understanding the chemistry, physics and other science subjects (Alhaggass, 2015). For example, in order to evaluate the effectiveness of training programs of science teachers, Asunta (2007) investigated different types of in-service science courses for primary teachers in Finland. The researcher reported that primary teachers felt they needed more continuous support in improving their knowledge and understanding of the subject, especially in chemistry and physics, and requested more hands-on activity planning. Other teachers in different fields of study, at whatever level and irrespective of their geographical location, are faced with numerous challenges (Kitta, 2004).

He further argues that TPD facilitators device different strategies which are known by the teachers to ensure that the required knowledge is attained. Countries like Netherlands, Singapore and Sweden require at least 100 hours of teacher professional development training for every teacher per year. This is in addition to regularly scheduled time for common planning and other teacher collaborations (Barber & Mourshed, 2007). It is possible to argue that the TPD program should be incorporated in all subjects across and the facilitators of these programmes should be made readily available. This speaks directly in answering the first research question of the study explored in detail after data collection. The researcher identified science and commerce teachers and investigated from them TPD facilitators' methods used to impact knowledge to teachers.

The next section will review various ways to improve TPD programmes

## **2.9. WAYS TO IMPROVE THE TPD PROGRAMMES**

Improving TPD programmes starts with the principal as the instructional leader in the school. Van Niekerk (2009) mentioned that principals should focus on improving effectiveness of teachers. Provision and promotion of appropriate TPD opportunities can

lead to improvement of teaching and learning practices, allowing teachers to grow professionally by extending and renewing their knowledge and skills. A way that a principal can provide and sustain supportive contexts for teachers is through TPD as it influences teachers' confidence levels, their inclination toward trying out new innovative ideas, as well as their attitude towards the teaching profession and creativity in teaching (Arnold et al, 2006).

Barrera Pedemonte (2016) indicates that improving TPD follows collaborative methods between teachers and the facilitator. He indicates that TPD facilitators need to have the requisite skills in ensuring that the programme is adequately carried out. TPD creates a supportive environment, so principals should encourage and create TPD opportunities where teachers can continuously share their expertise, success, frustrations and knowledge with one another (Theroux, 2014). Therefore, principals should assist teachers by providing the necessary time, resources, support and encouragement to enable them to work

A study conducted by Fargo (2010) showed that the TPD programmes are effective when the teacher also shows a positive effect in improving their content and methodological teaching strategies. Van Niekerk (2009) mentioned that the TPD programme should be continuous for teachers to ensure proper development of teaching. Consequently, well-organized learning activities and teacher instructions during TPD programmes could increase the motivation of a learner. This is because self-determined learning occurs when a learning activity supports fulfilment of basic psychological needs or development of interest (Field, 2011).

TPD programmes can also be improved if teachers are able to inculcate reflection after training programmes. Most importantly, the process of reflection involves: description, reflective questioning and redeveloping practice theory (Woolgar, 2008). Reflection can be done by looking inwards to consider how experiences have influenced our thinking and learning, and how what was learnt in the training can influence teaching and learning.

During TALIS 2008, it was discovered that beginner teachers across different continents experience various work-related challenges (OECD, 2008). Beginning teachers still focused on measuring such challenges as classroom discipline, motivating learners' interest, relationship with parents, organisation of classwork, supplies of support material, value of school leadership and workloads causing shortage of preparation time (OECD, 2013). Although these problem areas are associated with teachers in general and not just new teachers, special attention and support on TPD programmes should be given to new teachers (Zeru, 2013).

## **2.10. SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER**

This chapter presented a review of relevant literatures on the perceptions of teachers on the TPD programmes offered for the teachers in schools. The study adopted the social constructivist theory. This theory emphasizes the need for teachers to construct new ideas and meaning from what was taught in the TPD programmes into realities in the classroom. Various aspects such as an overview of TPD programmes, purpose of TPD programmes, characteristics of TPD programmes, methods used by TPD facilitators to teach teachers, the extent of TPD practice in schools and ways to improve TPD programmes in schools were explored. It was found in literature that TPD programmes are widely organised for all schools. However, the programmes do not fully cover a large number of aspects that are important for teachers for their professional development.

The next chapter will look into the research design and methodology used in obtaining empirical findings for the study.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH APPROACH, DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY**

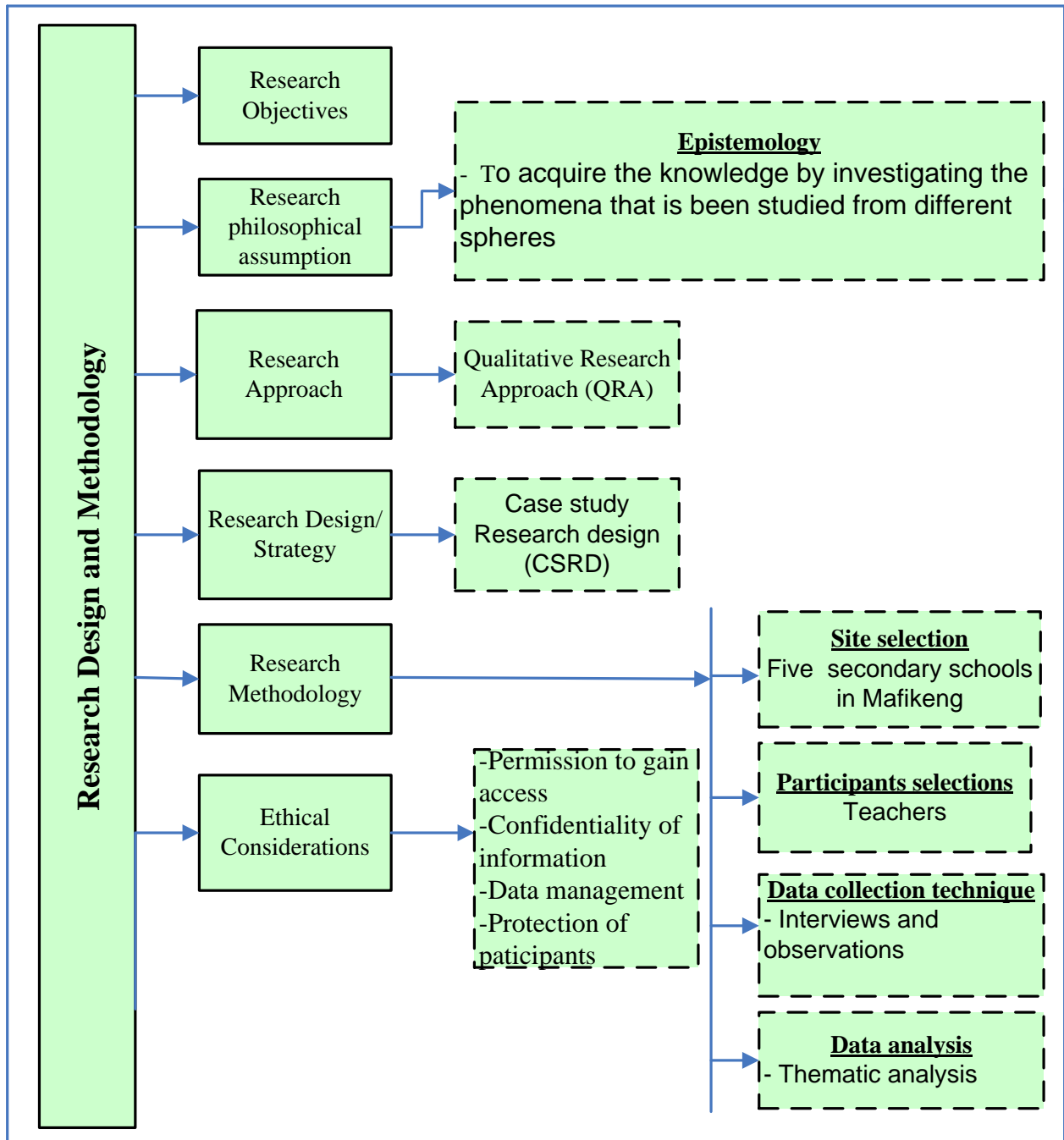
#### **3.1. INTRODUCTION**

The previous chapter reviewed relevant literature for in-depth understanding of what other authors have written regarding teachers' perceptions on effectiveness of TPD Programmes. In order to actualise the study objectives, this current chapter will provide a detailed explanation of the adopted research design and research methodology. Among aspects covered are: the research paradigm and philosophical assumption, research approach, research design, research methodology, site selection, participant and sampling selection, data collection technique and data analysis.

#### **3.2. CHAPTER MAP**

The chapter map, as presented in Figure 3.1 below, embodies the flow of different topics from the research aim of the study down to the methodology chosen. This enables easy understanding of the relationships existing among different topics when viewed at a glance. Supporting this assertion, Novak and Cañas (2008) and Chukwuere (2015) suggest that the ideology of inventing a chapter map is to vividly understand and showcase a concept and structure under study. Murray (2015) affirms that a document map represents an association of topics under study using diagrams which enable the reader to have a clearer view on how the research is carried out.

**Figure 3.1. The chapter map**



*Adapted from Oates (2008), Mavetera (2011) and Creswell (2014)*

### **3.3. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

As indicated in Chapter one, the study objectives were to:

- 3.3.1. Determine way(s) in which TPD programme facilitators impart knowledge and skills to teachers during the continuous professional development (CPD) programme training.
- 3.3.2. Identify monitoring and support programmes put in place to ensure that teachers practice what they learn from TPD programmes.
- 3.3.3. Identify teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of teacher professional development (TPD) programmes offered in their schools in a contextual setting.
- 3.3.4. Determine the strategies to improve TPD programmes

In attaining the research objective for this study, it is important to identify the research approach, design and methodology on which findings were attained.

### **3.4. RESEARCH PHILOSOPHICAL ASSUMPTION**

It is imperative for researchers to understand their philosophical standpoint before starting a research because their philosophical stance will generally sharpen their study through making appropriate decisions regarding methods to be used (Saunders *et al.*, 2016). In affirmation, Terreblanche *et al.* (2006) posit that a research paradigm comprises all the systems linking the practice and philosophy along the axis of ontology, epistemology and methodology that underpins the nature of research that the researcher intends to undertake.

Philosophy means the use of abstract ideas and beliefs that inform the research. Philosophical assumptions are typically the first ideas in developing a study, but how they relate to the overall process of research remains a mystery (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). Identification of philosophical assumptions at the start of the research process is critically important as it determines the choice of the research design. According to Yuli Rahmawati (2008), there are two most common assumptions that exist in research, which are defined as follows:

**Ontological assumptions:** This relates to the nature of reality and its characteristics. When researchers conduct research, they are embracing the idea of multiple realities. Epistemological assumptions: This interpretive is used to acquire the knowledge by investigating the phenomena that has been studied from different spheres as investigations from various phenomena can result in many interpretations (Yuli Rahmawati's Weblog, 2008).

For the purpose of this research, the researcher made use of the epistemology (interpretive) assumptions as the strategy of enquiry for the study. The use of interpretive assumptions enabled the researcher to acquire more knowledge by an in-depth investigation on teachers' perceptions on effectiveness of TPD Programmes. In attaining the chosen philosophical assumption, the researcher performed an empirical analysis and investigation of various aspects related to TPD programmes in schools.

### **3.5. RESEARCH APPROACH**

The qualitative research approach was used in this study. Qualitative research approach constitutes varieties of methodological approaches that enable a researcher to learn about people's social world and materials (Creswell, 2009). It brings a researcher closer to the participant by fostering an exploration of their perceptions, experience and values for a better understanding of the research topic. Qualitative research also allows researchers to ask questions using "WHAT", "WHY" and "HOW" about a phenomenon while working directly with participants for first-hand information. Hancock *et al.* (2009) posit that qualitative research approaches guide researchers towards in-depth understanding of the social world by studying individuals. Creswell (2009:175) adds that qualitative researchers use multiple techniques for data collection which helps in gathering in-depth data.

Furthermore, McCusker and Gunaydin (2015) state that qualitative research approach explores perceptions, behaviours and the overall meaning people ascribe to things happenings around them to generate word data as research data. Explicitly, Moule and Goodman (2009) state that a qualitative research approach enables close proximity



between the researcher and participants and generates word data instead of numbers; such word data can be interpreted in order to arrive at the participant's authentic meanings regarding the research questions.

The qualitative research approach was viewed as best for this study because it enabled the researcher to generate in-depth data regarding the study. In addition, a qualitative approach enabled the researcher to engage with the participants on a one-on-one basis, which fosters answering of the research questions.

According to Borg and Gall (2011), the qualitative method has a number of advantages, among which the following are the most prominent to the study:

- In-depth understanding of the situation and meaning for those involved (Henning, 2004);
- Qualitative research is an effort to avoid the imposition of a previous theory or hypothesis upon the subjects of the research (Lemmer, 2007);
- Participants can narrate their experience more efficiently when asked to do so in their own words in interviews (Henning, 2014). In this study, the teachers are expected to narrate their perceptions on the impact of TPD programmes in schools;
- In qualitative research design, research problems become research questions based on prior research experience;
- The selected setting can be as small as one; and
- Data collection involves interview, observation, and/or archival content data.

### **3.6. RESEARCH DESIGN**

The researcher utilised the case study design. Case studies are said to be analyses of persons' events, decisions, periods, projects, policies, institutions or other systems that are studied holistically by one or more methods (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Plano-Clark & Creswell, 2008). According to Taylor and Bogdan (1984), the purpose of a case study design is to describe and interpret the phenomena of the world in an attempt to get shared

meaning with others in a specific setting. This research design was relevant to this study since the researcher was interested in understanding subjective experiences and perceptions of teachers and school heads regarding the aspect of TPD programs. The researcher sought to gather an in-depth understanding of human behaviour and reasons that govern such behaviour as the study was conducted in a natural setting.

### **3.7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

McMillian and Schumacher (2010) define the term *methodology* as a design whereby the researcher selects data collection and analysis procedures to investigate a specific problem. Furthermore, Wilson (2009) posits that research methodology demonstrates the linkage between the adopted research method for data collection and analysis in order to answer research questions. In undertaking research, there has to be a method used to collect and analyse data. It also includes the research approach that will be in the actual research. It shows the site selected for the study, participants that will be used for the study, methods for data collection, analysis of the results and other ethical considerations for the study.

#### **3.7.1. Site selection**

Marshal and Rossman (2011) are of the opinion that no researcher can, at any point in time, study the entire site or location. Adding to this, Creswell (2009) posits that finding the appropriate location to study is the most important step towards a research. Maree (2010) argues that researchers when selecting a site for their study should endeavour to ascertain if the study site is suitable for the intended research. This is imperative because site selection can go a long way in actualising the study objectives. Furthermore, Creswell and Clark (2007:118) ascertained that site selection should be among the primary interests of a research prior to a research study.

The sites for this proposed research consist of all secondary schools in the Mafikeng Area Office (AO). The Mafikeng area office is in one of the local municipalities in Ngaka Modiri Molema District (NMMD) of the North West province. This AO was selected for this study because of its proximity to the researcher as well as its productivity among teachers (Municipalities of South Africa, 2016). There are 36 secondary schools in Mafikeng AO, so a purposeful sample was used to select only 6 schools from the secondary. Cohen *et al.* (2011:156) refer to purposive sampling as a non-probability sampling method which involves purposive or deliberate selection of a particular site or participants from a sample relevant to the study. Denscombe (2014) adds that purposive sampling is based on the principle that solicits the best information by focusing on a relatively small number of cases deliberately selected on the basis of their known attributes (i.e. not through random selection) such as age, ethnicity, occupation, country of origin, membership, nationality and so forth. In this case, the schools were selected based on the following criteria:

- The schools should offer TPD programmes; and
- Be readily available for the researcher.

### **3.7.2. Participant selection**

Purposive sampling was used to select one teacher from each one of the six schools selected. The researcher purposely selected teachers who have been in the system for not less than 10 years. This means that a total of six (6) teachers participated in the study.

### **3.7.3 Data Collection**

In a qualitative approach, tools for data collection include: interviews, focus group discussions and observations (Bryman, 2008; Lichtman, 2014; Creswell, 2013). Data in this study was collected through in-depth individual interviews with participants and observation of TPD workshops. An interview is a “direct personal contact” data collection method from participants who are asked questions relating to the research problem (Bless & Smith, 2000). According to Rosenblatt (2014), an interview is an arranged meeting aimed at sourcing information from participants in the fact-finding phase of research.

Rosenblat (2014) identified seven steps that should be followed to conduct an effective interview on the perceptions of teachers on TPD programmes carried out in schools.

These steps are to:

**(1) Determine the people to interview:** relevant participants for the interview should be selected with the right questions; for this study, the researcher selected teachers, as indicated earlier;

**(2) Establish the objective for the interview:** Specific objectives of the interview and area of interest must be identified and listed. In conducting interviews with the participants, the researcher ensured that the research questions and objectives that have been outlined in this study were answered;

**(3) Develop interview questions:** Well-structured questions should be framed to assist the interviewer to remain on track in the process. Interviewees were also allowed to express their views outside the listed questions;

**(4) Prepare for the interview:** the researcher ensured that in conducting interviews, the interview time, letting the interviewee know the duration of the interview, the venue, the date, (possibly through email) are all emphasised;

**(5) Conduct the interview:** The interview process began with a personal introduction, project description, interview objectives, after which questions were asked as arranged. At this point, the researcher ensured that interviewees were given enough time to think before responding to each question and established good rapport in the process;

**(6) Document the interview:** Note-taking is necessary during the interview but has advantages and disadvantages; only important things are noted down and kept to a minimum; and

**(7) Evaluating the interview:** at this stage, the researcher identifies all biases, for example, the interviewee might be shy or try to protect his or her personal image/information or give incorrect information.

Nevertheless, there are different kinds of interviews such as the structured, semi-structured and unstructured interview. This study used structured interviews. In a

structured interview, the interviewer uses a set of pre-determined questions which are short and clearly worded; in most cases, these questions are closed and require precise answers in the form of a set of options read out or presented on paper (Preece *et al.*, 2012). This type of interviewing is easy to conduct and is most appropriate when goals of the study are clearly understood and specific questions are identified.

#### **3.7.4. Interview process**

The interview conducted took approximately 25-20 minutes of the participants' time. The researcher explained to participants the process of the interview, including the need for signing the voluntary informed consent forms, sought permission to use a tape recorder for the section and requested to see all documents relating to learner discipline. The researcher commenced the interview by running the tape recorder, with a pen and notebook ready while reading out the questions on the interview guide. The participants were made to understand that the answers have no *Yes* or *No*, so anything they answered was assumed to be to the best of their knowledge.

#### **3.7.5 Data analysis**

Qualitative data analysis consists of gathering relevant documents from a selected research site and interpreting its contents as they relate to the study, thereby making out real meanings (Creswell, 2009). Furthermore, Maree (2010) maintained that data analysis involves the analysis of both primary and secondary documents which can be helpful in revealing answers to research problems.

In analysing the data collected from interviews, thematic analysis was used. Creswell (2014) attests that thematic analysis enables the qualitative researcher to analyse data in themes and categories. In so doing, data collected in this study was analysed in themes and categories. Themes reflected the research questions/objective while the categories are participants' responses or answers to selected themes. This enabled the researcher to present findings in a way that is understandable to answer the research questions posed for the study.

Creswell (2014) argues that qualitative data analysis should cut across data collection and write-up of the research findings. The analysis was carried out in a distinct way that enabled the researcher to make sense of the participants' voice recordings, text and images.

In analysing the data, the following was done:

- Tape-recorded data were transcribed carefully and arranged with written notes taken at the time of discussion;
- Non-English words were translated into English;
- Thematic or content analysis was employed to describe exploratory ideas obtained from data. Through this process, information was reduced into manageable chunks or themes; and
- Finally, data was presented in themes and categories, which enabled the researcher to cluster related themes and categories tighter in answering the research questions.

The process of data analysis began by transcribing *verbatim* audio-taped interviews, whereby the results were cross-checked with participants. The study then arranged the question numbers on each research instrument to the research question it would answer. The raw data from interviews was coded to come up with data sets. Responses were treated according to research questions they were responding to and in the process, data sets X and Y emerged.

### **3.7.6. Trustworthiness**

Trustworthiness is a set of criteria devised for judging the quality of a research (Bryman, 2012). Brink *et al.* (2012) and Lekganyane (2011) are of the opinion that a qualitative researcher's prioritizes the use of dependability, credibility, consistency, and transferability over-reliability and validity, stating that reliability and validity are mostly in favour of quantitative studies. Furthermore, they maintained that ascertaining study trustworthiness is for the purpose of measuring methodological consistency and the

general research relevance. Marshall and Rossman (2011:40), in affirmation, encouraged qualitative researchers to member-check findings with participants, spend prolonged time in the study site and triangulate data to ensure authenticity of their findings. In addition, Kemparaj and Chavan (2013:94) support Connelly (2016:435) by indicating that there are four criteria in ascertaining trustworthiness of qualitative research, which are: Credibility, Confirmability, Transferability and Reliability.

For this study, trustworthiness was ascertained through:

- Prolonged engagement in the study site: this enabled the researcher in obtaining in-depth and broad information regarding the study, thereby enhancing the study credibility;
- Using thick descriptions: this was ensured through deeper description of the case under investigation and setting up themes in order to properly convey the participant's authentic meaning;
- Peer review: employment of peer reviews allowed for in-depth description of the data by an independent person, generating themes which are compared to those of the researcher and enhanced the authenticity of the findings;
- Participants cross-checked their responses to ensure that these correlate with information that they provided to the researcher;
- Discussion of identified themes: Identified themes and categories from data were discussed with the participants to ensure accuracy and dependability; and
- Results from field notes, interviews and the research diary were triangulated with regard to common themes to provide reliable findings.

### ***Transferability***

Transferability is described as being parallel to external validity. Transferability is relative and depends entirely on the degree to which salient conditions overlap or match. This is mostly verified through "thick" descriptions. According to Erlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (1993), "an effective thick description brings the reader vicariously into the context being described." Before the study is finalized, research results were put through a "consensus stage" where the researcher and the supervisor critically assessed and

commented on the result and format of reporting. It must be remembered that the possibility of generalization is irrelevant in qualitative research because the context of the research is naturalistic and non-repeatable.

### ***Dependability and confirmability***

In order to enhance dependability and confirmability, an on-going audit was conducted as part of the study. As part of the on-going audit, during data collection, analysis and writing stages of the study, the researcher met regularly with the supervisor to review decisions made and questions that arose; a record of such meetings has been kept. The audit trail, “the residue of records stemming from the inquiry” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), for this study, includes records of activities, decisions and concerns which occurred during all the phases of the study. This information was assembled to facilitate other audits.

### **3.8. SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY**

The South African government is grappling with the triple challenges of apartheid education legacy, limited resources, and poorly skilled teachers unable to implement a constantly changing curriculum. Scientific studies in the field of basic education have pointed out the various TPD models that can be used to enhance skills of teachers in South African schools. However, findings from a systematic literature review in the field of professional development found that successful TPD depends not only on objective analytical models but is also influenced by personal (psychological) factors; including motivation and teacher cognition and organisational culture such as collaboration, positive relationships and communication and opportunities for teachers’ learning and so forth (Caena, 2011). Recommendations emanating from this study can guide decision-makers and practitioners in basic education policy formulation and school based practice.

### **3.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS**

Emmel (2013) explains that every research should be ethically sound to protect the participants from any physical or psychological harm and treat participants with respect and dignity. In this study, the researcher observed ethical principles of beneficence, respect for human dignity, fair treatment, self-respect, protection of human rights, benefit



and honesty in data processing. The following ethical aspects were considered in this study:

### **3.9.1 Gaining access**

Gaining access into a research site is a crucial aspect of a research which the researcher should always take note of. Ethical approval for this study was obtained from the University Research Ethics committee. In addition, the researcher obtained an approval letter from the North West Department of Education, subsequently presented to principals of the selected schools prior to the day of data collection. The researcher also presented a voluntary informed consent form (see appendix 1) to all research participants with an appropriate explanation of the study, which they signed in a proper psychological state of mind. The researcher endeavoured to explain the purpose and benefits of the research.

Face-to-face interviews were conducted with the participants on the day scheduled for the interview. Before the interview, the researcher greeted the participant politely before explaining the purpose and the benefit of the study to the participants. The researcher concentrated on the questions contained in the interview guide (see appendix 2) and allowed participants time to express their views regarding the study. Furthermore, data analysis was carried out without biases.

The researcher described the nature of the study as well as the participants' rights to participate or refuse to participate in the study. Participants were informed that they could choose not to answer any questions that they felt uncomfortable in answering. Confidentiality was maintained, as no names were disclosed in the study. Consent forms were issued to participants, indicating their permission to participate in the study. The researcher sought ethical clearance from University of Limpopo, permission from the Department of Education in Ngaka Modiri Molema Education Circuit (rural) in the North West, principals of schools and SGB members, to negotiate entry into the field. An example of the consent form used is referenced as appendix 1 on page 75.

### **3.9.2. Data management**

The objective of the Personal Data Protection Act is to protect, in relation to the processing of personal data, the fundamental rights and fundamental freedom of the

individuals in concordance with the public interest (Corti *et al.*, 2014). Ray (2014) explains that a database and analytics system is a software device that works on encrypted data without decrypting it, with the aim of protecting the data. The researcher only made use of a recorder during interviews to capture detailed responses of the participants. No form of video or any object that poses harm to the participants was used for the study. The researcher managed all data storage in the software device by ensuring that only the supervisor responsible for the study had access to the data. After use of data, all electronic data used in software packages will be deleted from the computer after 7 years.

### **3.9.3. Protection and safety of the respondents**

Bush (2007) indicated that for ethical purposes, it is vital to ensure that those being interviewed are absolutely clear about their rights, so an explanation of aims, procedures, purposes and consequences of the research, publication possibilities and the right to refuse to take part or withdraw at any stage is vital. In this study, researchers ensured that those taking part in research were not exposed to any form of distress and were protected from physical and mental harm. This means the researcher did not embarrass, frighten, offend or harm any of the participants.

### **3.9.4. Violation of privacy**

Privacy of participants was protected at all costs, and no concealed media such as video cameras, one-way mirrors or microphones were used.

### **3.9.5. Confidentiality and anonymity**

Information about participants was considered confidential. In doing so, the researcher ensured that names of participants and their schools were not disclosed in the study. This means that pseudonyms were used to identify the participants in the study.

### **3.10. CHAPTER SUMMARY**

In this chapter, the researcher extensively explained research design and methodology adopted for the study. This includes: qualitative research approach, case study research design, methodology, research paradigm and philosophical assumption, site selection, participant and sampling selection, data collection (document analysis and interview), data analysis. Furthermore, the researcher explained measures in ensuring trustworthiness, how ethical approval for the study was obtained and the contribution of the study. The next chapter will present and discuss data collected for the study with an attempt to answer the research questions posed for the study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1. INTRODUCTION**

Chapter three discussed the research approach, design and the methodology which guided the data collection processes. This current chapter focuses on data analysis and presentation of findings from questions regarding teachers' perceptions on effectiveness of Teacher Professional Development Programmes. The research findings are presented according to themes and categories as they emerged from data analysis which reflects authentic meanings of the participants' response and foster in-depth understanding of the study. The findings are also discussed in line with literatures and theories chosen for the study.

#### **4.2 PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

##### **4.2.1 Data collection and analysis**

According to Rossman and Rallis (2012), qualitative research builds on non-numerical data from different participants to have sufficient evidence for justifying a study. The collected qualitative data were transcribed from tape recorder and field notes, removing junk and coding the data to derive participants' authentic meaning before applying it to the current study. A thematic analysis was used to analyse and present data collected from the participants.

The observation, as indicated in the study (see 1.5.3 and 3.6.3), was not done due to the time frame allocated for the TPD training. The selected schools indicated that they conduct TPD training once in a year and the scheduled time was not adequate for the study. The interview was then deemed as the most appropriate form of data collection, as the participants can be easily accessible to the researcher.

### **4.2.2 Research objectives**

As indicated in Chapter 1, the study investigated the following research objectives:

- To understand how TPD programme facilitators impart knowledge and skills to teachers during continuous professional development (CPD) programme training.
- Identify the monitoring and support programmes put in place to ensure that teachers practice what they learn from TPD programmes.
- Determine teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of TPD programmes offered in their schools.
- Determine the strategies to improve the value of the TPD programmes being offered in schools.

## **4.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

### **4.3.1 Data coding**

As indicated in section 3.6.2, purposive sampling was used to select one teacher from each one of the six schools selected. The researcher purposely selected teachers who have been in the system for not less than 10 years. This means that a total of six (6) teachers were used for the study. Therefore, interviewed participants from each of the schools were represented as T1-T6 (Teacher one to Teacher six). The above representations foster clarity regarding interviewed participants in the discussion of findings. Participants' responses are, thus, discussed in relation to research objectives for in-depth understanding of the study.

### **4.3.2. Thematic analysis**

The findings made on the study were analysed and are presented in themes and categories, as illustrated in Table 4.1 below.

**Table 4.1 Themes and categories**

Themes	Sub-themes	Categories
How TPD programme facilitators impart knowledge and skills to teachers during the continuous professional development (CPD) programme training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Ways to impart knowledge</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Lecturing</li> <li>● Demonstrations</li> <li>● Case study</li> <li>● Group work</li> <li>● Role play</li> <li>● Question and answer</li> </ul>
The monitoring and support programmes that are put in place to ensure that teachers practice what they learn from TPD programmes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Monitoring programs</li> <li>● Support programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Follow-up</li> <li>● Implementation</li> <li>● Provision of learning materials</li> <li>● Peer assessment session</li> </ul>
Teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of TPD programmes offered in their schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Reason for participating in TPD</li> <li>● Level of involvement in TPD</li> <li>● Importance of TPD programs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Develop skills to learn further</li> <li>● Face new challenges</li> <li>● Make input of feedback from teachers to facilitators</li> <li>● Keep teacher up to date</li> <li>● Help classroom implementation</li> <li>● Gives learners confidence</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Challenges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Create collaborative work</li> <li>Limited knowledge</li> <li>Lack of resource</li> <li>Time allocation</li> </ul>
Strategies to improve the TPD programmes offered in schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More training time</li> <li>Use of technological devices</li> <li>Teacher involvement in curriculum development.</li> </ul>

#### 4.4 HOW TPD PROGRAMME FACILITATORS IMPART KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS TO THE TEACHERS DURING CPD PROGRAMME TRAINING

It was found in this study that the most common methods used by TPD training facilitators to impart knowledge during CPD training was lecturing, demonstrations, case study, group work, role play, question and answer.

Below are samples of *verbatim* responses from the participants:

*Methods they use are lecturing, case study and mentoring where other staff members make sure that they give new teachers on the job training where they give them guidance, teach them how to do lesson preparations, marking of registers and assessments [P1]*

*Facilitators used demonstrations, and for physical science we did several experiments. Teachers were then grouped into several groups of 5, and each group of educators performed an experiment together. In the whole process, we discovered easier methods of teaching science to learners. With Mathematics, it is the same old boring method of lecturing [P2].*

*Some other methods used by TPD facilitators are case study methods and role playing [P3].*

*We do group work; usually, when educators observe challenges, they are discussed during workshops. We simply break into sections to interact with our challenges [P4].*

*They give us case studies that we need to work on as a group. They also have a session of question and answer methods where we clear misconceptions and misunderstandings [P5] [P6].*

Findings revealed that TPD facilitators use various ways to impart knowledge on the teachers during the training. Mokhele (2013) asserts that constructivist learning theories require that individuals develop subjective ways and methods to impart knowledge on learners. Österholm (2010) affirms that individuals in the field of education strive to analyse and discover new knowledge and choose a good approach to impart knowledge to the learners.

To make science learning meaningful, teaching should be explained as that which engages students through performing tasks, investigations, discoveries, inquiry and problem-solving (Tilya, 2003). For science teachers to teach in new ways, a regular re-education process is required to transform their knowledge and skills pertaining to the subject matter, pedagogy, their conceptions of how knowledge is constructed and their views about learning (O-saki, 2004). This, therefore, shows that TPD facilitators are utilising good approaches to ensure that knowledge is transferred on the teachers through diverse methods.

#### **4.5. MONITORING AND SUPPORT PROGRAMMES THAT ARE PUT IN PLACE TO ENSURE THAT TEACHERS PRACTICE WHAT THEY LEARN FROM TPD PROGRAMMES**

The sub-themes derived from this section were to determine monitoring programmes and support programs. Below are findings depicted:



### 4.5.1. Monitoring programs

The monitoring programmes found in the study include follow-up and implementation.

#### 4.5.1.1. Follow-up

With regards to **follow up**, the following *verbatim* responses are reflected:

*They do follow-up at schools, peer evaluation and the Head of department routinely checks files and preparation of teachers' work [P1].*

*The facilitators make follow up visits to see if we are up-to-date with the training [P1].*

*Yes, at school level in our weekly meetings, the HOD checks our files before facilitators make a follow up to check if we are in line with what is expected from us [P1].*

*The facilitators did make follow up visits [P3].*

*Facilitators never visit the school (lack of support). However, they do have moderators as per the monitoring plan. They check if things are going according to how they facilitated to educators and if not, you are negatively responsible [P4].*

*The Head of Department does make a follow up in the phase by checking in files and learners' books as well as preparations done by teachers [P5]*

The findings revealed that the majority of participants attest that there is a follow-up with regards to monitoring of programmes by TPD trainers. However, P4 is of the opinion that there is no follow-up visit. It might be an indication that in some schools, TPD trainers do follow-up while in others they do not. This might also indicate an imbalance in the monitoring programmes provided by trainers to ensure that teachers practice what they learn. Allen *et al.* (2011) advise that follow-up should be made in all schools to ensure that teachers practice what has been taught.

#### 4.5.1.2. Implementation

With regards to **implementation**, the following *verbatim* responses are found:

*At the training, we were given files and learning materials that gave us guidelines on how to implement new skills and relevant strategies needed [P1].*

*Yes, the school did provide the necessary support. We did have a peer assessment session where in the phase, we just have a random checking of books and teachers' files to ensure that there is transferring of knowledge. This was a measure to ensure that we implement what has been taught in the TPD training [P1].*

*For Physical Science, especially the Chemistry part, it was easy to implement what I learnt from the workshops. Science is easier when learners discover things on their own, so grouping them and letting them work together to discover scientific facts on their own and shangri information made the science period interesting, exactly like it was at the workshop [P2].*

*The environment was conducive for me to implement what I learnt --- the school manager's support, the HOD's support and well-mannered learners [P3] [P4].*

*Teachers always struggle with implementation, especially beginner educators. TPD trainers help to ensure that they understand how to implement what was taught. However, time constraints are never easy for teachers to implement as they record this as added information; only at times do they feel like it is additional work without pay [P5] [P6].*

*After implement, all the frustrations were reduced to zero % because I was able to plan, asses, effectively record-keep and assist all learners who showed/reflected not achieving what I was expecting them to achieve [P6].*

According to the DoE (2018), one of the major aims of any TPD programme is to ensure that teachers are able to implement what they have been taught. Through continuing education, career-minded individuals can constantly improve their skills and become more proficient at their jobs when they implement what has been taught (James et al., 2013). Botha and Herselman (2018) mention lack of implementation as a downfall to any performance. Findings in this study revealed that teachers, following the TPD programmes, implement what has been taught in their daily teaching and learning in the classroom. However, it remains a concern that some still struggle to implement what has been taught. As such, there is a need for follow-up (see above section) by trainers to ensure that they guide teachers to implement what they learnt during the training.

#### **4.5.2. Support programs**

The support programmes found in the study include provision of learning materials and peer assessment sessions.

##### *4.5.2.1. Provision of learning materials*

With regards to **learning materials**, the following *verbatim* responses were found:

*At the training we were given files and learning materials which gave us guidelines on how to implement new skills and relevant strategies needed {P1}.*

*My science laboratory was always well equipped. If there were new science kits and apparatus recommended at the workshop to be purchased, the school provided these [P2].*

*Yes, they did assist because the admin printed for us exercises we had to do in class and material we received was checked by the HOD. However, this material is not sufficient [P5]*

*Yes, we were actually given a file which had examples of how to prepare lessons too, although the pamphlets were a lot [P5].*

#### 4.5.2.2. Peer assessment review

With regards to **peer assessment**, the following *verbatim* responses are found:

*Yes, the school did provide the necessary support. We did have a peer assessment session where in the phase, we just have a random checking of books and teachers' files to ensure that there is also transferring [P1].*

*We review one another's' work and what we learnt in the programme [P2].*

The findings made indicate that monitoring programmes and support was given to the teachers; however, it was not insufficient. This indicates the need for improvement in monitoring and support programmes provided for in TPD programmes.

### **4.6. TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TPD PROGRAMMES OFFERED IN THEIR SCHOOLS**

In order to obtain findings from this research objective of the study, the researcher derived four sub-themes from this section. These include: reason for participating in TPD, level of involvement in TPD, importance of TPD programs and challenges in implementing TPD programmes.

#### **4.6.1. Reasons for participating in TPD programmes**

The participants in the study were asked for reasons for participating in the TPD programmes to understand their perspectives on whether or not they understand the need for TPD programmes. Findings made are:

#### 4.6.1.1. Develop skills/opportunity to learn further

Participants attest that they participate in TPD programmes to develop their skills in their profession. Below are their *verbatim* responses:

*I participate to develop my skills and knowledge [P1].*

*To gain knowledge and be an effective teacher, so that we can challenge students to do their best to build more confident learners [P1].*

*My expectations from the workshop were to equip myself with new knowledge and skills [P2].*

*Every teacher hopes that teacher development at least sheds light in terms of developing the skills, which should bring about a workload relief of some sort. When teachers are gradually capacitated and monitored, they perform effectively. What the department is doing with teacher development is done incorrectly. What happens doesn't develop teachers at all but has them frustrated. More teachers expect to feel more enlightened and informed and ecstatic to go work once they are developed [P3].*

*After all this workshop and training, all educators are informed and knowledgeable about the approach to be used for curriculum delivery in their classrooms [P6].*

*My main reason and expectation in the programme was to discover new teaching methods or strategies relevant to the current education module so that after training, I will go back to the classroom and make changes in e.g. record keeping and evaluation style and different teaching methods which will accommodate all learners with different learning abilities in my class. I'm expecting that at the end of the training, I will be able to manage time effectively by proper planning and being well organized and efficient. As an educator, I believe education is a never-ending process, and this will make me improve my skills and learn best practices according to the field [P6].*

#### 4.6.1.2. To discover new challenges

Participants also indicated that they attend TPD programmes to discover new challenges in teaching and finding strategies to cope with challenges. Below are *verbatim* responses of participants:

*Some teachers think it takes a lot of time and confuses them more with a lot of terminology. At times, the facilitators themselves don't provide clear answers for the teachers [P5].*

*For me to discover new challenges and reformation in education, and seek for better ways to address the challenges [P2].*

*If we do not attend TPD programmes, we won't be able to understand challenges in teaching and ways to overcome the challenges [P6].*

James et al. (2013) identified enhancement of skills, improvement in their collaboration and attaining better performance as the reasons for teachers to participate in TPD programmes. Professional development transforms teachers into better and more apt educators by enabling them to create relevant and tailored course instructions for today's students (DoE, 2018). In addition, Roth et al. (2011) affirm that effective TPD enables teachers to analyse any subject taught, improves pedagogy, illustrates job-embedded and content-focused due to skills they obtained from the training. There is no doubt that there are benefits in attending a TPD programme, schools should therefore ensure that their teachers attend training at all times.

#### 4.6.2. Level of involvement in TPD

Participants were further asked to indicate their level involvement in the TPD programmes. Below depicts the findings obtained:

#### 4.6.2.1. Make inputs

This sub-theme was aimed at understanding whether participants were consulted to make inputs in the TPD programmes.

Below depicts *verbatim* response of the participants used in the study:

*Yes, our inputs were given attention because they did address our concerns in our follow up meetings we did even fill in the questionnaire that assessed if the workshops were beneficial to teachers [P1, P3].*

*No, we just fill in questionnaires on the trainer's performance, but they could be more effective if teachers were consulted to also give their input [P2].*

*Teachers are never consulted. They are summoned to workshops. At the same time, workshops are used as spaces to pinpoint all the wrong things teachers do, like it's a "reprimand a teacher session" which kills the morale of educators. If teachers were to be consulted, this was the input I was to make. First, gather teachers and hear from them what their challenges are [P4].*

*No! I was not consulted, and the workshop was run by teachers who were more experienced than me [P5].*

*I make inputs. My inputs were that facilitators must make sure that they start by elaborating the purpose of the training and their expectation after the workshop/training where it should be seen as an ongoing process for professional development to focus mainly on improving their skills, knowledge and attitude. This programme should be seen as an educator's review, renewal and extension of their commitment as change agents. It should be about school improvement and professional growth. Educators must be fully consulted and be given enough time to do research and contribute more on designing because they are the ones who are doing the curriculum implantation. My inputs were strongly considered, and it was indicated that all inputs will be escalated to officials above [P6].*

Findings revealed that the majority of participants were consulted to give their input, and their inputs were considered. Some participants were not consulted and just worked according to instructions of the trainers. The constructivist theory used in this study (see Chapter 2) requires that teachers be able to construct new ideas from what has been taught during training. It remains a concern that if teachers are not consulted to give their input, new ideas might not be generated to enhance TPD programmes. As such, it is important that teachers are consulted to give their input in enhancing TPD programmes.

#### *4.6.2.2. Provision of feedback from teachers to facilitators*

This sub-theme was aimed at understanding whether participants were consulted to provide feedback to the facilitators on how the training was conducted.

Below are *verbatim* responses of participants in the study:

*By filling in the questionnaire, we did indicate how we have gained or not gained, and that did show if it was effective or not [P1] [P3].*

*Yes, they made us take questionnaires, some surveys of some sort [P2].*

*Yes, we were given an opportunity to give feedback, it was a question and answer session [P5].*

*The facilitators gave an opportunity to all participants to give feedback where the forms were issued and we were supposed to complete by ticking and commenting to give it back but the interested part we were advised to be honest for developmental purpose [P6].*

Findings in this regard revealed that all the participants agreed that they were given provision to provide feedback on how the training was conducted. The process of providing feedback includes asking them to fill some questionnaire and survey with honesty.



### 4.6.3. Importance of TPD programs

In attaining effectiveness of TPD programmes on teachers, participants were also asked to indicate their views on the importance of TPD programmes on teacher development. Below are *verbatim* responses of the participants used in the study:

*TPD is important and it is needed in schools because it keeps teachers on their toes, it increases knowledge, sharpen our skills, and help us to keep up within the sharp minds of our learners who are very advanced [P1] [P3].*

*The learners have become more confident in their groups, and this builds their self-confidence [P1].*

*TPD programmes help as they enable students to be more interested in learning on their own. There was active participation. Learners were really helping each other to find solutions to challenges [P2].*

*They are worth attending. They were informative, but they could be more effective if teachers were consulted to also give their input [P2]*

*Skilled teachers produce excellent students. Students achieve a lot when they are taught by confident and knowledgeable educators [P2].*

*My perception is that they are important especially for new teachers like me. It helps in classroom implementation, like to group my learners by mixing highly gifted ones with the slow ones so they can mingle and stimulate the slow ones [P5].*

*It will address core issues, keep teachers up to date with their work, and it will also built our confidence as teachers and improve our content [P5].*

*It helped, in particular, slow ones are picking up because they get embarrassed if they do not finish while high flyer leaves some behind, and it does motivate them [P4].*

*It was more effective because most participants were confused and frustrated after the majority of us were very clear about how the best implementation and curriculum delivery [P6].*

*It enables all educators to be more confident, and learners will benefit a lot and obviously, results will be good [P6].*

Findings revealed that participants are of the opinion that the TPD programmes is effective as its importance is to help keep teachers up to date with their work, help in classroom management, gives both learners and teachers confident and create work collaboration. Orr et al. (2013) mentioned that an ongoing classroom trialling, and sufficient scaffolding sustained are favourable regarding cost, scalability and effectiveness of the TPD programmes. TPD must recognise the “everyday realities of the classroom, motivation and capacity of the teachers to deliver in the classroom” (Hardman et al, 2011).

Guskey (2002) indicates that TPD is important and its main purpose is to facilitate the enhancement of teacher quality through engagement in a systematic programme geared to bring about change in three main areas. Various researchers on TPD programmes consistently make the point that many TPD programmes are ineffective and will continue in this vein unless the programmes are realigned to the needs of teachers (Hunzicker, 2010). Van Niekerk (2009) mentioned that the provision of TPD programmes should be emphasised in schools, especially professional development, change in teachers’ classroom practices, change in student learning outcomes and change in teachers’ beliefs and attitudes.

Even though TPD programmes are important and effective for teacher development, participants reported that they encounter challenges. The next section outlines challenges encountered by the participants in the TPD programme.

#### 4.6.4. Challenges encountered in the TPD programmes

In understanding effectiveness of TPD programmes on teachers, participants were also asked to indicate their views on the challenges they encounter in TPD programmes on teacher development.

Below are *verbatim* responses of participants in the study:

*The major challenge I face is the limited knowledge that TPD trainers show to us. Sometimes, I feel we should learn more but it looks like they themselves are also not well informed [P2] [P3].*

*The resources are not enough and we struggle to get resource during the training [P4].*

*The time allocated for the training is small, and we do not spend enough time. It is always brief and short [P5].*

*Not enough knowledge is imparted on us. We need more [P6].*

According to Van Eekaln Vermunt and Boshuizen (2006), it is also unfortunate that teachers encounter some challenges in most TPD programmes. Research has also indicated that many continuous professional development (PD) programmes for teachers are unsatisfactory and have not met intended goals (Boyle, 2005; Newborn & Huberty, 2004). Steyn (2008) blames ineffective TPD programmes on research, since many programmes are based on faulty assumptions of such research, or even no research at all.

Findings in this study show that most challenges encountered by teachers are time allocated for training, limited knowledge and lack of resources during TPD training. For education to be transformed in South Africa, it is necessary for teachers to be appropriately equipped to meet its evolving challenges and needs (DoE, 2007). It remains a concern that if teachers do not have required resources during TPD programmes, effective learning will be hindered.

#### **4.7. STRATEGIES TO IMPROVE TPD PROGRAMMES BEING OFFERED IN SCHOOLS**

In order to obtain findings from this research objective of the study, the researcher identified strategies as a sub-theme from this section. It was found that more training time is needed, use of technological devices in teaching and teacher involvement in the curriculum development are essential. Below are responses of participants:

*We need more time for training, one week is little because more information and new terminology are given at the same time, and that causes congestion [P1].*

*I think we should use technology more. Appropriate use of ICT for Teacher Professional Development will definitely yield improvement. It will save costs and a lot of teaching time [P2].*

*We should be given more time, and smaller classes will assist [P4].*

*By consulting teachers before designing their materials, get our real challenges and struggles in class [P5].*

*Resources required should be made available to schools. The official should support all educators after training to check if they are doing it correctly [P6].*

Findings depict that more training time, use of technological devices and teacher involvement in curriculum development are strategies that can be used to improve the TPD programmes. Van Niekerk (2009) mentioned that principals should focus on improving effectiveness of teachers. Provision of adequate facilities and support can lead to improvement of teaching and learning practices, which allows teachers to grow professionally.

Improving TPD follows collaborative methods between teachers and the facilitator. He indicates that TPD facilitators need to have the required skills in ensuring that the programme is adequately carried out (Barrera Pedemonte, 2016). TPD creates a

supportive environment, and principals should encourage and create TPD opportunities where teachers can continuously share their expertise, success, frustrations and knowledge with one another (Theroux, 2014). TPD programmes can also be improved if teachers are able to inculcate reflection after the training programmes. Most importantly, the process of reflection involves: description, reflective questioning and redeveloping practice theory (Woolgar, 2008). Therefore, principals should assist teachers by providing the necessary time, resources, support and encouragement to enable them to work.

#### **4.8. CONCLUSION OF THE CHAPTER**

The chapter presents findings in relation to the study. In an attempt to achieve the research aim, research questions were raised in order to find answers to the main problem of this study. The next chapter presents conclusions, recommendations and contribution of this study.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1. INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter, the analysis and presentation of data collected through interviews conducted with participants to answer the research question posed in Chapter 1 of this study was done.

In this chapter, the overall conclusions on findings of teachers' perceptions on effectiveness of TPDP programmes is presented. The researcher also formulates recommendations that can be used by schools in improving TPD programmes. The limitations of the study are also pointed out, and an overall summary of the study is provided.

#### **5.2. CONCLUSIONS ON THE FINDINGS**

These conclusions are drawn as per the research questions of the study which are based on the main themes used in the data analysis. They are, thus, presented as follows:

##### **5.2.1. Ways TPD programme facilitators impart knowledge and skills on the teachers during the continuous professional development (CPD) programme training**

From the findings in the study, it is evident that there are various ways in which TPD programme facilitators impart knowledge on the teachers. These include: lecturing, case study, demonstration, role play and question and answer method. All participants were of the opinion that TPD programme facilitators should try to incorporate these methods when they teach. They also indicated that these worked and were seen as good teaching strategies.

### **5.2.2. The monitoring and support programmes that are put in place to ensure that teachers practise what they learn from TPD programmes**

In attaining this research objective, two sub-themes were identified, that is, monitoring programmes, which include: a follow-up strategy and implementation process. The support programme, on the other hand, includes provision of learning materials and peer assessment sessions. The study revealed that peer assessment was necessary to enable teachers to evaluate themselves. Findings also indicated that monitoring and support programmes provided were, and participants indicated that not much support was given and the support material was insufficient.

### **5.2.3. Determine teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of TPD programmes offered in their schools**

In attaining this research objective, the following sub-themes were determined:

- Reasons for TPD programmes: findings such as to develop skills, opportunities to learn further and to face new challenges;
- Level of involvement in TPD programmes: findings relating to making input and provision of feedback from the training to trainer;
- Importance of TPD programmes: findings such as to keep teachers up-to-date, improvement in classroom management in aiding teaching and learning, giving learners confidence and collaborative work with learners; and
- Challenges: findings such as limited knowledge, lack of resource and time allocation.

### **5.2.4. Determine the strategies to improve the value of the TPD programmes being offered in schools**

Findings relating to this aspect depict that more training should be provided for teaching, use of technological devices and involvement of teachers in curriculum development. It was found in the study that including technology in TPD training would help enhance the training programmes

### **5.3. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE STUDY**

Recommendations are made to address problems identified in themes and suggest ways to improve the effectiveness of TPD programmes on teacher development. The recommendations are further broken down into various components such as recommendation for teachers, principals and TPD facilitators.

#### **5.3.1. Recommendation for teachers**

The recommendations for teachers are highlighted as follows:

- Teachers should ensure they get acquainted with all facilities required in the TPD programmes.
- Teachers should ensure they master properly the content of their subject to have more control for proper classroom discipline.
- Teachers must teach their subject with best teaching methods (pedagogy) and show confidence during instruction.
- They should be aware of teaching strategies used by TPD facilitators and implement those strategies in classroom teaching and learning.
- Teachers should work collaboratively to ensure that they go beyond implementation of what was learnt, through use of effective constructivist learning.

#### **5.3.2. Recommendations for principals**

The recommendations for principals are as follows:

- Principals should organise training seminars and workshops on the application of discipline strategies/methods, management strategies and intervention programmes.
- Principals should improve on monitoring and support programmes provided for the teachers.
- Principal must make sure that healthy relationships exist between teachers and learners and that teachers guide learners with their behaviour in the classroom.
- Principals should ensure that more TPD training time is put in place so that teachers can have enough time to practice what has been learnt.



### **5.3.3. Recommendations for the TPD trainers**

- Trainers should ensure that they afford a listening ear to the teachers.
- Trainers should apply different assessment strategies to evaluate what has been taught.
- Trainers should be lifelong learners. There is need for continuous reading and research to impart more knowledge to teachers.

### **5.4. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

This study focused on the effectiveness of TPD programmes on teachers' development. The aim of this study was to gain an understanding from teachers regarding the extent to which TPD programmes improve their professional development and ways TPD programmes can be improved.

The study was limited by the following:

- The research design used was only qualitative research design. If a mixed method was used, there would be more findings in relation to the study.
- The study is further limited by the fact that it was a small-scale survey, and results could not be generalized to schools and teachers in all South African schools.

### **5.5. SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS**

In Chapter 1, the rationale and background of the study was presented. This chapter also provided the research questions and research objectives. Furthermore, a brief description of the research methodology and clarification of certain relevant concepts were clarified. In Chapter 2, literature in respect of TPD programmes, was reviewed in detail.

This entailed an in-depth study on the following issues:

- The constructive theory;
- Overview of TPD programmes;
- Extent of TPD programmes offered in schools;
- Characteristics of effective TPD learning;

- Purpose of TPD;
- Factors affecting TPD programmes;
- Methods used by TPD trainers to impart knowledge on the teachers; and
- Ways to improve TPD programmes.

Chapter 3 covered the use of a qualitative approach in research where the case study design and methodology of the study were presented. This was done with reference to data collection and data processing, site selection and selection of participants, analysis of the data and trustworthiness. A purposeful sample of six secondary schools enabled the researcher to obtain in-depth information on the topic under review. Participants in the data collection process were identified, measures to ensure the trustworthiness of the research, as well as ethical measures, were discussed and clearly explained. Individual interviews were carried out with six teachers, one from each school.

In Chapter 4, research findings were first analysed using an open coding system, which was further presented in themes and categories to identify related patterns that emerged from the study. The discussions focused on qualitative data collected. After the analysis was done, findings were presented and discussed. In discussing the findings, literature discussed in Chapter 2 was linked in Chapter 4 to collate the participants' views with literature findings.

Chapter 5 summarised the whole study and drew conclusions that emanated from the findings of the study. It also made recommendations based on the findings of the study to assist in TPD programmes offered in schools.

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## **APPENDICES**

### **APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM**

**Dear teacher,**

I am Dorcas Phetla currently studying for a Master's Degree in Education at the University of Limpopo in South Africa. My research study for the degree is to investigate Teachers' perceptions on the effectiveness of Teacher Professional Development Programmes in Polokwane. The results of the study will be an eye opener to the Ministry of Education in South Africa and its partners as regards how best to implement In-service education programmes for primary school teachers that can result into teacher change and consequent improvement in learner performance. In doing so, the study will help the government and other organizations working in teacher education to improve delivery of In-service education for primary school teachers in South Africa. I request your participation in this important study.

#### **Right to confidentiality and Privacy**

To ensure confidentiality and other ethical issues, your name will remain anonymous. The information you give will be completely confidential and private. Consent forms with signatures will be placed in a separate, locked file. No names or reference to specific schools in the district will be used in any reports or discussions about the results. The information you share through interviews will not be used against any person or any specific TPD programmes. Further, the information provided will be used for academic purposes only. In this regard, results of the research may be published, and presented in conferences and meetings.

#### **Possible Benefits and Compensation**

The research study does not provide for direct individual benefits. However, satisfaction can be derived from the fact that by participating in the study, the participants have contributed to knowledge in the area that affects them as teachers. Such knowledge

base widens understanding of issues that affect education in general and provision of In-service education in particular. The interviews will take about half an hour. It is my hope that you will give me your open and honest opinions.

**Voluntary Participation declaration**

I have read and understood this consent form. I understand the purpose of the study and I do understand that there are no direct benefits to me and that I should feel that I am at risk and I am free to withdraw. However, my motivation to participate is facilitated by my will and zeal to help improve the quality of education offered to our learners in South Africa.

Please sign below:

\_\_\_\_\_  
**SIGNATURE**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

## **APPENDIX 2: TEACHER INTERVIEWS**

### **Research question 1. How do TPD programme facilitators impart knowledge and skills to teachers during the TPD programme training?**

1.1 How well conversant with the material, were the facilitators or trainers of the In-service training programmes you attended?

1.2 On average, how much time was allocated to the TPD programmes you attended?

1.3 Which methods, from the ones listed below, were used by the facilitators to impart knowledge and skills to teachers during TPD programmes?

- (a) Lecturing
- (b) Demonstrations
- (c) Question and answer
- (d) Group work
- (e) Other (specify)

1.4 Were you involved during the trainings?

### **Research question 2. What monitoring and support programmes are put in place to ensure that teachers practise what they learn from TPD programmes?**

2.1 How easy was it for you to implement what you learnt from the In-service training programmes in your classrooms?

Please give reasons.

2.2 Did the facilitators or trainers make follow-up visits to classrooms to see how teachers were implementing what they learned from the training?

2.3 Did the school environment, including the administration, assist in making sure that teachers implemented what they learned from the training?

2.4 Were teachers given resources or materials to help them in the implementation of what was learned at the training?

2.5 Did the school provide sufficient resources to assist you in using the learning strategies you learned during the TPD training? What else could the school provide to help you use TPD learning strategies in your classes?



2.6 Describe your efforts at using the techniques you learned in the TPD training?

**Research question 3. What are teachers' perceptions of the effectiveness of teacher professional development (TPD) programmes offered in their schools?**

3.1 What was your main reason or expectation from your participation in the TPD programmes?

3.2 Were you consulted to give your input in the design of TPD programmes you attended?

- (b) If yes,  
(i) What were your inputs?

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(ii) Were your inputs taken into consideration?

3.3 Did the facilitators or trainers provide opportunities for teachers to give feedback on how training was conducted?

3.4 What are your perceptions on effectiveness of TPD programmes that you attended?

3.5 How have you used what you learned in the TPD training in your own classroom?

3.6 If you have not used what you learned in the TPD training sessions to alter your teaching in any way, please explain why.

3.7 If you have used what you learned during TPD programmes, have you noticed any difference in student engagement in the classroom?

**Research question 4. What strategies are used to improve TPD programmes being offered in schools?**

4.1 How can the TPD programs be improved?

4.2 What are the benefits of an improved TPD programs offered to teachers in school.

